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

DR. MICHAEL H. ANDERSON

Interviewed by: David Reuther
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INTERVIEW

Q: This afternoon we are interviewing Dr. Michael Anderson for the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training. I am David Reuther. Mike, please give us some background on when you were born and where you were raised.

ANDERSON: I was born in International Falls, Minnesota, the icebox of the nation, right smack on the Canadian border. I was born on October 28, 1945, in a hospital about two blocks from Canada. My dad was the editor of a small-town newspaper there, a piece called the Daily Journal. So, International Falls was a small town, company town, pulp and paper company, fishing tourism on the Canadian border in northern Minnesota. Its claim to fame is for years it had a U. S. weather bureau station and would have the coldest temperatures in the 48 states, consistently like 40 degrees below zero (F). In time we had a family cabin on Rainy Lake, again on the Ontario/Minnesota border.

Q: The people on your father's side. What were their backgrounds?

ANDERSON: Well, they were Andersons, Swedish immigrants, farmers who came to the U.S. in the late 1800's near Minneapolis and settled on the farm where my father was born. My dad went into journalism and got a job in this small town and married my mother who was a Canadian. She lived right across the Canadian border in Fort Frances, Ontario. She was a journalist also, a reporter for a newspaper on the Canadian side of the border. My dad's side was all Swedes and my mother's side were Canadian and Scottish.

Q: Is this a small enough town that when you went to school you probably went to school with the same people for all 12 grades?

ANDERSON: Actually, I went to public school there through grade 6 and then my father, because the newspaper was sold, moved to Minneapolis and stayed with the paper company which was headquartered in Minneapolis. So, I moved to the big city of Minneapolis for junior and senior high school and lived in suburban Minneapolis. I had the best of two worlds, big city and small town.

Q: How was growing up in Minneapolis? What were some of the things that drew your attention in Junior high? What were you reading?

ANDERSON: Oh, I loved social studies, so I read a lot of politics and history. I remember there was a world affairs club in high school that was a cooperative project with the Minneapolis Star newspaper. At one point I was the World Affairs Club president. Students would gather after class and discuss current affairs and read these study guides that the daily newspaper published. I think that really stimulated my interest in the wider world of current affairs. I loved that. Got interested in journalism. I was the feature editor of the Buzzette, the student newspaper. Started following my Dad's steps in that sense.

Q:, I take it your dad wasn't in the war, WWII.

ANDERSON: No. I think my dad was too old for WWII and then he was a newspaper editor. Two of my uncles served.

Q: Were you the first born?

ANDERSON: Second. Second of two boys.

Q: You were in high school in the 1960s?

ANDERSON: Let's see. I finished grade 6 in '58. We moved to Minneapolis. I graduated from high school in '64, class of '64, and then went to the University of Minnesota.

Q: High school in the 60's basically coincided with the Kennedy administration.

ANDERSON: It did, right. I remember distinctly the day Kennedy was shot. I was sitting in the study hall in November of 1963. I would graduate in the spring of 1964, so my senior year was the transition from Kennedy to LBJ.

My dad was active in the Rotary. There was a big Rotary International exchange program. So, every year my father would host a foreign student who would come to town and do an internship over Christmas or something. Therefore I got to meet foreign students through that and that was wonderful. Because Rotary always tried to place those foreign students in a small town so they could see what middle America and small-town life was. That was a good experience again meeting foreign students at that age.

Q: The University of Minnesota was right there at hand.

ANDERSON: The University of Minnesota was a fabulous school. We had, I think, thousands of foreign students. For years the University, I think, had more Chinese students I think than any university. I mean way back they always had strong foreign exchange programs. Fulbright, lots of foreign students. And I was in the journalism school, and we had lots of foreign students studying journalism. That again perked my interest in the world. I remember the first Filipino I ever met was a journalism graduate student at the University of Minnesota. When I was assigned to my first posting in

Manila, I looked him up because he was a famous journalism professor then in the Philippines. We stayed in touch for 40 years. We still exchange Christmas cards. He was the first Filipino I ever met. I distinctly remember that.

I studied journalism there and also joined the student newspaper the Minnesota Daily and became the editor. So, I was the editor in chief of the Minnesota Daily at the height of the Vietnam war. I will never forget the spring of ’68 we had LBJ's withdrawal from the presidency, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, demonstrations on campus, and then the assassination of Bobby Kennedy. All within I think about two to three months in ’68. That was my graduating year from the University of Minnesota with a BA in journalism. So those were fascinating times. I was the editor of the paper so I was in the middle of reporting all of it. It was exciting and memorable. We had great responsibility as students and lots to write about and comment on; fascinating times.

Q: What was the time frame?

ANDERSON: I was at Minnesota ’64 to ’69 . I should note that Garrison Keillor was two or three years ahead of me. I knew him because he was the editor of the literary magazine which was called the Ivory Tower. His office was right with the student newspaper. We were all together. I remember him and I have seen him a couple of times. He remembers me but we were not intimate because he was older and more senior. But he was a character back then and very bright. He was on the student radio station also. Very bright. He was editor of the student literary magazine. He was always interested in fiction, in writing and poetry and was intellectual. I was more practical day to day student journalism.

Q: Well, it is interesting how he has taken his Prairie Home Companion to fame.

ANDERSON: Yes, fabulous. Lake Wobegon and all that. He is extremely talented, and very loyal to the University of Minnesota. He does lots of work and was definitely influenced by that period. The same professors I knew, he knew. The school of journalism was fabulous. It was one of the best schools of its time. The professors were very internationally oriented. A number of them back then were experts on Latin American media or China or different parts of the world. It was a very international open university that welcomed foreign students and encouraged you to learn about the world.

[Ed: In 2020, Dr. Anderson established the Anderson Scholarship at the Hubbert School of Journalism at the University of Minnesota]

Q: Well ’68 was one of those pivotal years. It also started off with the Tet offensive in Vietnam.

ANDERSON: I am sure it did. Specifically, I mean the war was a big issue, and also that spring we had the Democratic Presidential campaign in which you had Humphrey who was from Minnesota, and Gene McCarthy who was from Minnesota. That was a huge issue on campus with lots of enthusiasm and excitement. Then Nixon won the election in

’68. That summer I intended to be a journalist. I worked on the St. Paul newspaper that summer and then joined the Peace Corps.

Q: Why did you join the Peace Corps in 1968?

ANDERSON: I wanted to see the world, and I was assigned to Malaysia. I didn’t know where on earth Malaysia was. Went to the Atlas and National Geographic and found it was right in the heart of Southeast Asia, and was a newly independent country from the British. On one side across the South China Sea was Vietnam, and then on the other end was tiny Singapore and then up north, Thailand. So it looks like a great adventure. Like many kids at the time, Peace Corps was not only a way to avoid the draft but a way to serve your country in a positive way.

Q: How does the country assignment come up? I mean you volunteer for the Peace Corps maybe a country, or do they assign you?

ANDERSON: Well, I don’t remember how it happened. I was a BA generalist. Peace Corps volunteers were generally graduates, 22 years or so fresh out of college, no real skills, and they called us all BA generalists. That means you had a BA degree and you were a generalist. You were not an expert really on anything. I had a liberal arts journalism and Poly Sci focus as an undergraduate. Then I think when you applied for the Peace Corps you indicated what fields you were interested in. I can’t really remember what I said. But I was assigned to be an English teacher and sent to Malaysia. I could say yes or no. You really didn’t have a choice. You didn’t pick your job. Malaysia was one of the first 12 Peace Corps countries, so they had a long record of wanting the Peace Corps and making very good effective use out of the Peace Corps, because they were a young, new country and were short of human resources.

Q: What did the initial Peace Corps training consist of?

ANDERSON: Peace Corps training, they shipped us off to Hawaii, the big island. The University of Hawaii had the Peace Corps training contract. Our group was the first that did half of their training in Hawaii and half of their training in country, in Malaysia. So, I was in Hawaii for language training and English teaching training, cross cultural studies for six weeks, and then my group of English teachers were sent directly to Malaysia where we did another six weeks of intensive language practice teaching and cross cultural studies right there in the country. The feeling was you had to be right there in the country to know what the Peace Corps was all about. I think it was a good move on the Peace Corps’ part to give you a realistic exposure to what your two-year assignment will be. People dropped out, freaked out, left, but most of us stayed in and it was a fabulous experience.

Q: How big was the group that stayed in?

ANDERSON: I think our small subunit was Malaysia Peace Corps group 20, and I think we had, we were all into education. We were all either high school math and science or

we were primary regional centers of excellence teachers. I was in the primary English teaching group, and we broke off. I think there were maybe 20 in my subgroup. Very recently Peace Corps had its 50th anniversary. Part of my little group got together in Minnesota a few weeks ago. There were about 50 of us. We have kept in touch all of those years, and it was wonderful to reunite. We spent a three-day weekend together cooking and eating and swapping tales. I might also add that one of the volunteers in my group also joined the Foreign Service. I didn't know this until much later, Charles Silver, who was a public diplomacy officer, was a high school science teacher in my same group, although we were split because he was high school science, and I was English. But he worked in Kuala Lumpur in a leading high school, and both of us joined the Foreign Service some years later. I replaced him in Djakarta as PAO [Public Affairs Officer].

Q: Now the Embassy and the Peace Corps were not supposed to interact. At least that was my understanding. But, wasn't there Peace Corps administrative staff in the Embassy?

ANDERSON: No. Peace Corps had a separate office outside the embassy. The Peace Corps director was a member of the country team, but Peace Corps volunteers had little if any contact with the embassy. One, it was discouraged, and two, we were scattered all over the country and the embassy was obviously in the capital city. Plus, we didn't really want to associate with embassy types. We felt we were different, as we were. We were out mixing with the local people and knew the language and knew the culture. Our job was quite different.

The Peace Corps had a remarkable impact, I think, on the Foreign Service. I remember when I was in New Delhi, there were three ex-Peace Corps Malaysia volunteers just in the public affairs section. Throughout the embassy as a whole there were a number of Peace Corps volunteers. So, I think the Peace Corps has done a lot in terms of getting Americans interested in both State Department, USIA [U.S. Information Agency] and USAID [U.S. Agency for International Development]. There are hundreds of Peace Corps alumni in the Foreign Service today and over the past years.

When I arrived in 1969, I think, I was assigned to teach English in a little town in the Northern part of West Malaysia called Sungai Petani. At the end of two years, I was enjoying Malaysia so much that I wanted to extend. Malaysia had a high rate of extension. Most Peace Corps volunteers enjoyed Malaysia. It was an easy country to work in. You felt that you were doing good work. I wanted to be a journalist, and after two years of English teaching it got a little frustrating because I knew I wasn't going to go into English teaching as a career. I said, what can I do to get journalism training. I heard about an outfit in Kuala Lumpur called the Southeast Asia Press Center that the Ford Foundation and the Press Foundation of Malaysia had established in Kuala Lumpur just two years before. It was basically to train regional journalists. I read about that organization in the newspaper. I thought, gosh I wonder if they would like my services as a volunteer. I have a degree in journalism, and I could do some training. And I wrote them a letter. They welcomed me and loved me.

So, I was able to work out a one-year extension with the Southeast Asia Press Center which was in Kuala Lumpur where all the media was headquartered. I had a wonderful additional year there. In that year I did meet one of two USIS officers from the embassy. Because USIS would work with the journalists. And they funded some training programs, and they were bringing speakers in etc. I said, "Gosh there is a guy at the embassy - I remember his name, Richard Boardman. He was the press officer or the assistant press officer, and we would meet occasionally and talk about training or can we get an American professor to come over and help with some of our courses. I thought gosh this guy has a neat job. He is into journalism; he goes to parties; he gets a free house, and he has a good job. That was the first time I ever focused on the Foreign Service because I had no contact with diplomats. No one in my family had the vaguest idea what a diplomat was. No one in my family had ever been in the Foreign Service. So, looking back on my career, that exposure, that third year in the Peace Corps at least introduced me to a real live Foreign Service officer in this agency called the U.S. Information Service, which I saw doing good work in Malaysia and having fun and representing the U.S. in Malaysia in trying to work to promote press freedom and journalism training, good things like that. So that did perk my interest and years later I followed up on that and joined the Foreign Service.

Q: Now your original assignment was in one of the northern provinces of Malaysia teaching English. Did your students enjoy it?

ANDERSON: Oh, I am sure they found me greatly amusing. I was obviously the first American, first Peace Corps ever in that school. It was the main school, Malay medium school, public school. I was posted there because the Malaysian government had phased down English medium schools, a deliberate policy. Malaysia is multi racial. You have Malays, Chinese and Indians. Under the British they were streamed. So the Chinese students went to Chinese schools. Malay kids went to Malay speaking schools, and the Indian kids went to Indian schools. The rich kids went to English schools. But the Malaysian government in the mid-60s said this is crazy, we are promoting elitism. So, what we want to do is promote the national language which is Malay, Bahasa Malaysia. So, they phased out the English medium schools, so everybody had to study the national language as a unifying device. The Chinese didn't like it; the Indians didn't like it, and the rich Malays didn't like it because they wanted their kids to either go to the local school that spoke their mother tongue or to the better-quality English language school where they would pick up English which was a very valuable and useful tool in a multilingual society like Malaysia. Consequently, I was assigned to a Malay national school.

The government's effort was to place Peace Corps in some of the bigger Malay schools around the country to help improve the standard of English during this transition period. I was new at English teaching. I did the best I could. I think I made some contributions. But mainly I was just the American. I lived in a Malay village in a traditional house up on stilts. No indoor toilet, it was a bit rough. I had a bicycle. Of course, no cars or no motorcycles. No air conditioning, no television, so it was roughing it to a degree. But I enjoyed it and it gave me total immersion in a new and different culture. I was able to

pick up Bahasa Malaysia which helped me later when I was posted to Indonesia because the Indonesian language is similar to the Malaysian language, so I had a head start there. Hopefully some of my students picked up enough English to stay in school and go on to bigger and better things. English in Malaysia is really the key to success because it is such a divided segmented culture. English even to this day is a unifying force in that society. The national language is crucial of course, for unity but in today's world you have got to have English and the Malaysian government recognized that. That is why they accepted so many English teachers from the Peace Corps.

Q: And your duties down at the Southeast Asia Press Center?

ANDERSON: Ok, right. The Malaysian Southeast Asian Press Center was bureaucratically under the Malaysian Ministry of Information. But they had a British expatriate journalist who headed the program. I served as his deputy or his assistant. I mean it was a small operation. For training they would bring in experts to actually do the teaching and that. That was a wonderful experience. I met all the journalists in Malaysia. I met the Ministry of Information officials. It was just a wonderful chance to take on responsibility and really contribute because their Malaysian press system had been very British oriented and Malaysia as a new country was really struggling with press freedom. It most needed training and exposure to the wider world and I think we did very good work for a number of years in that unique institution which as I said was under the regional outfit called the Press Foundation of Asia which was established as a nonprofit group by the big newspaper publishers throughout Asia. It was based in Manila, but they had programs throughout the region. They did training, development journalism training and things like that. It was right up my alley and a wonderful experience to have that third year in Malaysia.

Q: This is still the period of the Vietnam War. Were any of the major Western journalists drift by from time to time, or was the press center primarily for Malaysian journalists?

ANDERSON: Drifted by. I like that phrase. The press center was for Southeast Asian journalists. Primarily Malaysian but sometimes we did training sometimes in Singapore or Thailand. It was to promote regional journalism. It had nothing to do with foreign correspondents or the international media. I met them of course, but they weren't directly involved with the students or the teachers. Later in the Foreign Service I met with them all the time.

Q: Now out of this Peace Corps assignment did you get any travel in, really be able to look over Malaysia?

ANDERSON: Oh terrific. Malaysia is such a small compact country. It has two parts, West Malaysia, Peninsular Malaysia, and then East Malaysia which is the northern part of the island of Borneo. The southern part of Borneo is part of Indonesia. In the northern part of Borneo you have two provinces, Sarawak and Sabah. You also have tiny little Brunei, a country right smack in the middle on the coast. I traveled all over west Malaysia. Peace Corps hitch hiked. It was safe and easy to do. People loved to pick up

Peace Corps volunteers and give us rides. We would thumb our way all over the country, so yeah I traveled everywhere in the western part of Malaysia. Unfortunately I did not get over to East Malaysia. Borneo seemed like a totally different world. And it was, it was culturally very different. Different language, different religion, a totally different culture than Peninsular Malaysia which was much more developed and much more affluent and more segmented racially. You had huge Chinese and Indian populations mixed in, whereas the eastern part of Malaysia was more indigenous tribal people.

Q: You described your housing situation in country but when you came down to Kuala Lumpur for this one year at the press center did you….

ANDERSON: No, I had the Peace Corps ethic and I insisted on living in a Malay kampung house on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur. So, I lived again in a traditional house. The only thing I had different was I had a motorcycle. In the Peace Corps as an English teacher, I only had a bicycle. I biked everywhere. When I was in Kuala Lumpur the policy was they allowed you to have a motorcycle because it is hard to get around in the big city. I was living on the outskirts in a Malay village. So I had to kind of commute and I did have a motorcycle. I learned to ride a motorcycle there. I remember one memorable day I was driving to the office and across the road slithered a gigantic python. It must have been ten feet long just ambling across the road. I had to swerve to one side on my motorcycle to avoid hitting it. Yeah, I lived in very simple accommodations. The Peace Corps only gave you only so much money. You were to live like local people, and you could not afford fancy housing. So, my lifestyle continued to be simple and basic.

Q: When did you leave Malaysia?

ANDERSON: I finished my third year in early ’71 I believe. And then I did what most Peace Corps volunteers do, you join a few friends and travel. So, I worked my way around the world. I went to Nepal, India, everybody goes to Nepal. Everybody goes to India. Then I deviated from my friends. My friends continued on to Europe and I continued on to Africa. I hitchhiked from Kenya to Botswana way down south. Hitchhiked and local buses. It was wild and wooly. I went through, it was Rhodesia at the time, now Zimbabwe. But it was Rhodesia and I remember distinctly walking across the bridge. Rhodesian authorities didn’t like tourists walking or hitch hiking. They didn’t particularly like Americans. They didn’t like outsiders. They gave me a visa one day to pass through the country. So I saw the famous Victoria Waterfalls at the border there. I took a train through the country and got out. I think I only had one day. They did not want young ex-Peace Corps Americans stirring things up. It was still a white dominated colonial government there.

Q: Were you traveling as a wandering hippie?

ANDERSON: No I was clean cut. But I was traveling alone. I was going down to Botswana to visit an old high school friend of mine who had been in the Peace Corps in Lesotho. She was now teaching in Botswana. I visited her school then I left East Africa and went to Europe. Hopscotched around for a few weeks and then got back to Minnesota

after I think about six months, which again was a fabulous experience. Opening your mind to different cultures in the world. Hiking in the Himalayas was wonderful. Seeing the Taj Mahal and the animals in East Africa, Kilimanjaro just mind boggling. It was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Q: When you got back to Minnesota were people interested in those stories?

ANDERSON: Not really. Maybe five minutes. America is so inward looking. We weren't very interested in the world back then, and we aren't today I must say. A little better off now, but we are quite a provincial country in many ways. Inward looking, not very adventurous. My family had never traveled. My parents had never been out of the U.S. or Canada ever until very late in life. We were just people who liked Minnesota and were happy there and had a good life and were not that adventurous. Although in fairness Minnesota is one of the leading states that contributes to the Peace Corps and probably to the Foreign Service. The whole Midwest, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, a number of those people do go into the Foreign Service and do very well.

Q: There is an interesting museum in Minneapolis, the flour museum.

ANDERSON: Oh yes, the old Pillsbury mill. It is a wonderful museum. Next to the Guthrie.

Q: When you say right next to the Guthrie that is good for talking about where people came from that come into Minnesota and where they were selling the flour they were milling .

ANDERSON: In Minnesota there are a number of multinational corporations in Minnesota doing business around the world. General Motors, Mayo Clinic, Pillsbury, Honeywell. These are all Minnesota companies, 3-M. They are all Minnesota companies that are international.

Q: After you got back from the Peace Corps what did you decide to do?

ANDERSON: Good question. I wanted to go into journalism, I thought but I felt I needed a master's degree, an MA degree. The University of Minnesota has a first-rate school of journalism, so I enrolled in the MA program at the University of Minnesota.

Q: So when did you start?

ANDERSON: That would have been '72. For one year I worked with the College of Education helping them. What was my title, information resource service coordinator, something like that. My second year I was admin assistant to the director of the journalism school, and I taught a reporting class as a teaching assistant. That paid my way through college and kind of got me interested in journalism education. Not being a working journalist, I had kind of done that. I knew it was hard work, good work.

A piece of history that comes back now was for several summers I worked in the Minneapolis newspapers. My last assignment after getting my MA degree would have been in ’74. I was on the Minneapolis Star reporting for the summer as a reporter and Nixon resigned. I distinctly remember he resigned in August of ’74 I believe. I was set out frantically that morning to do what we call man on the street, person on the street interviews. So, I had to go on the street frantically quickly, and ask people, “What do you think of Nixon stepping down?” race back to the office and write, because it was an afternoon paper. I distinctly remember that it was a huge story. About the last thing I wrote before going off to Hawaii for my Ph.D. That is another story.

Q: How did you decide to continue on the education train?

ANDERSON: I think I was influenced by my third year in Malaysia. I got interested in journalism training, education, and research. There is a wonderful institution called The East-West Center which is based in Honolulu. Most Americans have never heard of it. It was established by the Congress in 1960, bipartisan as an education and research center think tank kind of, attached to the University of Hawaii. That was established during the time when Hawaii became an independent state. LBJ said “Hey this would be a great way to recognize the unique nature of Hawaii.” It is in the middle of the Pacific. It is our window to Asia, and so he worked with governor of Hawaii, John Burns, and Congress passed legislation to establish this institution in Hawaii, which gave scholarship to Asians and Americans to come to Hawaii to study at the University of Hawaii either for masters or Ph.D.s and to do research and cultural exchange interaction. It was a fantastic idea. Our Congress continues to support that. Hopefully with the budget cuts they will continue to fund it.

Q: Is it part of the University of Hawaii or does it stand on its own?

ANDERSON: It is adjacent to the University of Hawaii. Originally it was under the University of Hawaii, but in about ’75 or ’76 it gained autonomy from the University of Hawaii because Congress and the State Department felt it is a national institution, it is not just a Hawaiian institution. There was some Congressional criticism that it was serving the narrow interests of Hawaii and the University of Hawaii. Why should they get all this federal money and scholarship students? So, it was incorporated and pulled out of the University of Hawaii under State Department guidance, encouragement and was established as a quasi-autonomous, federally funded education institution. It continues to be that way today. Again a number of Foreign Service people studied at the University of Hawaii or had scholarships at the East-West Center had gone into the Foreign Service after having had that exposure.

I arrived in 1974. The best thing about the East West Center at the time was the Ph.D. program, four years, and wonderful scholarship. It included a chance to go to Asia to do field study or field research. So I spent about seven months in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia doing my dissertation data collection. That was just a fabulous opportunity to have a funded data collection process. You know who one of my classmates in Hawaii was? A lady named Ann Dunham Sutoro. The mother of Barack Obama. Ann Dunham

was an anthropology student when I was at the East West Center at the same time. She was studying anthropology and was interested in Indonesian rural village life, life in Java. I was a political science student interested in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. But I remember Ann at the East-West Center. She credits the center for stimulating her interest in Indonesia, and of course my interest in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, came out of the Peace Corps but also out of the East West center because I met students from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. It was just a wonderful melting pot of graduate students living together, eating together and studying together. It was just a unique venue to learn about all of Asia in one setting.

Ann, of course, went on and did her Ph.D. and research in Indonesia, and eventually published her dissertation. It came out after she passed away, But President Obama knows all about the East-West Center because not only did his mother study there, but his stepfather Lolo Sutoro who was an Indonesian geology student and also had a scholarship. So, I knew him a little bit. I remember him. And of course, President Obama met her husband, her first husband who was a student at the university of Hawaii from Kenya. Then she divorced him and remarried another foreign student who came from the East-West Center. That was an Indonesian geography student named Sutoro. She married him and then moved with him to Indonesia. President Obama went and lived in Indonesia for four years when she was married to Sutoro.

Q: You had classes together?

ANDERSON: Not classes because she was an anthropology student and I was political science, and the twain really didn't meet. But we were at the East-West Center and you did things, I mean it was a small community of about 300 students from the U.S. and all over Asia. That is where Ann met her second husband.

Q: Going back to your Ph.D. program and the field research that you did. What was the dissertation topic and how did the field research work?

ANDERSON: My topic, I was always interested in communications. I never really saw myself as a political scientist. If you are getting a Ph.D., the closest field is political science. So, I wanted to do something in mass media or communication policy and one area that I didn't think had been given any attention was the impact of advertising, modern Madison Avenue advertising on third world development. Because when I was in Malaysia in the Peace Corps, I was struck by how we had an A&W Root Beer and we had American films. American television was getting popular. You could just see the impact of American culture on southeast Asia to one degree or another depending on what country you were in. I would say Malaysia had a British focus, not too strong an American presence, unlike say in the Philippines which was a former American colony with heavy Hollywood and American pop culture influence. So, I was looking for a topic and I thought advertising could contribute to the field of political science and development. My dissertation was on trying to determine the impact of western advertising on third world development on those three countries, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. I spent seven months interviewing government officials, media advertising

officials, advertising clients to get a feel for how this foreign institution of mass communication called advertising imported from the west, how did it functioned in those three societies. What were the regulations? What was the impact on consumerism, on politics, on media development?

Within those three countries, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia, advertising was handled somewhat differently in each of those three countries. So there was a nice comparative element. Indonesia for example was very strict in terms of foreign influences. For a while they banned television advertising for example. No foreign ad agencies could openly operate in Indonesia. Whereas next door in Singapore they were welcomed. So you had all the Madison Avenue ad agencies working in Singapore, 100% foreign owned and yet next door in this giant country Indonesia they weren't even allowed legally. They were there, but they were not 100% foreign owned. They had to work through local partners or behind the scenes. So, you had a very nice contrast of how advertising functioned. There were differences in consumerism and lifestyle issues and regulations on lifestyle issues and values. There were lots to study. It was a fun thing to do. I got a book out of it called Madison Avenue in Asia, which was basically my dissertation dumbed down a little bit. But it was kind of the first serious study of advertising in Asia. To publish the book, I added a chapter on China because China was just opening up and it added a little more interest.

Q: This is the book that was published by the Fairleigh Dickinson University Press in 1984.

ANDERSON: I can't remember the year, but that sounds right, yeah. It was basically my dissertation. Then I co-edited a book at the East West Center. Remember the great debate about the free flow of information and role of UNESCO and the New World Information order and controlling the flow of western media and all that. That was a huge debate in the early 80's. We pulled out of UNESCO under Reagan. We feared UNESCO was trying to control the flow of information and press freedom around the world. I co-edited a book which Columbia University published on those issues that the State Department and the UN were involved in.

Q: That was co-edited with Jim Rechstad, called Crisis in International News, Policies and Prospects. It came out in October '81.

ANDERSON: From Columbia University Press. I think that came out in a Japanese edition even. I didn't make any money. I did it as a scholar and East West Center had the copyright. So I didn't make a penny but it was a wonderful chance again to put my university experience and time in Asia, write down my experiences and share them.

Q: Now when did you finish your Ph.D. work?

ANDERSON: I finished my Ph.D in 1979. I was job hunting and I looked around and said, "Hey I have always been interested in the UN." I knew some people in UNICEF at the headquarters in New York. I always felt UNICEF was well-managed and a good UN

Agency. They had a clear mission of protecting children and advancing the well-being of children around the world. Americans love UNICEF. Remember the Halloween donation project and the Christmas cards. UNICEF, Americans were always very generous in funding UNICEF, voluntarily funding UNICEF's efforts. I thought it would be interesting to work in New York and try the UN.

Meanwhile I had taken the Foreign Service exam and back in those days it took you months and months and months to hear whether you were approved or not. It was a very lengthy process. I took the exam I think when I was a student in Hawaii, in Honolulu. I passed the written and had my oral exams there. But I didn't hear anything. Meanwhile I got a contract job in New York at UNICEF doing information work. So that was a good experience again internationally.

Q: Do you recall anything about the oral at that time. It has changed over the years.

ANDERSON: I just remember the infamous inbox test where they gave you a stack of paper and the clock was ticking, and you frantically had to set priorities and read all these memos and take action quickly. That was great fun. Called the in-basket test. I remember that, and I remember role playing. We worked in little teams. I think they were trying to figure out your negotiating skills and how you present yourself and how well you argue your case. I remember that. I guess I didn't know if I had passed. I don't think they told you immediately if you passed. It was fun. I think it was half a day. The written exam I remember had more economics than I expected for some reason. But it had lots of general knowledge, American history, constitution, pop culture, all of that stuff was quite easy. Then if you were going into USIA. I was always interested in USIA, never in any other State cone. One, I didn't know anything about them, and I was fascinated about USIA. That seemed to be the part of the Foreign Service right up my alley, journalism, media culture. I remember I had met a USIS officer in Malaysia some years earlier, and what he was doing looked interesting.

Q: So, at the time of the test, you had to designate yourself as USIA?

ANDERSON: Right. I think the USIA exam was slightly different, the written part was different. I think there might have been more essays and more English or something back in those days, but you were mixed in with everybody. Then it was a very slow process, I remember, terribly slow. Then they gave you a number and told you were 20 on a list and we will get back to you, and you move up and down the list.

Q: You went from Hawaii to New York.

ANDERSON: Honolulu to the Big Apple. A big change. This was late1979, closer to 1980.

So, I was fully engaged in New York and enjoyed that job immensely. But I did decide I did not want to go into the UN for a career for a couple of reasons. I was not good in languages I didn't think, and I did not have an international language. In high school I

studied Latin and Spanish and then in Hawaii. In Malaysia I studied Malaysian which is not an international language.

Also, at the time during the Reagan administration working at the UN was not a popular thing to do for Americans. The U.S. government was kind of down on the UN. Some felt it was a waste of money. Some felt the Soviets had too much influence. It was a bloated bureaucracy that needed improvement.

UNICEF was well run, voluntary donations and had a clear mission, so I was pleased with UNICEF. But I did decide then that a career within the UN probably just wasn't for me. Because of the language factor. And the Americans, the UN hires people from all over the world and Americans were a distinct minority. We sometimes weren't really welcome because we like to throw our weight around. For example the head of UNICEF, also an American, the executive director of UNICEF, and some people resented that. The director when I was there was Jim Grant. Fabulous, James Grant. Used to be with USAID and then he started the overseas development council and was a real leader in development work, having been brought up in China. Superb director of UNICEF, just fabulous, but some people resented the fact that he was an American.

Q: What were some of your duties at UNICEF? Did you work closely with Mr. Grant?

ANDERSON: A little bit. He was the executive director of a huge international agency.

Q: Were you in the New York Office?

ANDERSON: Well it was the headquarters, the UN headquarters of UNICEF, I was in the information division, so we worked with the press or did development communication work press advocacy, good will ambassadors, that kind of liaison to fundraising around the world. I think they would call it advocacy. We would call it outreach. But providing information about what UNICEF does to the public and to the mass media. I had a very junior press information position. My title was press information officer. Information specialist. It was a very junior job.

Q: Was your boss also an American?

ANDERSON: My boss, the head of the division, was an American. The deputy was Australian. The sub boss was Pakistani. So yeah, very international, which was great. You met people from all around the world. UNICEF was great, had great staff, terrific morale, clear mission. The International Year of the Child had just ended so there was lots of extra work to do in terms of that initiative which was endorsed by the UN General Assembly etc.

Q: Now sometime in 1981 you were told that your commission in the Foreign Service had come through. You were offered a position with the Foreign Service.

ANDERSON: Allowed into training. Junior officer candidacy.

Q: When did you hear that you made the list?

ANDERSON: I think it was in the spring of ’81, to start training in the fall of ’81, enter in October or November. So people at UNICEF understood. You are going to be a diplomat and work at Foggy Bottom. Some of those people I have stayed in touch with. They are personal friends today and have remained in contact.

Q: You joined the Foreign Service in November of ’81 and your first exposure to the Foreign Service was the A-100 course, junior officer basic training. What was that like, and who did the other mew Foreign Service people look like to you?

ANDERSON: It was a terrific group, a huge class. Again this was the time when USIA existed, so I entered as a JOT [Junior Officer Training] USIA officer candidate. We were all in A-100 but the USIA people did separate training except I believe for one week when we were exposed to the consular issues, the simulated consular exercise. Again, back in those days USIA people were not required to do consular duty, so we were given a quick and dirty short course on consular affairs, but not the intensive course that everybody else in A-100 has to take. Today everybody has to have that consular training, everybody, PD, all the cones. But back in those days in USIA we did more intensive media related cultural things, with just a slight overlap with other cone colleagues.

Q: How big was the public diplomacy group?

ANDERSON: I think it was maybe 20 or something like that.

Q: That was fairly substantial.

ANDERSON: I should get that number. It was a good diverse group, maybe even more women, like Kathryn Gunning, Linda Cheatham, or Mari Baumgarten, than men. We had more older people, there had been a new law or regulation about no age. I think they raised the age limit up to I think it was like 50 or something back then. So we had some senior JOTs. You knew they would not be able to stay in long because they had to be able to retire at 65. Mandatory. But the regulation had changed so we had some of those, several people in that category. It was a good diverse group from all over the country, different ethnic groups.

Q: Everybody basically out of university?

ANDERSON: I wouldn’t say all, All very experienced. They had done things. They had lived overseas; they had languages, they had a little work experience. But I would say generally they were in their mid 20s. I would say I was a little older because I had gotten my Ph.D. and most of them had only only BAs. A few had masters degrees; I don’t think anyone had a Ph.D. but me. They were a diverse talented group. Most of us stayed in. A couple dropped out along the way.

The only one who I think was a Foreign Service brat so to speak was Doug Barnes. His father was Harry Barnes who had been ambassador to India and head of the Foreign Service. Then Doug, who is now retired, was the only Foreign Service brat in our class. But the majority of us had no diplomatic experience at all.

Q: Were some of the things that you were exposed to in A-100 remarkable or humorous. How did the group take to the exposure to the Foreign Service?

ANDERSON: I think they accepted it. Looking back now I wish we had more media interviewing training. We didn't get much of that. They do a much better job in training everybody how to deal with the media. We didn't get much of that. You would have thought they would have done more. And of course, television wasn't that old back then. Satellite– CNN didn't exist. CNN came in about the early 80's but it wasn't a big player internationally even then. Of course, no internet, none of the new media of course.

Q: Now you are saying the public diplomacy group was taken off by itself for most of the training?

ANDERSON: Yeah. We were trained by USIA officers, just our group of 20, because we were narrowly training to be cultural affairs or press officers. Our task was to pick up skills in dealing with the media and exchange programs and all the regulations and learning the bureaucracy running some foreign policy. I think they did a pretty good job. A good basic training. Then I was lucky or unlucky because I had Malaysian language. I was lucky in jumping over that language hurdle immediately. Language policy kept changing over the years, but I believe when I was there you just had to have I think 3/3 [Ed: 3/3 reflects FSI grades for speaking and reading] in some language, any language. I had it in Malaysian because I was in the Peace Corps where I learned it. While I was at the University of Hawaii I took Indonesian which was similar to Malaysian. So I had a good dose of that one basically one language. So I ticked that box quickly.

I was slightly older than several of the group, so I was shipped off to Manila. Our junior officer training experience I thought was excellent. I was given a specific job in Manila from day one. I was a junior officer for X number of months and then I would go into that job officially. So, I knew from day one what job I was in. My training geared me up for that job. I didn't have to spend time doing visas. I rotated through the consular section but it was only a day or something.

Q: Let me get this straight. In the A-100 class were you were given a list of countries and you expressed an interest?

ANDERSON: Right. We were given a long shopping list of countries and I think we had to pack three that we really wanted to go to. Then it was just up for grabs. Just like the Peace Corps. Give your preferences but we can send you anywhere. I think I was sent to Manila because I had already ticked the language box, and the Philippines was not a language designated post. English is widely spoken there. I think they thought it was just a great place, a busy big post. Throw him in there, he has got language already and see

how he does. So that was a very smooth process, excellent training. I feel lucky to have had that exposure because I didn't have to go through the consular requirement that I think all officers have to do now. It is sad in a way because you sign up for a cone, let's say you sign up for the PD (Public Diplomacy) cone. You may not get a PD job for two or more postings. That is a tremendous frustration and waste of talent and interest on the part of a junior officer, who is frustrated because he or she comes in and wants to be cultural affairs officer and you may not get there for two, three, four, five years.

Q: In fact, the requirement for bodies in the consular sections at the various embassies is so strong that not only those who choose to be consular officers, literally, every junior officer does.

ANDERSON: Yes. And I think that has affected morale. I think it has led some good people to leave. They get frustrated doing visa issuance for two years or more. It can be frustrating if you want to be a political officer or a press officer or cultural affairs. You have to pay your dues and that is a big price to pay.

Q: There was a time in the Foreign Service when a junior officer would come to post and he would be rotated through every four months, every six months through the various sections. Was that your experience when you got to Manila?

ANDERSON: When I arrived in Manila around February 1982, I was assigned as a junior officer candidate. I rotated within the public affairs divisions of USIS (U.S. Information Service) which was huge, so I would spend some time in the press office, sometime in the cultural affairs section doing actual work. Then I briefly rotated, like running through other sections. It was just here you spend a day in consular, you spend a day in political. So in those days they clearly focused you on your cone, and since I was USIS there was plenty to keep me busy just rotating within the USIS section of the Manila embassy. Today you don't have that luxury. You are rotated throughout and I believe you have to pay your dues and serve time in the Visa section.

Q: How was the public diplomacy part of the embassy organized when you arrived? Who is the boss? Where are the sections?

ANDERSON: The USIS section was huge. The Philippines at the time were extremely important to the U.S. There were maybe six or eight American officers. So, it was a standard big post, USIS operation. You had a public affairs officer; you had a deputy. You had an American management officer. Sadly, that position was abolished when USIA merged into the State Department, the executive office USIS function disappeared and was absorbed by the Admin section of the embassy. We can talk about those problems sometime because I think it is a very real problem that has never been solved by the merger of the two.

Then we had a cultural affairs and an assistant cultural affairs officer, and an information officer, spokesman, a press attaché and a deputy. So it was a nice and well rounded. We had a separate cultural center outside of the embassy, a huge public library with a

wonderful multi-purpose room for programming and a real good old fashioned library where people could actually come into and read books and magazines and meet Americans. It was just a wonderful resource.

The USIS in the Philippines at that time also had a big VLA transmitter operation in several parts of the country transmitting VLA signals. Of course, there was a VOA correspondent. Then there was a regional press service which was a first-rate publishing operation for USIA. They could print everything from newspapers, to brochures, buttons, posters, world class high quality all done in house. That was a wonderful resource that USIS in Manila or PD could tap because we could get things printed nicely just down the street. A wonderful bonus of being posted in Manila at the time.

Q: Now who was PAO at the time you started?

ANDERSON: My second PAO there was Hal Morton and the first was Cliff Southard, one of the great public diplomacy officers. I had Cliff Southard for a year or two and then Hal Morton a year or two after that.

It was a fascinating time to be in Manila. President Marcos was the dictator. He had been in about 16 to 18 years; very special relationship to the U.S. Close to President Reagan. We had two huge military bases in the Philippines at the time, Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base. Huge operations. Of course, the Philippines is our ally, our security partner, and really our only colony. The U.S. ruled the Philippines from 1898 until 1946. There was a long, close history.

Of course, we had a huge visa operation requiring a huge consular service. The veterans' administration operation, gigantic because so many Filipinos had been in WWII serving with the U.S. and they got benefits and all that. Just a gigantic, I think the biggest overseas operation the VA has anywhere in the world because so many Filipinos were veterans and got benefits from our VA facility.

It was just a fascinating time because the anti-Marcos feelings were intensifying; the anti-American feelings were intensifying for two reasons. Many Filipinos resented that we had two huge bases in the Philippines on their land. We had those for 100 years and we weren't going to give them up lightly. Marcos had a terrible human rights record and was not democratic. People resented the fact that the U.S. was close to him. We needed him because we needed the bases, and Marcos used us because he wanted our aid and our support to prop him up. So, it was a disaster waiting to happen. Sure enough, it did happen when I was there.

Q: In this kind of environment what does the USIA operation overseas do? You are obviously not putting out pamphlets that you are Marcos' friend.

ANDERSON: Well, we were Marcos' friend. He was an ally. The Philippines is an ally. We have a mutual defense treaty with them, and administration after administration were close to Marcos. We felt we needed the stability that the Philippines offered in terms of

broader regional security issues. We needed those two bases. We did in those days because it was still the Cold War raging. You have to keep in mind the time. The anti-Marcos feeling, the communist influence was gaining, the NPA, New People's Army which was the leftist anti-Marcos movement was increasing and that was scary to the U.S.

The relationship was getting more difficult, more tense. Even within our government there was a huge debate. Are we propping Marcos up? Are we giving too much aid? Do we need the bases? Why aren't we pushing Marcos to become more democratic? Why are we maintaining a quasi-colonial stance towards the Philippines? Do we need the Philippines; are they important anymore? All of these issues were being debated within the American people and within the American media and certainly within the Philippines. The U.S. suffered because we were tarred with having Marcos as our puppet. There were lots of demonstrations against the U.S. constantly. I mean demos at the U.S. embassy in Manila were famous. They were constant, often. The press was very anti-U.S. There were a lot of Filipinos, good Filipino friends who thought we didn't need the bases. Or that they should be turned over to the Philippines or that they should be renegotiated, because we had carte blanche. They were like our territory. There were concerns about nuclear ships, concerns about behavior of the U.S. military towards local people. Not constant were occasional incidents that made the press and made the life of an embassy press officer difficult because the Philippine media would blow these issues up all the time. All of this had a happy ending because in 1983, the popular politician Benigno "Noynoy"Aquino was assassinated at the Manila airport.

Everything changed in the Philippines. Our ambassador was Mike Armacost. A terrific ambassador, first rate. He had the delicate job of maintaining good relations with Marcos, keeping the bases open and yet reflecting American values such as democracy, human rights etc. Very difficult challenge for any ambassador or any embassy. Anyway in August, 1983, the former senator Aquino, the most prominent opposition leader who had been in exile in the U.S. at Harvard decided to return to the Philippines. So he arrived on a bright Sunday. I will never forget it. I was the USIS duty officer that day.

I was having a party at my apartment and my apartment happened to be very close to the Manila international airport. Down Rojas Boulevard facing Manila Bay a five minute drive from the airport. The telephone rang about 1:00, it was the PAO, Cliff Southard calling, he said, Mike, go immediately to the airport. There is bad news. We think Aquino has been assassinated at the airport upon his arrival from the U.S. via Taiwan. Please go to the airport immediately. There is a press conference that is about to begin, and we want you there. You are the closest and we need you to report." So I left my friends. I said, "You won't believe what has just happened, but Senator Aquino has been killed and I have to leave. Stay in my apartment and have a good party but I gotta run off." I can't remember whether I drove or took a taxi. Anyway, I dashed off to the airport and sat in on the press conference in which the police gave the details of the assassination. As Aquino left the plane he was gunned down on the tarmac at the airport surrounded by guards. Nobody knew who did it or why, but rumors were pointing at obvious suspects behind what obviously was a political assassination for some reason or another. So I went

to the airport. It was interesting. I reported what I heard and what I learned at the press conference about the details to the embassy. Then I think there was an emergency country team and then a very intense and prolonged period of turmoil and tension and uncertainty in the rise of the people power movement and Mrs. Aquino, the widow rose up over time and became active, and the opposition movement boomed, and their anti-American protests expanded. The pressure on Marcos to step down, to leave, to call elections intensified over some months.

Finally during an ABC interview with Ted Koppel on Nightline, Marcos said he would hold elections. He would spring the elections. He said, "I have nothing to hide; I will be elected. People like me and I will have elections." Which he announced in November '85, by then I had finished my tour and was transferred way down to Papua New Guinea as the PAO in Port Moresby.

I was called back to Manila TDY to help support the embassy's public affairs efforts during the elections because there were hundreds of journalists from around the world, every American network. All the big-name journalists flocked to Manila to observe the elections and to cover this classic clash between the dictator Marcos versus the widow pro-democracy Cory Aquino. The U.S. I think President Reagan appointed an election observer team headed by Senator Lugar and it had John Kerry and a number of other prominent Americans on it. They came out to the Philippines to observe or monitor the election, which was held February 7, 1986.

Q: A couple of things I want to get into with the Aquino assassination. Did the embassy set up a task force all the junior officers had to serve on or anything special on you? Then on the other hand, you are the guy on the bottom of the pyramid. Is there anything to say about working for Cliff Southard and the atmosphere he created?

ANDERSON: Oh Cliff was terrific. He was a great mentor. From day one I had responsibility. I was acting information officer and press spokesman for a month or two. I knew all the foreign correspondents, all the journalists. This was a big international story. The Philippines for a good year or two was a good international story. Most of the major media had correspondents in Manila or would send in people and they would all touch base with the embassy. So, I was involved with the briefings or arranging for them to see the ambassador. Public affairs USIS was fully involved throughout. It was a major public affairs challenge. One thing I would never forget. Sometime around, fall of '83 President Reagan was invited to the Philippines. Marcos wanted him to come obviously to show friendship. The White House announced a presidential visit. The White House set teams out. Arrangements were well underway and then all of this turmoil happened, and the visit was canceled. I had to announce that to the Philippine public. I will never forget that. I think I was the acting press officer at the time because my boss was out of the country on leave. That was a tough thing to do because that was a shock to the Philippine people that the president was not coming to the Philippines.

Q: How did you make this announcement?

ANDERSON: I will have to find out how we explained it. Let me edit that and I will find out what we said. Obviously, it was an excuse. Reagan was under intense pressure to pull back from supporting Marcos. Schultz was Secretary of State and a major player in changing our policy, distancing ourselves from the Philippines after the Aquino assassination. It became in our interests to support democracy, free and fair elections. Ultimately of course Marcos was eased out and the U.S. flew him out and there was a smooth transition, relatively peaceful, to democracy and to Mrs. Aquino. But announcing the cancellation of a POTUS (President of the United States) visit was a major public signal because it showed the U.S. support in the White House was weakening. I forget. I think we said it was due to scheduling or something. So that was interesting and a challenge to announce that because the Philippine people were shocked and the government was totally shocked. But Armacost was a terrific ambassador at the time because he had good contacts with President Marcos, Imelda, and yet he had that delicate balance. How do you move the Philippines to democracy and still protect our security interests? But after the assassination our interest in the Philippines changed, and our policy changed. Schultz writes about it in his memoirs. There have been so many books published about the Philippines.

A major factor in the people power revolution was not only U.S. policy but intense U.S. media attention. There were just hordes of foreign correspondents. We knew all of them. They all wanted briefings, so we were extremely active as a press operation, plus doing all of the other things we do in any country. The Philippines because our relations were so intense and the people to people ties with the Filipinos were so close. They all want to go to the U.S. and there is a huge Philippine American community. It is not a love-hate relationship. Filipinos like Americans. They didn't like our policies; they didn't like our having bases there. They didn't like us propping up Marcos but they have always been friendly to us. We have always had a full range program, cultural, Fulbright, library, things we were doing all the time to reach out to the Filipinos, quite apart from the political tensions. But after a while they became just ….

Q: So for a junior officer on your first tour, you get to see considerable…

ANDERSON: Internal workings of two governments really. I got to see the Philippine government quite closely. Plus, I knew top people and foreign diplomats from the embassy had fabulous access. I met Marcos several times, Imelda, other ministers you knew you would get invited to all the time. There was a lot of mingling with foreign correspondents and government officials would mingle pretty often at the embassy. We were invited. It was great. You were in the action. There was a display of foreign media, the U.S. embassy, Marcos, the leftists, it truly was a remarkable time. In many ways the Philippines had an April spring way back in February of '86. They had a peaceful transition. Mrs. Aquino was not all that great a president, but she did restore democracy and pride in the Philippine people, and was I think a major historical figure. That year I remember she was Time Magazine's person of the year. Cory Aquino. The single most important…

Q: You were mentioning for the 1986 elections that Marcos finally set up, Senators Lugar and Kerry and others came. You were brought back to do what for that delegation?

ANDERSON: TDY for two or three weeks. Mainly to handle the foreign correspondents who were in Manila to cover the election and doing the press support for Kerry and Lugar. It was a huge story. After the election they made a report like the next day and as I recall they said the elections were not free and fair. It was a huge story because the U.S. was not validating that Marcos won the election. The delegation said there was fraud and abuse and it was extremely controversial. The U.S. observer delegation publicly reported not only to Reagan but to the public and gave their decision. It was just a day or two after the election. That is when the turmoil all broke out. I left a day or two later. The night I left to return to Papua New Guinea you could feel the tension in the air. You knew this was a weird historic time. Things were changing and you didn't know which way. Was Marcos going to crack down? Is he going to arrest Aquino; is he going to kick out everybody. What is going to happen? Is he going to step down? Are they going to call for new elections? About three weeks later, February 25, everything blew up. Marcos, people power happened in the streets, Ramos defected, the minister of defense defected. As a matter of fact, they staged a coup. Marcos fled in U.S. helicopters. Fled to Clark Base and then on to Hawaii. Mrs. Aquino walked into the palace and took over. Interesting.

Q: A fascinating time to be there. One other interesting thing you did there at the time, you went down to Singapore to support UN Ambassador Kirkpatrick's May 1984 visit.

ANDERSON: Oh yes, right. Singapore is a tiny post, and Jeanne Kirkpatrick was the colorful U.S. ambassador to the UN. Kind of a strong presence, demanding, and liked the media. I remember the embassy contacted the PAO and said Help , we are too tiny. Kirkpatrick is coming. Can you lend us an officer who can help provide press support because she is going to be very demanding? So, they sent me TDY. They didn't really need me, but it was a good learning experience. And I helped over there. She was fine.

Q: What was the requirement?

ANDERSON: Set up a press conference and briefings and get her clippings to her, I think maybe because the Philippines were in turmoil too I can't remember the timing, but they just needed an extra body to help on her visit. She was giving a major speech. It was just three or four days. But it gave me a chance to see Singapore. I subsequently returned there as PAO several years later. They knew I knew Singapore because I had done my research there.

Q: Is there anything else about the Philippines assignment that would be illustrative of how one starts out a career in public diplomacy?

ANDERSON: One thing I learned was the importance of your local employees, Foreign Service nationals. We had a terrific Filipino staff. During the crisis with Marcos they were fabulous, knowledgeable. They knew the culture; they advised the ambassador. One issue was, for example, should the U.S. ambassador go to the funeral of Aquino. Was that

wise to do, what is the message, what is the protocol, what signals if he goes or doesn't go. Should he go? Does he call on the family? All of these issues.

One of my senior FSN's was well connected and personally advised the ambassador on what to do. We played a crucial role on some of the cross-cultural issues that came up during the period. The media was just going crazy, so we had lots of media monitoring to do. There were great demands on the ambassador to give speeches and interviews, go on American TV as well as host country Philippine Television. So, there was a lot of excitement, a lot of turmoil and a lot of pressure. It was one of those rare times in the Foreign Service where your work has a clear mission. The cause was good; it was democracy. The Filipino wanted a democracy. They did not want to be under Marcos for another 20 years. In some ways the U.S. was the stumbling block.

We had backed him because those two bases were considered crucial. Now later they were no longer considered crucial. One reason was the Mount Pinatubo volcano eruption in 1991 that almost destroyed Clark Air Base, so it was almost worthless. Act of God, eh? Secondly the cold war ended so we didn't really need such a huge expensive, physical, boots on the ground presence in the Philippines. So several years later we got kicked out of the Philippines by Mrs. Aquino and the Philippine Senate. The Philippine Senate voted to not renew the bases agreement, so we had to leave. We said OK. You don't want us, we will leave. I wasn't there during that. I did return some years later as PAO when we didn't have the bases. That was an interesting time. That is when the second people power revolution happened, so I was there for that change of presidents also.

Q: Well why don't we stop there and pick up at our next opportunity. Today is 21 December, and we are returning to our conversation with Mike Anderson. Mike, we were wrapping up the Manila assignment. But you were wanting to make sure we mentioned the TV programming tool called World Net TV. What is that and was it available to you at the time you were in Manila?

ANDERSON: WorldNet was the invention of or creation of the USIA director at the time, Charles Wick who of course came from Hollywood and had produced films in Hollywood, and had a real show business flair to him. He was a good friend of President Reagan's. He felt USIA was not doing enough or anything really in television. Satellite TV was just starting and CNN was barely off the ground. So, he developed WorldNet as a closed circuit satellite TV system worldwide. He tried to get satellite dishes in every embassy and many consulates around the world, so that interactive programming could be done. So, I would be sitting in Manila with an audience, and there would be a guest back in Washington or someplace else around the world due to satellite connectivity. There would be a lot of interactive video conferencing. Then his hope was that this raw material would be placed on television. The system was also used to distribute finished television products, news clips and do these television interactive things. It was quite innovative at the time and really preceded CNN and BBC satellite delivery systems. It was an innovative tool.

However, it was awkward, old fashioned, not sophisticated technology. It required every embassy to have a dish, a huge, I forget how, it had to be six feet side at least. It had to be wide enough to pull in the signal. That had all kinds of technical problems. In some countries you have problems getting permission. Our side took the line, "This is U.S. government property. We don't need permission. We can do whatever we want on embassy premises." Then in some countries the local carriers the telephone companies often run by the government of course, would make money so they were against direct satellites owned by, and run and serviced by the embassy. But it was just another good tool for connecting people and doing more exciting and timely programming. Then that system was kind of unfortunate in a way the technology leapt ahead of everything. The system became kind of old fashioned. Then when Wick left it kind of lost some of its momentum.

Today it is done by internet, so it is easy to do interactive programming of all kinds now wherever you are around the world as long as you are connected to the internet. But it was fun in Manila to be part of that early stage of using satellite TV. And noting the importance of television for public diplomacy. Over the following years ambassadors would get more training in television, and PD [public diplomacy] officers were encouraged to be well prepared to answer on television and go before the cameras. A lot of that can be traced back to Charles Wick's efforts back in the early 80s.

Q: What kind of programming or audiences would you have?

ANDERSON: Oh, we would do things directly with television stations connected directly for placement. We would do programs on Afghanistan, it was big time, even then. And Poland. Remember the Polish revolution? That was a major Reagan initiative; the fall of the Soviet Union. So, all of those kinds of policy topics would be used. Then we did lots of softer things, Olympic sports, a whole variety of things. But the main focus was on hard line policy things coming out of Washington with a guest in Washington. A policy expert on topic X, Y, Z, who would connect with local journalists or academics or audiences whatever on the embassy premises or at a local TV studio, using this world net satellite system.

Q: In the summer of 1985 you had a new assignment and became the public affairs officer at the embassy in Port Moresby. How did you go about getting that assignment?

ANDERSON: I was asked. Papua New Guinea was probably not all that popular a place. It was isolated, probably the smallest embassies we had in the world, only one public diplomacy officer, and I think my entire staff was three people. So, the area director asked if I would like to do it. I looked at the job for two reasons. One I would become a PAO on a second assignment, right. The goal of every PD officer is to become a public affairs country officer, and I thought it was kind of neat that they would offer it to me. Of course, it was a small backward place out of the way, and not a lot of pressing bilateral issues. But it was still recognition that I had some ability and that I could manage a small post and kind of run my own shop. So that was kind of nice and exciting and I grabbed at it. He probably asked 20 other people who said no. I didn't ask. I was naive and glad I did

it because it gave me very early in my Foreign Service career a chance to manage one's own office without interference. You went out to Papua New Guinea and you didn't get a lot of feedback from Washington. We had a terrific embassy, great morale, very small country, not a lot of issues, but it was a good way to learn management skills and pick up the basics of being a Foreign Service officer.

Q: Starting off you said the morale at the embassy was pretty good. Who was the ambassador? Who were the people that were there?

ANDERSON: Papua New Guinea was considered a hardship post, so the assignment was only two years, not a long time. My first ambassador was Paul Gardner, who was terrific. I think he had been political officer in Indonesia and was a real Southeast Asia specialist. The DCM was Bob Pringle, and Bob was fabulous. I kept in touch with them over the years. Bob went on to become an ambassador in West Africa, and Ambassador Gardner I can't remember what he did after that. Ambassador Gardner was a political career appointee, and he was replaced by a political ambassador Ed Bierman. He had come from the Hill. He was a Hill staffer on the house foreign affairs committee. So, he was a brand-new ambassador, had never served overseas, but of course had wonderful Hill contacts and knew the policy issues. Those were the two leaders there. You knew everybody and lived closely together in a housing compound.

Q: What was the embassy building like?

ANDERSON: It was a very small insecure embassy built on the side of a cliff. I swear if there were an earthquake the whole embassy would come sliding down the hill. Terribly small, inadequate, too crowded for the needs. Eventually they did get a little bigger premises and moved but when I was there we were really crowded and it was not the best facility. But the one thing I learned there was it was very good training to realize that America is not the big boy in every country. Papua New Guinea if you look on a map is right next door to Australia. Papua New Guinea was a fairly young country. I think it got independence in 1975. It had been under the Australians, and before that under the British. Part of it was British, part of it was German if I recall my colonial history. Then it became an independent country in 1975. So it was a new, up and coming democracy. It just gave me a good inside look at a developing country struggling to build up its infrastructure and become a working democracy and overcome all the challenges of becoming Papua New Guinea. It is a mountainous country, there are very few roads. There are a thousand different tribes, 600 different languages. It is a rich country culturally, anthropologically, of course Margaret Mead and Bronisław Malinowski did research there back in the stone ages, almost. It is a very rich country. Lots of copper, gold, oil, timber, fisheries. But it is mountainous and has a very small population. But it is right next door to Australia and Australia is the big boy and their embassy was gigantic, and they heavily subsidized the Papua New Guinea government. They had a huge aid program and lots of Australian business people and a lot of Papua New Guinea students went to either high school or more likely university next door in Australia. So, we were really kind of secondary importance in town. That was a good lesson too, that U.S. is not always the biggest embassy in town or the most important player. Our job there was to

reassure the Papua New Guineans that we cared about them, that we knew where they were and that we recognized their independence and that we were trying to give them some attention. That was the challenge that we had all the time and public diplomacy was crucial to that because we had a miniscule aid program and no military presence. We had no real deliverables except the kind of the things we did on the cultural side, programs and Fulbrights, Humphrey fellows, and things like that. There was a regional USAID office but I think it was in Fiji and covered all of the South Pacific. One thing our ambassador fought for was to get a USAID officer in the embassy to really increase the aid because Papua New Guinea is the biggest of all the island countries. I think it is bigger than Fiji. Our aid program was just peanuts.

Q: You are talking about the public affairs program in this environment. What might that include and what did you get?

ANDERSON: Well, it was a very unsophisticated environment. Media very undeveloped. There was only one daily newspaper, maybe in the entire country, one or two. Broadcasting radio was still important. No television in the mid 1980s. Hard to believe. The government did not want this foreign influence impacting the rural people because much of Papua New Guinea people still live in mountainous, isolated villages, and have strong local traditions and cultures and their own unique language. Educated people spoke English. All the schools were in English if you were lucky to have access to a school. So, there were huge challenges on those fronts. The country was struggling to develop national unity and move from a very tribal locally based traditional culture into a modern unified Papua New Guinea culture that would be well educated and unified.

Q: The world net facilities that you saw in Manila weren't even there.

ANDERSON: No, we did not have them. Washington could never understand that. Why can't you get WorldNet? I think we finally got a dish, but it was not a priority in a small country. Of course, the irony with television was that many people had satellite dishes all over the country and were watching Australian TV. So ironically the government's policy of no television in a way backfired because the local people knew about TV; they wanted it, and they would buy commercial dishes and pull in signals from Australia and other countries. If they had moved more quickly to have a local TV system, people would have watched that, because it would have been more relevant and in the local language or pidgin language. The programming would be more relevant to their unique culture, but instead the government tried to protect the people. So we did nothing with television. A little with print media. We did more cultural things and more exchange programs. We had very few IP visitors. I remember we had Vernon Walters who was the ambassador to the UN. He came to Papua New Guinea. That was a big deal. I think he was probably the most senior we had. We had no Codels [Congressional delegations], no cabinet members. We would get, of course military. We would get people from Hawaii. CINCPAC (Commander in Chief, Pacific) Admiral Hays would come because at that time we were concerned with regional stability and the Russians were starting to kind of reach out and kind of flex their muscles in the Pacific nations, as was China. In fact, China had a huge modern embassy in Papua New Guinea, beautiful. Then also another sensitivity was our

fisheries policy throughout the Pacific was a big issue. I forget the details now, but I think we wouldn't sign an international fishing agreement that irritated all the Pacific islanders. Then of course this is the time of the New Zealand nuclear ship policy and New Zealand is not that far from Papua New Guinea.

Our government was concerned that no nuclear ship visit policy could spread to other countries. So the military was focused a bit more than usual on the Pacific Island countries. Remember PNG (Papua New Guinea) is really a Pacific island country, not Southeast Asian. The culture is Melanesian, so it is more Pacific Island focused than Southeast Asia focused. Indonesia is adjacent to it. The Papua province of Indonesia shares 1/3 of the New Guinea Island and the rest is Papua New Guinea. But the people are Melanesians, Christians. Lots of missionaries. Hordes of American missionaries in Papua New Guinea, Lutherans and SIL - Summer Institute of Linguistics - people translating the bible. They were all over in remote areas. So, the embassy was quite busy with consular services for American citizens. The missionaries had their own airline system, charter flights that would go all over and land at these little villages and pick up the missionaries and bring in supplies, it is a unique place.

Q: Did you ever get a chance to travel?

ANDERSON: I did. I traveled quite a bit. I am interested in WWII history and New Guinea was a major battlefield for the Japanese. General MacArthur was down there. Right next door was the Solomon Islands which were under the ambassador in Port Moresby. He handled Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and a third country, Vanuatu. Vanuatu, a very small place. But it is an independent country. They are all Melanesian cultures and they were all under the U.S. ambassador based in Port Moresby. I did quite a bit of traveling.

One of the most delightful things I did in my entire career - I mentioned Papua New Guinea people are quite religious, Christian - as a cultural event we brought out three gospel singers from Chicago called the Barret Sisters. Very famous gospel singing group based in Chicago. They were quite big in the 80s. They had best selling records. They resonated with the local people like no program I have ever done. We booked them into an annual event called the Port Moresby Fair or something, like a big state fair. We booked them into the grandstand to perform for three days. They absolutely packed the place and really connected. They were black. Papua New Guineans are black. They were Christian and they were fabulous entertainers. They just connected culture to culture. We took them to several places including over to Bougainville Island which had a big secessionist movement and there was a lot of WWII fighting there. This is the home of one of the world's largest copper mines, copper and gold. Gigantic mine run by Australians. We took them over there to perform for the Bougainville Island people. It was in an open field. I think we had like 40,000 people. They came from everywhere. It was just a phenomenal thing. Just wonderful because they really connected. It showed them Americans singing, Americans have religious values. It highlighted the black American cultural diversity in our country. The three sisters were just fabulous. They mixed with the people and sang with them and showed interest in the local culture.

Q: Their availability to you, were they signed up by USIA back in Washington to do so many countries and you bid on them? How does that exactly work?

ANDERSON: The program at USIA used to be called Arts America I believe. Washington would survey all embassies, all posts and say OK culturally what would you like to have ideally? Do you want a rock and roll band, a cultural group, an art exhibit, gospel music, square dancers, the New York Philharmonic, whatever. So, these ideal dream requests would come into Washington and they would try to match budget with demands from the field. We had asked for a couple years for a gospel group. We just thought a gospel singer would just be perfect, just the right message. Then we got them and they went to Papua New Guinea and I think they probably went to Fiji and maybe the Philippines, two or three other countries. To keep costs down you would share them with other countries. But it was a memorable program I just read recently that one of the Beret sisters had passed away just this past August. She was 85. They were terrific people. It was one of the best cultural connection programs I think USIA or the State Department ever did.

Q: You were talking earlier about the airlines that belong to the missionaries. Did you fly around with them any?

ANDERSON: I didn't but some of the consular officers did go out to register births or give out voting information or tax information or something, these were in really isolated places. The major towns, Port Moresby is like 40,000 people and that is the capital. That is the top. But the other big towns all were connected by the national carrier in New Guinea. But the only international flights were out of Port Moresby. You had to, and there weren't many of them. You could fly to Australia and I think once a week you could fly to Manila. Other than that, you had to go to Australia and make connections in Sidney, Canberra, and Brisbane. So you had to detour way down south and then hook up internationally. Papua New Guinea is definitely isolated. It is hard to get to. As a result, we had very few visitors, and it was expensive traveling.

Q: Did you have any other traveling adventures?

ANDERSON: One other good programming thing I should mention, which was quite interesting. We didn't have a big programming budget obviously. Papua New Guinea, we had to be creative on programming. Somewhere I heard that the famous lady pilot, aviatrix Amelia Earhart's final flight was out of Papua New Guinea from a town called Lae on the north coast of New Guinea. The anniversary of her mysterious disappearance was coming. So, we said, hey why don't we celebrate the anniversary and use it as an opportunity to talk about the Space program and the role of women in leadership and science. So, we got a NASA lady astronaut to come out to Papua New Guinea, and we talked to Air New Guinea, the national airline of Papua New Guinea to see if they would put up an historic marker at the airfield where Amelia left from in June1937. They said, "Yeah, great idea, great promotion PR." So, we kind of partnered with them and I think

they may have paid part of the airline, cost sharing, and so we got the astronaut, a lady astronaut.

She hadn't flown in the space shuttle yet. Her name was Marsha Ivins. She was in training to go up. She subsequently has been in space two or three times since then. But she was a young astronaut and hadn't traveled that much and just couldn't believe Papua New Guinea was mind bogglingly memorable. We had her speaking at universities, meeting with women's groups, meeting with the ministry of aviation and tourism and all that. It was a good program and I think it does show that with a little creativity and some partnerships you can cost share on things and work with other agencies like NASA and project American life in a variety of other ways. I am sure this is the first and only astronaut that has ever been to Papua New Guinea. It reminded young Papuans women what they can achieve with education and hard work. It showed the aviation leadership of the United States. And it showed Papua New Guinea that they had a unique role and a piece of interesting world history at the time, when Amelia disappeared flying out of Lae, what was then New Guinea, on the northern part of the island.

Q: Were there any programs related to WWII?

ANDERSON: Of course, the embassy cooperated with the folks in Hawaii who continued to go out and find remains. When I was there, they found the remains of a long lost air force plane that had crashed into the jungles. I forget the name of that office in Hawaii.

Q: The Joint Casualty Resolution Center.

ANDERSON: Exactly. They often come to New Guinea. They are finding planes maybe a couple a year. It is interesting. Papua New Guinea government has a whole office that is focused on preserving WWII, documenting it, finding planes and ships and all of that. It is fascinating. Any WWII buff would love Papua New Guinea.

You mentioned places to visit. I went to Rabaul, which was the Japanese headquarters in the South Pacific. That is part of Papua New Guinea today. When I was there the volcano was smoking. A couple of years after I left it blew up. The town is gone. They moved the entire town because it was just sitting on a volcano that was active. It finally blew up and they had to evacuate the whole town. But Rabaul was the headquarters of the Japanese WWII southwest command. Of course, Mac Arthur had spent time in Port Moresby and the Australians were heavily there. In the north part of New Guinea there is an island off of, part of Papua New Guinea where the U.S. had a major air base that is still being used to this day as an airfield. It was built so strongly that the tarmac is still working. I will dig up the name of that island. For a while they were talking about having international flights come in there because the airfield was still first class relatively. I think Continental even started flights there for a while.

On a note, the only other stories I like to tell people that are not very positive is, I think I am probably one of the few officers in the Foreign Service that the State Department issued a travel advisory, or warning based on my experiences.

Q: Don't travel with this guy?

ANDERSON: Yeah, don't travel like this guy. I was on vacation or leave from the embassy visiting the Sepik River, part of Papua New Guinea along the Indonesian border which is famous for its isolated villages that do wonderful carvings and artwork. Traditional, beautiful, expensive, lovely artwork. I was in a small tour group. I think there were six of us in an escorted tour group in a boat going up the river. We were ambushed by pirates on the Sepik River. Honest to Gosh pirates attacked us with guns, at gunpoint. They were obviously trying to rob us. This is jungle. I mean there is nobody around. There are no other tourists, no foreigners, no police. You are out in the jungle on a river boat.

Q: How is the river? How deep?

ANDERSON: It is deep, it is a major river, Sepik. We were, if I recall properly, we saw this boat and thought the people ran out of gasoline and needed help or something. It was all a decoy to get our attention. But to our credit, our guide fought them off, literally risking his life. He could have been killed. He shoved them in the water and grabbed their guns and fought them and we escaped. We got away. We were not injured or killed. Then we were taken to a Catholic mission place that had a short-wave radio. They radioed for help and the police sent a helicopter in to rescue us. That was all very exciting. They took us to Mount Hagen in the interior mountains of New Guinea way up in the highlands. A big town up there called Mount Hagen known for its coffee and unique culture and tribal groups. A popular tourist place if you can get up there.

Two days later, lo and behold, I was with another group in a small van. We were going sightseeing in this van from the hotel. Darn if we weren't ambushed again. Highway robbers this time. A tree across the road. Nasty armed gunmen came to our van and took our money, watch, passport, and glasses. Pushed us out and drove the bus into the ditch, smashed the windows and told us to walk for our lives. I tell this only because it is a great story, but it could happen in any country. It does show you do need to be careful. If the embassy says don't go to some place it is not safe, pay attention. When I finally got back to Port Moresby the embassy reported it. We reported it to the police and then the State Department issued a travel warning just cautionary. Do not go to these areas because of random crime possibilities. It wasn't terrorism; it was just basic crime in isolated parts of the country. That was exciting.

Q: Well, it illustrates that the Foreign Service isn't all cocktail parties and formal attire. You are on the front line.

ANDERSON: It shows that you have got to get out of the capital city. You have got to get out and see the country. If you are just staying behind the high embassy walls you are not

representing your country. So that didn't cut back on my travel; I went all over the place. But travel in Papua New Guinea is difficult. You have to fly most places because there are no roads. It is the only capital city in the world where there is no road to anywhere. So to get out of Port Moresby you either need to walk, or you have to fly, because it is surrounded by mountains. There is just one 20 miles of road. That is it. There is no escaping. There is no place to drive to. So it is unique in that sense.

Q: Now among the tools in the public affairs handbag are fellowships, travel. Was any of that available?

ANDERSON: Oh sure. Yeah, international visitor program, Fulbright, Humphrey fellows. The Humphrey fellows program Papua New Guinea had never had any Humphrey fellows. The Humphrey fellowship is a one year non degreed program kind of mid-career for people who are interested in government service and development issues named for Vice President Humphrey. You take nine months of courses at leading American universities. I was able to get four Papua New Guineans. It was more than Papua New Guinea ever had, and it was more than China had, so I was very proud of that. I worked very hard to find good applicants. We had 200 applicants, which is phenomenal in a small country. Because it is a very focused program. It is non degreed. It is very competitive because there aren't that many grants available. Our Fulbright program is very modest.

Q: Do you recall who went on the Humphrey program?

ANDERSON: Not by name. They were all government, young up and coming government in the ministries or I think maybe a bank, the central banker. They were all development people. It is for public admin people. That was a great program. Then we had three or four international visitors each year. Two or three Fulbrighters. Getting Americans to come was difficult. Partly because of the security. People thought Papua New Guinea was dangerous, isolated, far out of the way. So, it was a tough sell to get American professors or scholars interested in coming there. We only had two or three spots and it was always hard to get people. They all wanted to go to other countries.

Q: You were mentioning earlier that the American Navy had a major presence in the Pacific. Did you have any ship visits?

ANDERSON: We did. We had a couple, sure.

Q: Then I assume Papua New Guinea has a sufficient port?

ANDERSON: Yes, Port Moresby has a tiny port. They could come to, more often they would visit Lae on the north coast where Amelia flew from or some of the other islands. I think we did get one ship visit to Port Moresby. I think it was the tenth anniversary of independence. That would be 1985. There was a big anniversary celebration. So the U.S. government sent a navy band, a ship visit, and some admiral. I can't remember who it

was. But we had a big military presence for the tenth anniversary of independence. That was a big deal for the country.

Q: I take it there was a very small international community and small embassy community.

ANDERSON: Small embassies. Small American community in Port Moresby. A small American Peace Corps program.

Q: Who were they? You were saying the Americans, The Chinese, the Aussies, How about the diplomatic community? Was it equally small?

ANDERSON: I am throwing in New Zealand, the Philippines, China, Japan, was quite big, and then a couple of other Pacific Island countries. Indonesia is, of course, the next-door neighbor. If I were to guess there were maybe 20 embassies. But the Australians by far were the dominant. They had a huge aid program, massive. I think something like 25% of the Papua New Guinea budget was AusAID, aid from Australia. They had a gigantic high commission and a lot of contractors. Most of the trade was between Australia and New Guinea. America had little foreign investment. Very few American citizens except for missionaries who were scattered all over the place. Little pockets of them. But just a handful. But the embassy was small, maybe six or eight officers.

Q: And the Japanese embassy?

ANDERSON: Bigger, a little bigger, Australia, gigantic. China was big. A lot of countries used Papua New Guinea as kind of their South Pacific regional headquarters kind of because it is the biggest and most important country. So yeah, a small diplomatic community.

Q: Did you notice what some of the other countries were doing in public affairs?

ANDERSON: Sure. Australia of course, you couldn't miss them. They were quite active, especially in education. They had huge scholarship programs. Training programs. Consultants in all the ministries. But I think we did some of the more original creative things on a miniscule budget. China didn't do much. Indonesia tried to do things because they shared a border. But that is touchy again because the Indonesian side of New Guinea is Papua Irian Jaya. And then in a UN plebiscite joined Indonesia. The secessionist movement, I mean there is a small movement to this day that wanted to make that independent. They did not want to be under Indonesia. So, there is tension on that front.

Q: By November, '86 Ambassador Bierman comes to post. Did he have a particularly different style of management from Ambassador Gardner?

ANDERSON: Ambassador Gardner was a career political officer ambassador. Ambassador Bierman was a brand-new political appointee. He was enthusiastic, listened

to his staff. I always respected him for that. He knew he didn't know the Foreign Service; he didn't know diplomacy. He was effective too in a different way. I enjoyed working with both of them. Both were excellent. As I said, the morale was good. In a small embassy you have to work together. The Ambassador had a separate house; the DCM had a separate house, but everybody else lived in a compound, so you were really thrown together. Plus, you are isolated. The big deal was to go to Australia, to Cairns and the barrier reef and all of that, but even that was a long way.

Q: Doesn't sound like there were enough people for a good baseball game.

ANDERSON: No baseball at all there. They are cricket, soccer, and rugby. It is British and Australian influenced. Not much knowledge of American culture there.

The one other thing I should mention is I think one or two, there are only one or two PAOs after me. I don't know if it was the end of USIA or the start of the State Department consolidation; they abolished the PAO position entirely in Papua New Guinea. So that was too bad. That was part of the challenges of small posts.

Q: It was a great training post.

ANDERSON: Great training post. Not only was there no USAID, there was no PD at all. It was just too expensive, and we had budget cuts, and people said, "Ahh, somebody else can cover it." It was too bad. It was sad to see those small posts, where you could do things, disappear. It was all part of the massive budget cuts we took in the late 90's.

Q: In 1987 that tour ends, and I think David Lambert replaced you in Papua New Guinea. Your next assignment is the embassy in New Delhi. You are moving from a very small post to obviously a very large one. How did you get this job?

ANDERSON: India was a fabulous assignment. I went to New Delhi as the information officer or embassy spokesman or press attaché. I always said I had three titles, which was great. But I had two offices there which used to drive me nuts. I was in the embassy close to the ambassador and the rest of the country team. Then halfway across town was the American Center and we had a wonderful full-service library and cultural center right downtown in the heart of New Delhi. That is where all the other public diplomacy USIS at the time, all the other staff were there. So, I was kind of the lone outpost, me and two FSNs (Foreign Service National) in the embassy. Yet I was the embassy spokesperson and the countrywide press officer. So, part of my staff was at the American Cultural Center halfway across town, and the other part of my staff was at the embassy. I would spend half my time commuting back and forth. Every morning I would brief the ambassador on the media and then we would have country team or mini-country team meeting. Then I would do my narrow embassy work. It was a huge embassy. Complex issues. Then most afternoons I would hop in the embassy shuttle and race across town and work with my other staff on kind of the country wide press things coming out of the American Center. We had a huge staff. We had a magazine. We had a printing press. We had a designer. A photographer and audio-visual service. It was a wonderful full service.

Q: It sounds like India was one of the largest USIA operations.

ANDERSON: No question about it. I think it was the largest. USIA India altogether by far was the largest in terms of people. We had a huge staff. We were in four different locations.

Q: Now if you were the press spokesman you probably worked very closely with the political section and the ambassador. Who was Ambassador at the time you arrived?

ANDERSON: OK, I was in India twice. The first time I arrived I had three ambassadors. The first was a veteran career diplomat, John Gunther Dean, a very prominent well-known ambassador. I think he had been in Cambodia, Lebanon, and I believe one or two other places as ambassador. He was one of our topmost senior ambassadors. He was there for part of my first tour.

Then we had a political appointee. The Indian expert was fortunately named John Hubbard. Professor Hubbard was president of the University of Southern California and had been a friend or acquaintance of President Reagan, and he had been a USAID India officer serving in India in the ‘50s. And he was an expert on British colonial history. So he knew all about the Raj and the British colonial history period, plus he was a wonderful educator who had been at USC for years. He just passed away about a year ago. I understand he was teaching into his 90’s I believe. He was an interim appointment if I recall. I don’t think he was ever confirmed by the senate. I will have to check on that. Then Reagan left office and we got a new career ambassador Bill Clark, who if I recall had been DCM in Japan and was really an East Asia hand, professional, very businesslike, and hard working. Later became Assistant Secretary of the East Asia Bureau

Q: Clark arrived on December 22, 1989.

ANDERSON: Right, we overlapped just briefly for some months. So it was interesting, three ambassadors in three years. It was an interesting time to be in India because the old India - the leader of the third world and the nonaligned movement, the socialistic India central planning, the India of Gandhi and Nehru - was starting to change. That was very noticeable. It was interesting to be there during the slow early days of that change. The opposition parties were finally in power. The dominant Congress party of Nehru and Indira Gandhi lost the elections. So, part of the time I was in India the opposition was in power and we had I think two different prime ministers. There might have been three in the three years I was there, but there was not a lot of change. It was interesting to see a non-Congress party government in power there. The big issues as always concern nuclear policy. Pakistan-India relations, always tense. They were tense at that time. The U.S. was just really trying to get a grip on India and see if we could change things there, because India had been such a prickly country. It claimed to be nonaligned, but it was really tilted towards the Soviet Union. So there was a lot of anti-U.S. sentiment. The media was heavily leftist influenced. That was all starting to really change while I was there. It was

an interesting time to be there. The Indian economy was just starting to open up a wee bit.

I recall a huge raging issue was should Pepsi cola be allowed into India. Pepsi and Coca Cola were not in India. India disliked foreign influences and did not want foreign investment. They had kicked Coca Cola, IBM and other prominent western companies out of India. But when I was there, after many years of heated battle and media debate and a lot of local sensitivities, India allowed the first American soft drink company to come back into India since Coke had been booted out. Remember the Indian government wanted the Coke formula, and Coke said sorry we can't do that. And Coke left, as did IBM. The Indian government insisted that Pepsi come in and not just make sugary drinks to sell to the rising middle class, but that they invest in agriculture, because Pepsi owned the big potato chip company. Frito Lay is Pepsi I think. Frito Lay and Doritos and all those junk food are agricultural products. Pepsi lo and behold, said sure, we will invest in Indian agriculture to make potato chips and related food products plus the soft drink. That was the package. So Pepsi came in and there was no trouble. But that was a big, huge breakthrough. The embassy spent lots of time working on that issue, trying to pry open the India economy.

Q: What other data points suggested that this transition was underway?

ANDERSON: Actually, the most dramatic things happened the year or so after I left. That is when India had the huge foreign exchange crisis and was almost broke. Then it changed its foreign investment policy and liberalized its economy under the current prime minister, who was then minister of finance. Manmohan Singh was the minister of finance. He understood the changing world economy and globalization, and that India simply had to change. But that came a year or two after I left.

Q: Now you are the press spokesman. You must have interacted with the Indian press regularly.

ANDERSON: Oh yes. Wonderful Indian press. Huge, feisty, free, often irresponsible, but very lively and vibrant. Yeah, we did lots with the press. They were constantly talking to us. We did briefings and press conferences and exclusive interviews and by-liners and answered their questions. But even then, the press, I would say, housed real elements of anti-Americanism. I remember there was even one newspaper that was just vehemently anti-U.S. and was believed to be anti-Soviet influenced and funded. They constantly spread disinformation about the U.S. So, we were always fighting those battles on the propaganda front. Remember this was the Cold War period too. There was a strong Soviet presence in India. I forget some of the disinformation stories. One was body parts. Remember that big scandal, the allegation that America was dealing in body parts. Soviet disinformation, but that was big in Indian newspapers and could be traced back to disinformation. But there were a number of just anti-U.S. issues that would just pop up from time to time.

Q: Like?

ANDERSON: Let me think specifically. Well one, we were pro-Pakistan back then, that we were tilted toward Pakistan, which was the case. We were friendlier to Pakistan at the time. Kashmir was a huge, disputed territory. They were always trying to drag us into Kashmir, get us involved, get us to comment, pull the U.S. in somehow into that highly emotional issue, a no-win issue for us.

All kinds of trade disputes all the time. And then what else, trade, then I think just the general atmosphere that India was a leader of the nonaligned world and they just weren't going to kowtow to the west. There was an anti-colonial feeling. Very strong then. Remember that India, Indonesia, Yugoslavia, Ghana, and China were all part of the nonaligned movement. It was a formal grouping of countries that claimed not to be tilted. But India in fact was tilted toward the Soviets. No question about it. They bought weapons from the Soviet Union. They got aid from the Soviet Union and kind of voted in the UN in the Soviet bloc often against us.

Q: Now what does the job of the embassy press spokesman look like? What would be a typical day?

ANDERSON: Hmmm, typical day, wake up very early and read. What you need to know about India is that the English press is very strong and influential. And, India is a multilingual society. There are ten official languages. But English is really the medium of communication between the elites. Most journalists spoke good English. Government people all spoke English. They were all very well educated. English was kind of the lingua franca between different parts of India. North India may speak Hindi and parts of south India may speak Tamil or Telugu or dozens of other languages. But the unifying language was English among the elites. So the media was heavily English influence. But then there would be the Hindi press, the Urdu press and all of the others. So we would try to monitor the huge Indian press.

We would do a press summary each day. Every morning at 8:00 each day I would brief the ambassador. This continued, it was quite unique in India. The ambassadors liked to get a press briefing. I don't know why. It was quite unusual compared to other countries where the press officer would brief the ambassador like one on one with one FSN and the press officer and the ambassador and sometimes the political officer and a few others sometimes. But it was a morning ritual. Ambassadors in India all felt it was important to know what the media was saying. So we had to get up early and quickly scramble and start summarizing the key issues the ambassador needed to know about to start the day. Then he would go to his country team and do all of his regular business, but the day started with press briefings. It was an exhausting job because it never ended. It started early in the morning. There were lots of activities and then I would run over to the American center and manage my other staff over there. Then I would frequently do stuff at night. There were always things we were doing at the ambassador's house or cultural events or media events that you would get invited to. It was a very interesting, exhausting and terrific post because you had real responsibility.

You were dealing with serious tough issues. Another issue was that India was testing missiles at the time. Another highly sensitive issue, tech transfer issue, and nonproliferation issue. So that was a big sensitive policy issue we had with India. We were trying to pressure them to give up the nuke and stop transferring high tech stuff. But there were lots of issues with high-tech stuff all the time.

Q: And of course your day may have included going to the other sections, political, economic, and what not for briefings.

ANDERSON: We were all in that wonderful embassy in New Delhi. It was fabulous. It was designed by, it looks like the Kennedy Center because it was the model for the Kennedy Center. Wonderful, award winning, you are going to ask me who was the architect who did the Kennedy Center. I can't remember but I will. Whoever did the Kennedy Center did the embassy in New Delhi. But he did the New Delhi embassy before he did the Kennedy Center. The reason for that is Mrs. Kennedy visited India in 1962 I believe with her sister. President Kennedy did not accompany them. But she razzled and dazzled by India and fell in love with the U.S. embassy. So when President Kennedy was assassinated, I think President Johnson asked her if we have a memorial, if we do the Kennedy Center who would you like to be the architect to do it. She said the guy who did the U.S. embassy in New Delhi. So even to this day it is a wonderful landmark historic embassy building. So, I had the privilege of working there. It was a wonderful building.

Anyway, I communicated with the political counselor right down the hall, we worked closely together. The ambassador was right above me. I was constantly with the economic and political sections. Science, we had a huge science program in India. That was one of the areas in which we did cooperate. We also had a gigantic PL-480 program that went on for like 20 years. The United States donated wheat to India and the proceeds of the sale went to funding bilateral projects. So we had a ton of money to spend on science, technology, education, and culture. Megabucks from the PL-480 fund that continued for years.

Q: You were saying you were one of a number of USIA officers in place at that time. Who was the boss?

ANDERSON: The PAO was Len Baldiga in the latter part. The first part was when I first got there it was Jim McGinley. Jim McGinley was PAO initially. He was a career officer, and when Jim left it was Len Baldiga. For both of them, being PAO in New Delhi was one of the gems of the Foreign Service. They were both at the top. They were senior Foreign Service. There were constituent posts. You had a full-service operation and not just New Delhi, but you had a huge operation in Calcutta, in Chennai which was Madras at the time and in Bombay which is now Mumbai. So you had three consulates plus New Delhi and they all had American centers, public libraries and huge staffs and the capability of doing everything. Radio, photography, art culture, it was fabulous. You had the human resources to really do things. We did all kinds of things. India was important. It was well funded, and it was just a terrific place to be posted.

Q: What did this exercise in soft power look like? What kinds of programs?

ANDERSON: Well, when I was there the first time, we had a public library. We brought in speakers, wonderful speakers. We brought in cultural groups. Sometimes very huge, like I think we had the philharmonic there once. Jazz groups, performers of all kinds, writers, intellectuals, government spokespeople. Any PD tool we had at the time in India back in those days. We had survey research. India is one of the most surveyed documented public opinion posts we have anywhere in the world. That has continued to this day. Remember India was a gigantic country, not aligned. Huge. Initially got a lot of U.S. Aid historically. Green revolution. We gave lots of aid, saved India in the 50's. We poured lots of development money into India. We had a big impact on the early days of their science and space program. It was always seen as a very important public diplomacy venue that we had to be there.

Q: If it was so large and important, does that mean that each consulate also had a PAO?

ANDERSON: Oh of course, a PAO and one or two other American officers plus maybe ten FSNs in each consulate and a public library and an auditorium. Those consulates were bigger than many posts. Bombay is 16 million people alone. So, if you take the surrounding area, the consular district is bigger than most countries by far. So, the challenge in India was always who do you reach. There were a billion people there. How much time do you spend? What language do you use to communicate with them? What do you do to make a difference in a country that large? So, PD did a lot with young people in universities, plus all the traditional journalist elites.

Q: But you are also saying there is quite a bit of competition with the Soviets.

ANDERSON: That was starting to wane while I was there.

Q: Perhaps because the Soviet Union would dissolve in about two years?

ANDERSON: It was just at the end of the cold war. The handwriting was sort of on the wall. But the Indian foreign policy didn't change while I was there. What did change was the Indian people who were waking up to the wider world. Young Indians wanted to be more involved. They wanted more television. Also, when I was there the first time if I had my dates right, all broadcasting, radio and TV was government of India run. That started to change when I was there too in that they allowed some private broadcasting. Now today India has a zillion private TV channels and internet and cable TV and everything. But back then, it was all India radio and Dur Darchon, government television. It was terrible. It was propaganda, no you couldn't get American stuff on. No, it was your third world…

Q: Would a typical TV show be <u>Dallas</u>?

ANDERSON: They had very limited American programming, very limited. And no independent news at all and no foreign news. It was all government ministry of information run. That changed. India today is just booming with all kinds of private media. But the press in India to its credit is independent and privately owned and quite lively.

Q: One of the things that certainly came to your attention at the time is that in August 1988 Ambassador Rayfield and President Zia of Pakistan were in a plane crash in Pakistan. I presume that was heavily covered.

ANDERSON: Huge.

Q: What was their take on that?

ANDERSON: A lot of conspiracy theories. It was tense. Nobody knew who did it at the time. That was a huge issue and rattled the nuclear tensions on both sides and the finger pointing. That was a huge issue.

Q: It sounds to me like your workday pretty much kept you in New Delhi.

ANDERSON: It did. I was kind of trapped. I did a little but not much. In part it wasn't too needed because you did have the consulates which had PD USIS at the time, PD operations. So they monitored the media and they ran their own programs. They got money from New Delhi and coordination and policy guidance. But they were running quasi-independent operations regionally. India has huge regional differences. Different languages, cultures, traditions. Bombay for example is the financial center of India, like the Wall Street of India. So economics is more important over there. New Delhi is the government, the bureaucracy, foreign policy centralized. Calcutta is kind of the intellectual artistic, leftist politics. They had a communist government throughout the whole time I was there, the chief minister was a communist.

Q: Now you are saying the PAO, Jim McGinley and Leon Baldyga were senior USIA officers. Here you are on your third tour, and you are with the ambassador every day. What was it like to work with him?

ANDERSON: I had to learn a bit. One thing I had to learn was to keep your supervisor informed. I spent a lot of time keeping the PAO and we had a deputy then, a deputy PAO who was more senior than me. Their office was at the American center across town. I was at the embassy in close proximity to the ambassador all the time. So the Poor PAO was always trying to catch up, to keep up to date, trying to find out what was going on. That was a frustrating challenge for him because he was physically out of the embassy. That is a huge burden. He would spend half of his day running back and forth. He would have to come to the country team all the time. I think we met daily if I recall or maybe three times a week. I had first crack at the ambassador everyday alone with one FSN that the PAO did not have. But you learn to work with your PAO. We got along well. I obviously did well. I got promoted. We had a good working relationship, close. But it was

frustrating because he was always wanting more information. Things develop so quickly. You are doing press guidance on something and you can't just stop everything and say Oops I have got to brief the PAO. He is busy with a zillion other things managing a huge operation. You work that out.

Q: You came to the end of the tour in New Delhi in 1990. I want to go back to 1989. Tiananmen Square to the north of you. Fall of the Berlin Wall to the west of you. How did these events play in India?

ANDERSON: Gosh I would say that has almost no impact in part because India is a democracy. India has free speech. Remember China is close to Pakistan. China was not close to India. The two countries had border disputes. I don't remember that Tiananmen Square had much media impact. My guess is the Indian media flaunted it and the Indian government kept its mouth shut because Pakistan shared a border with India. Of course, the fall of the Berlin Wall had a huge impact on India because suddenly their best friend who gave them, sold them weapons at cheap prices and with whom they had barter trade and all that just collapsed. I think that shocked people. But the great contradiction in India is that it is a democracy and always has been. That is its great strength, and yet it was tilted to the Soviet Union. That was Realpolitik in those days. Of course I think that did psychologically have an impact on the leaders of India because the world changed overnight. Meanwhile globalization is just racing forward, so India if it were going to be a player had to be a part of that. India had to adjust its economy, had to start liberalization to compete. No longer could they rely on others.

Q: The nonaligned movement meant nothing.

ANDERSON: There was nothing to be nonaligned against. It collapsed, although it continues to this day. It doesn't have the relevance obviously that it does now. India today is in G-20. The international economy, booming economy.

Q: For your fourth tour you stay in South Asia and move over to Pakistan next door after three years in India. You are stationed in Pakistan from about the summer of 1990 to 1992. You were the PAO in the constituent post in Karachi.
?
ANDERSON: Yep. Back then we were called Branch PAOs. It was still USIS. We were a branch only.

I was an information officer in an embassy, and I moved to being the PAO at a consulate. But Karachi is a huge city, very interesting, a huge place. Again it was interesting. I had my own shop. The Ambassadors then, we had two of them. One was Ambassador Bob Oakley up in Islamabad. He was there for about a little over half of my tour. Then he was replaced by another career diplomat, Nicholas Platt who I think came from the Philippines most recently. But we had two highly experienced career diplomats.
Then in Karachi I worked for two consuls general (CG). Both were career diplomats. One was Joe Melrose and then he was replaced in the latter part of my time there by Richard Falk. I had so many bosses in Pakistan. In Karachi there was the CG and the deputy

DPAO. Then in Islamabad I had the country PAO and the Deputy. I would report to the deputy, and then of course I had the ambassador. So I had five bosses when I was PAO in Karachi.

But in reality, you were quite independent in Karachi. It was a good assignment. A big lively port city. Kind of like the New York of Pakistan or the Bombay of India, the Bombay of Karachi. Again, we had a cultural center. We had a library, a pretty good sized staff. Also I had programs in two other interesting cities under me. One was Hyderabad where we had an American Center again, small but it was an American Center. Then a little town that wasn't very well known, but now it is infamous. That was a place called Quetta. Everybody knows Quetta today, but Quetta is a border town far away. We had a tiny mini library there, like a reading room. It was in the Serena Hotel. It was actually in a hotel there. The best and really the only western style hotel. We were there for security reasons. Unfortunately during my time in Karachi I had to close both Hyderabad and Quetta, due not to security although that was a factor, but again it was the budget.

USIA had huge budget cuts. People in Washington said we don't need these small places; we don't need cultural centers. Let's retreat, pull behind embassy walls or big consulate walls and forget about these outposts. They are not important really; we don't need them. So I had to cut both of those. I would travel to those places but it was very painful. I had to fire people and literally close our libraries and give out books away. That was painful. Very, probably the toughest thing I had to do anywhere was shutting down our branches. I think today if we had been in Quetta for the last 15 or 20 years, we would know more about that part of Pakistan and its next-door neighbor Afghanistan.

We also closed a place called Peshawar. We used to have an American there and a library. We shut that down at about the same time.

Q: When was this, what was the date?

ANDERSON: Early '90s. Whenever I was there, what were the dates?

More towards the end of my tour. Those decisions were budget driven. Then although security was getting much more difficult. By the time I left Karachi whenever we traveled, we went with a security escort. Say I would go to Hyderabad for a cultural visit or to a university or something. We would have a security escort. Consulate security and then local police would always escort us because the law and order problem would always increase. Then if my history is correct the Iraq war broke out when I was there, and there was a lot of growing anti-Americanism in the country.

Q: You have mentioned growing anti-Americanism in India. When you moved over to Pakistan before the Gulf War, was those same atmospherics there or was there a different approach to the Americans on the part of the Pakistani press?

ANDERSON: There was anti-Americanism in both countries but for different reasons. In Pakistan it was more linked to our Middle East, Iraq, Iran policy. Remember this was pre

9/11. All of this was pre 9/11, so we weren't talking about the war on terrorism and things like that. There was disagreement in both India and Pakistan against U.S. foreign policy but for quite different reasons. Then you had the India-Pak Factor. India thought we were tilted toward Pakistan which in fact we were. That changed later on when we moved to become a strategic partner of India, but that is later in my career. And now relations with Pakistan couldn't be any worse. And relations with India are the best they probably have ever been. So, relationships do change. That was interesting again because I was able to see some of those changes. When I was in Karachi the main security issue had been more to do with internal issues. The Mohajirs who were the Indian Muslims who left at partition and moved to India. They were running politics in Karachi. There was a lot of internal tension and fighting and violence and it was just unsafe to travel parts of Karachi because of the sectarian intra politics within Pakistan. We didn't want to get caught in the middle of that.

Q: Now as you mentioned, Iraq invades Kuwait in August 1990. Kuwait is freed in the spring of '91. How did that play in Pakistan and what impact did it have on your work?

ANDERSON: It influenced security a bit because there were a lot of fears that the U.S. could become a target in that. But much of the anti-Americanism was in Islamabad where we had the embassy and where the government was. Karachi is kind of like Bombay and New York. It is capitalism, a more sophisticated audience, less government influence, and more westernized; Karachi. The bureaucrats in Islamabad were the more cultural types like in Lahore when we had the consulate.

Q: Then what would you say were some of your public affairs successes in Karachi?

ANDERSON: Oh we just did lots of people to people things, cultural groups, university things, speakers, Fulbright, all of the exchange programs. We did lots with them.

Q: Who was your target audience in Pakistan?

ANDERSON: Then it was traditional elites, editors. The thing about Pakistan is that the main media is in Karachi. The major media, the big media groups are in Karachi, not in the capital city and not in Lahore. So, in that sense the consulate dealt more with publishers and opinion influencers, think tank people, universities, In many ways as much as Islamabad did frankly. Islamabad you had the bureaucracy, the government-to-government links, but you didn't have the intellectuals, the artists, the journalists you had in the biggest city in the country, Karachi. I felt lucky to be in Karachi. It was very vibrant, lively, easy to talk to people. Vibrant socially, you get invited to people's houses. The business community is huge there, so you get more interaction with the landlords and the landowners and the big bankers and all those people. You were part of that elite group, and of course issues like Muslim outreach. Those were quite irrelevant because everybody in Pakistan is a Muslim. It is a Muslim country a Muslim government, a Muslim society. Everybody you talk to is Muslim, so you didn't talk about religion, like we do in some countries today. Of course, Pakistan

was not drawn into the politics of Afghanistan and Iraq and all of that. This was all pre 9/11, pre war on terrorism, and pre Iraq II.

Q: I forgot. Did Pakistan offer troops in the liberation of Kuwait?

ANDERSON: Let me check on that. I don't think they did. Let me check. That is crucial. I should know that.

Q: Now Bill Lenderking was the PAO in Islamabad with constituent posts in Lahore, Peshawar and Karachi. How was he to work for?

ANDERSON: Terrific. Left us alone, He visited once or twice. I mean if the PAO had faith in you, you communicated all the time. The telephones were good. You were in constant communication. Your budget was set by him so he had that control. Broad policy came out of Washington and Islamabad. So as long as you knew. PAO in Karachi was more of running and managing programs independent cultural press operations but your guidelines all came from Islamabad and your budget came from USIA via Islamabad. So, they knew what you were doing but they weren't breathing down your neck.

Q: You mentioned the very attractive embassy in New Delhi, what were the diplomatic facilities in Karachi like?

ANDERSON: It was an old highly vulnerable consulate that had been attacked and subsequently was attacked several times. Housing was good. I had a terrific representation house. The consul general had one of the great embassy houses in the world. It was a wonderful old mansion. Both CG's were terrific. They included PD in representation. We could use the house, and it was right almost across the street from the consulate so it was a superb location. But the other officers lived in several compounds around the city in the more westernized parts of town near the Americans school or whatever. It was good.

Q: And you were saying the consuls general, Melrose and Faulk understood PD's requirements and were supportive.

ANDERSON: Yes, good. Again, it was a small community there. Karachi is a huge city of 14 million, but the consulate was small and because of the war in Kuwait, security tightened up noticeably during my time there. In fact, I recall the war broke out when I was on leave in Sri Lanka on a weeks' vacation. I got trapped down there. They wouldn't allow me back in post for a couple of days, because they just didn't know. State Department and the embassy. If you were out of the country you stayed out of the country for a while. They were assessing the threats and the dangers. Nobody knew what was going to happen. There could have been terrorism. There could have been anti U.S. demonstrations. That did not happen, but nobody knew initially. And of course, shortly after I left there was a terrible assassination killing officers in Karachi in the shuttle bus that I took every day. That happened just after I left. They were ambushed just coming

into the consulate in the morning. We will check our history but I think Two embassy officers were killed and one wounded shortly after I left. [Ed: Gary C. Durell and Jacqueline Van Landingham were killed on March 8, 1995, in Karachi when three armed men ambushed a U.S. Consulate van.]

Q: How large was the diplomatic community in Karachi and were you aware of their public diplomacy programs?

ANDERSON: I would say no, the diplomatic community in Karachi was not large. It doesn't stick in my mind as being big at all. Of course, everybody was in Islamabad, the capital city. India had a consulate but they were strictly kept on a leash by Pakistan. Who else was there? The Soviets were there. The Soviets had a cultural center. That brings back one thing: we actually cooperated with the Soviet Cultural Center once. We did a film festival together and if I remember correctly the Soviet Consul hosted it, because the Soviets were falling apart and they wanted to communicate with the U.S. I think we partnered with the Soviet Union on a film series. I remember the film we got from Hollywood through the MPA through USIA. What was that Dolly Parton film?

Q: Steel Magnolias I think.

I will double check. I think it was Steel Magnolias. We got a film through Hollywood for this local film festival that we did with the Soviets. I think it was shown at the Soviet cultural center which was kind of a breakthrough. But the Soviets had a presence in Karachi, I am sure the Chinese did. India.

Q: Were there western journalists that would come through from time to time.

ANDERSON: They would come through. Getting back to India for a minute. India was the regional foreign media hub. So New Delhi had all of the foreign correspondents covering virtually all of South Asia. They would be based in New Delhi but would cover Sri Lanka, Nepal Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the trouble in Afghanistan. So you had big outfits: Time Magazine, Newsweek, New York Times, Washington Post, AP [Associated Press], they were all in New Delhi, so I got to know all of those journalists. That was part of my job as embassy spokesman. So I knew Steve Coll before he was Steve Coll; before he won his two Pulitzers. He was the Washington Post guy there. So I got to know all of those people very well.

Q: Did any of them cycle through Karachi?

ANDERSON: Yeah, sure they did occasionally, but they would more likely go to Islamabad unless they were doing a business story. But we did not get many journalists in Pakistan, no. They would fly over to go to Afghanistan or the war. Many of the Delhi people were assigned to the Gulf War, right. But we did not have, we had stringers in Karachi but I don't recall any American journalists in Karachi.

Q: Now Karachi as a major port probably has some kind of naval facilities. Did you have any U.S. ship visits?

ANDERSON: I am sure we probably did because we had close military ties with Pakistan. None come to mind, but I think we did. Of course, any ships that would come, would come to Karachi. The major port, I think virtually the only port of Pakistan is Karachi. It is huge and the navy headquarters is there. Then we had a big AID program but that was run out of Islamabad. Karachi was more the commercial and economic reporting and the media center for the country. But the foreign policy stuff was done out of Islamabad.

Q: Did you find yourself frequently entertaining and meeting the local media people?

ANDERSON: Yeah, I would say we had good relations. In many ways the Pakistani were easier to work with than the Indian journalists. They weren't so feisty and negative. The Pakistanis were more accessible. They were always willing to talk to you and we partied. It was good.

Q: What was their training?

ANDERSON: Let me just mention, I distinctly recall working with a number of Pakistani journalists. One journalist, in particular, has gone on to bigger and better things. When I first met her, she was a young editor of the top newsmagazine in Pakistan. She was a young female named Shari Raman. Shari Raman is now the new Pakistani ambassador to Washington. Really talented. She was close to Benazir Bhutto in the opposition and left journalism and became political advisor to Benazir, became a member of parliament, and an outspoken advocate of human rights. Very controversial among say the extremists in Pakistan. They don't like her. She is too liberal; she is too tolerant, and she is against things like blasphemy. She has now been named the new Pakistani ambassador to Washington, a very talented woman. But I knew her when she was just a journalist. So yeah I got to know all the journalists quite well. They were accessible, friendly. They didn't agree with us on a lot of things, but they were always courteous and accessible

Q: What were some of the major newspapers and their approach to issues?

ANDERSON: Well, the two biggest papers in Pakistan were both based in Karachi. One is Dawn, the Dawn group, and the other one is the Pakistan Times, the major Urdu national daily. Both are headquartered in Karachi, and both have English editions and both have Urdu editions. The big difference between India and Pakistan is that English in India is much more widely spoken and much more influential in media terms. In Pakistan English is spoken only by the really elite, educated, and therefore the dominant media is in Urdu. To reach the masses you need to be in Urdu. So, the biggest Urdu paper was in Karachi. They weren't vehemently anti-U.S. at the time. I think they disagreed with us on the war, but again it was pre 9/11 so you didn't have the West is against us and you are out to destroy Islam. Those issues weren't really around. We respected the people. It was different times.

Q: One of the things we haven't touched on was did you receive any language training in the course of your career?

ANDERSON: No. Just Indonesian. I did not have to in India; there were language designated officers of course, and as there were in Pakistan, but neither job I had required anything but English. That has changed a wee bit, but it has changed quite a bit in Pakistan. It is still a huge problem in Pakistan. Urdu is needed, and there just aren't that many Urdu speakers. We have expanded just so rapidly in Pakistan and there are so many PD officers there now, so many officers and you are only there a year. It is a real challenge to the Foreign Service. The balance between getting competent people that are available and experienced for a tough job versus do you have the budget and do you have the time to train people in a tough language. So again, my great respect is for the local hires, the FSNs that are crucial, and even more so today in Pakistan. India, English if you are educated you speak English quite well. In Pakistan, definitely not. The English skills are much weaker there except for the super elites.

Q: I noticed that the staffing of the embassy in Islamabad included a refugee section. That would be related to the Soviet war in Afghanistan, wouldn't it?

ANDERSON: It must be. Let me double check on that. We did not have that in Karachi of course. Or it might have been the winding down of that period. The Consulate in Peshawar did much more of that reporting. Although there probably was an office in Islamabad, refugees were not a big media issue.

Q: Was the press talking about the refugees and the anti-Soviet activities in Afghanistan.

ANDERSON: That was all winding down. I think if I recall they were supportive of the U.S. policy. We were friends with Pakistan. I think we were supportive of it and Pakistan was supportive and helpful and cooperative.

Q: Now your next assignment in the summer of 1992 was Washington. How did it come up or was it just a matter of the rules that said you have not been to Washington yet?

ANDERSON: The wonderful thing about USIA was that it was small enough that you did get mentoring. You knew people. You knew the senior officers. For example, I remember Henry Kato who just passed away the other day. Ambassador Kato was director of USIA. He came to Karachi. He was supposed to be there for two days and then I can't remember what happened. The airlines went on strike, or something happened. He got stuck in Karachi, so over the next day or two, I got to talk to him. You had that kind of contact all the time with people. You would get Washington visitors from USIA or from the embassy. You knew the people and they would go back. You kept in touch with people. There was a real, not the old boy system. I think that is too harsh and unfair. It was just a small enough agency that you did get known by corridor reputation and you knew the senior people. If you were relatively junior. In this case I went to the area office, the NEA office of USIA.

NEA at that time covered both Middle East and South Asia. So, India and Pakistan were part of NEA. It was Near East and South Asia, NESA I think it was called. I had a great job there as policy analyst. Fabulous. So, as the policy officer in NEA, I was our liaison officer to State Bureau of Public Affairs and the area officers within State. Our area director in USIA was Kent Obi. He had replaced Bill Rugh, Ambassador Rugh who went on to be ambassador once or twice. He was a real Middle East expert.

Within USIA each area geographic bureau had a policy officer who was liaison to State PA, and the area offices within State and the various sections of USIA to make sure that policy issues were followed and understood within the materials and the programming that was being done by USIA. A great job, again more coordination and liaison but I got to meet everybody in VOA. We cleared all the VOA editorials and things like that. We signed off on policy and guidance. It was good, very interesting work for two years. I got to know USIA very well.

Q: Now, how big an office was that?

ANDERSON: The policy office or the NEA office within USIA? There were desk officers for the different counties. Several officers had multiple countries. There would be a desk officer for Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon. North Africa would have one or two officers handling that. So it was maybe 10 or 15 people.

Q: But this is not where someone decides, oh we have this singing gospel group, where do we want to send them?

ANDERSON: They would be the middle person, the liaison between the field and the office that does cultural programming within USIS. You would coordinate in weekly meetings. You had quite a lot of influence because you would sign off and approve requests, programs, materials, and cultural groups. That would all be done through the geographic bureau. So, they had a lot of power. The PAOs, their personnel evaluations were all done by the NEA director for the PAOs.

Q: Really, not the chief of mission.

ANDERSON: The chief of mission also did one. So, you got two EERs, one from Washington from your geographic bureau director or deputy and one from the ambassador or consul general. In Karachi I would have the consul general do one for State and I would also get one from USIA Washington. So, you would have two different EERs on you each cycle. That was good. The people in Washington controlled the budget and your assignment. The ambassador and the CG controlled what you did operationally and policy in your relations locally. That worked very well actually.

Q: What was Kent Obi like to work for?

ANDERSON: Fabulous. Terrific. He had been in Pakistan, I think. He was a really terrific cooperative, easy to work with kind of guy.

Q: Now the people who were the desk officers in this office. They were career USIA officers and this is just their Washington stint?

ANDERSON: Yes, Career PD. Then they would go back to Egypt as PAO or IO in Islamabad or Cairo or wherever. That structure has continued. It has transferred into State. It is now the PD office within the geographic bureaus. But what didn't continue is kind of the, of course there was no top management. That disappeared completely. Some of the kind of admin support and direct budget support no longer exists. It is channeled through State, so it is part of the 150 State budget.

Q: After all these tours overseas. What do you think you got out of being in Washington?

ANDERSON: Well one, was the policy exposure was priceless; two, just how the bureaucracy works. Whether you are in State or USIA, you are learning how Washington works. The inter-agency process, clearances. You become aware of the budget process, issues, problems, challenges. I think during that period the government was shut down. Isn't that the year we had a shut down once or twice during Clinton and Gingrich. I think so. I think that happened once or twice. [Ed: The United States federal government shut down from November 14 through November 19, 1995, and from December 16, 1995, to January 6, 1996, for 5 and 21 days, respectively.] So, of course you learned the big picture. You learned the global issues, regional issues. You learned that Papua New Guinea was not the center of the universe. That nobody really cared. You learned that nobody really knew where Karachi was. You learned all of those things which are important to put things into perspective.

Q: Now one of the things that you just mentioned. You are in Washington at a time of political transition. One administration is departing and another administration is coming in. On the State side the desks and the offices go through a process of summing up what they have been doing for the new administration. Did that sort of thing happen to you in this office?

ANDERSON: Yes. Policy papers and that were done. This was the transition from Bush to Clinton. Sure that happened. There was a time of transition. There was also,…I was fortunate to be in Washington doing the big Clinton Middle East initiative. So, I was detailed to the White House. This was like a dream assignment. I got seconded to the White House for the September 13, 1993, signing of the Middle East Peace Accords. Remember when Clinton brought the Israelis and the Palestinians together with the famous handshake between Arafat and Begin. That was the Israel-Palestinian agreement signed in 1993. I was in charge of the foreign press for that. I worked in the White House for about a week accrediting all the foreign journalists, and there were hundreds who wanted to come to the White House and see this big deal. It was a big, huge deal, and people were finally saying we have peace in the Middle East. So that was a great job. I

was assigned to the White House, I guess the press secretary's office. They had one advisor to Clinton who handled the foreign press for the press secretary. I worked with her. It was great, a wonderful job. They gave me a White House badge, and I could wander around. I remember once I think I was in the Rose Garden just wandering around, and Mrs. Clinton came through. You had access then, and they treated you, I remember it was very casual. I couldn't believe it. I am in the White House. And they accept you, and you had a badge, and you were kind of free to wander around. I thoroughly enjoyed my week there. It was hectic, long days and chaos, of course.

Q: What exactly were your duties, getting journalists to the right spot?

ANDERSON: I was kind of a liaison between the White House, our foreign press center which is in Washington over in the press building, and the posts. All of the countries wanted to send their journalists to Washington or get journalists accredited somehow so they could get into the handshake ceremony. So, they had to be accredited with special badges. It was a nightmare, horrible, but we survived.

Q: Any particular problems arose?

ANDERSON: Well just, you know, everybody wanting a press badge and how do you accredit them. How do you certify who they are, security checks. It all went very smoothly. It was huge, there was a major, that picture was a classic, it was orchestrated and Clinton was there to make sure hands touched. It was a big deal. Then some of my colleagues back at the office, I got them roped in. We needed escorts. Say Egypt would have ten journalists covering, or Israel would have 50, I forget the numbers. But they all needed some kind of escort. They couldn't be wandering around the White House and all that so you would escort them in, stay with them. Make sure they went to their assigned seating. They behaved and didn't stand up and protest or embarrass someone. There was quite a lot of orchestrating over the last couple of days. It was interesting and fun. I do remember the VOA editorials. It was always a challenge to clear those. The State Department had to clear them; USIA had to clear them. Then they went back to VOA.

Q: Was there any particular tension in that process?

ANDERSON: Of course, sure, always. Because VOA sees itself as being independent, which it is. It has a Congressional charter and yet it is part of USIA. It is supposed to represent our official views. That is what the editorials are, the official views of the U.S. government. They are identified that way. But on the Middle East, it was always the Middle East issues that were always a challenge. I think that process still continues today. They still do official editorials on VOA. But it was a struggle because we wanted it to be timely.

Then again, VOA editorials had word limits. They were always restricted, short, I mean like four paragraphs. And then day after day the middle east was a huge issue then and they tried what can you say new fresh different.

Q: Now, here you are in Washington with frequent liaison with State. Did your job require you to work with any other agencies in Washington or on the Hill? Now where was your office situated?

ANDERSON: Physically in USIA. Southwest Fourth Street, over by VOA, the old USIA building.

Q: So over by the Congress. Isn't the Longworth building close by and the State Department is on the other end of town. How did you conduct your business?

ANDERSON: Telephone. We were always on the telephone clearing stuff or fax. We had fax by then if I recall. But my contact would be with the Public Affairs Advisor in the NEA Front Office. As I recall it was Wendy Chamberlain and her deputy Richard LeBaron. They did all the press guidance. But the VOA would go through them. We were passing stuff all the time. It works frequently. We had constant contact. I got to know all of those people by phone. I didn't see much of them in person because it was a hassle going over to State. And State would never come over to USIA. That was, you just didn't do that. Never. You want to meet; you go to State.

There was a shuttle that went over there all the time, but it was faster by Fax. It was Fax and telephone, and then you know the internet came in while I was policy officer. You know who had internet first, way before USIA or State Department knew what it was. VOA. I distinctly remember VOA Middle East director, a guy named Dan Streeby, who went on to become senior in PD. He was the desk officer or VOA Middle East director. He said, "I have got this great have you seen this tool. Come on and look at it." So, several of us from that office traipsed over to VOA and saw an internet demonstrated. It was fabulous. That was about 1993 or so.

Q: Now one of the things VOA did from time to time was, take a survey, if you can hear this program send us a postcard. Were you on the policy side of that or was that kind of run on their initiative.

ANDERSON: VOA was always quasi-independent. I mean even when it was under the USIA director it was still a separate distinct bureau. They did their own polling. There would be liaison a little bit, but they were quite autonomous. And proud of it because they felt they were a media organization in many ways under their congressional mandate.

Q: You were in Washington from '92 to '94 for a two-year assignment. That was enough?

ANDERSON: That was enough! Come on. Who joins the Foreign Service to sit in Washington, right?

Q: In the summer of '94 you are assigned to Singapore. How did you get that assignment?

ANDERSON: You bid. It is an open bidding system. But again as policy officer I got to know all the senior people. I would often substitute for the director. I would go to the staff meetings that the director of USIA held. I would represent NEA because my boss or his deputy were on leave or sick. I would go to the senior meetings often, so I got to know senior people. They make the policy decisions and they are on the committees and promotions. Then I bid on it like anybody else.

Q: Now Singapore is small and mighty.

ANDERSON: Very popular post. One of the most bid on posts at least in PD of any job in the world. People love Singapore.

Q: How big was the PD office at that time?

ANDERSON: Two Americans only, very small. The embassy was quite big because again there are several regional offices there. FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) for example, was there covering all of Southeast Asia out of Singapore. So the embassy was bigger than one might think, but PD was only two officers when I started. When I left it was one. Again these budget cuts that crippled USIA in the mid to late 90's were coming in, and they were felt, and I felt it in Singapore. I had to close my library. I had to close and privatize our student advising service. We relocated into a brand-new embassy, so USIA as a separate office outside of the embassy disappeared, and we moved into the brand new embassy. That happened when I was there.

Q: What was this new embassy like?

ANDERSON: Huge. It was one of the first monsters; secure compliant with all of the security regulation embassies. Singaporeans said it looked like a prison. It was a monster. It was nice inside but it was cold. One of those first embassies built after Congress put all of those strict regulations on setback and all of that after the Lebanon bombing I think. So FBO [Office of Foreign Buildings]….

Q: That was in the 80s?

ANDERSON: Yeah but it took years to put those secure things into effect. It was a huge, nice building inside. Very nice, but we no longer had a public library, and we no longer did student advising directly. But what it did do was it merged everybody into the embassy so that coordination was much easier. FAA moved in. FCS (Foreign Commercial Service) moved into the embassy. USIS moved into the embassy, and it became a more consolidated, efficient whole of government operation in the new building, so that was good.

Q: Your title is still PAO?

ANDERSON: PAO because it was still USIA, USIS. It was the last USIS post I was in.

Q: What was the embassy like at that time? How was it organized; who was the ambassador?

ANDERSON: When I got there, no one. No one was the ambassador. We had a Chargé because it was about the time of the Michael Fay Caning case that had just ended. We did not have an ambassador during that period. So [Ralph Leo] "Skip" Boyce was the Chargé. He had been DCM and he moved up to Chargé pending a decision to send another ambassador out. That took time. That was also the transition to Clinton. [Ed: Boyce was Chargé from June 1993 to August 1994.]

I went to Singapore in '94. Right. The last Ambassador was Huntsman. [Ed: Ambassador John Huntsman departed post June 15, 1993]. When I arrived, Skip Boyse was Chargé. He was a career diplomat. His father had been in USIA so he knew all of what we did. The next ambassador after Skip was a political appointee by Clinton. A friend of Bill's. Very interesting, Timothy Chorba, a Washington lawyer who had studied with Bill Clinton at Georgetown. They were classmates. Mr. Chorba was a prominent Washington lawyer with Patton, Boggs and Blow I think, was the law firm. It was his first ambassadorship, but he was a friend of Bill's good access to the White house, and he had never been ambassador, never been to Singapore. But he again listened. He had a good DCM and a good staff and he listened. He did have to manage the fallout from the Michael Fay Caning case which did affect our relations for a year or so there.

Q: Why don't you do a little background there?

ANDERSON: Oh do I have to? I wasn't there. That was the infamous case well publicized internationally where you had a young American high school student. Not a child of an embassy kid, but he was an American student at the school. He and a friend or two spray painted a couple of things in Singapore and got caught. The Singapore government has strict regulations, rules about graffiti and things like that, vandalism. They were charged with vandalism. They were convicted and sentenced to caning under Singapore law. The U.S. government, President Clinton directly, if I recall, criticized the Singapore government, and thought it was too severe. Human rights got involved, and the Singapore government really stood up to the U.S. and justice Singapore style was done. Huge fury. The Media went ballistic. American media and Singapore for different reasons. It became a very emotional and controversial case. Singapore was well known for being strict, tough on law-and-order human rights. Not terribly democratic. So critics of Singapore leaped on this of course, and made a big deal of it as did the U.S. government officially. Then Singaporeans were overwhelmingly defensive and critical of the U.S. for trying to meddle in our internal affairs and tried to get this kid off. It was Singapore law and we follow the laws. Open court, justice prevailed and he should be caned. Within the American community I would say it was mixed opinion. Some people said Yeah, they were caught; they did it. They need to suffer. It is part of growing up. Others said this is terrible. How can you cane a poor American youth, a young boy. So anyway, it was interesting, and it gave rise in many ways to the whole debate within Asia led by Singapore of Asian values. That somehow Asia had different values than the West and the West could not impose its alien values on Asia. Asia is different. Asia is Asia and

they have their own values and laws and regulations, and the U.S. should not impose our standards on them. The Singapore government led that whole effort. It got heated and interesting at times. Anyway, it finally got resolved and we finally got an ambassador there, but relations did suffer. We opposed their policies and said so publicly. It did affect relations a bit, official relations. But Singapore is a wonderful friend, a good partner. Huge base for American businesses; huge multinational business center and a good ally on strategic and military issues.

Q: Now in your job as public affairs officer, did that encompass or was there a separate press spokesman?

ANDERSON: I was the only one. Come on we only had two officers and later eventually we only had one, so I was the spokesman, yeah.

Q: So again, you were talking to the western journalists coming through, the local Singapore reporters. How was the Singapore media compared to some of the others you have seen?

ANDERSON: Controlled. The Singapore press is not independent. What can I say? It was virtually one newspaper company, The Straits Times. But we had great access to them. I knew all the editors, and they would listen. They were friendly to us on foreign policy. Singapore wants the U.S. in the region. They want a strong military; they want our bases. When we were kicked out of the Philippines, Singapore stood up and said, "Hey come on over. We will let you have a navy logistics center in Singapore." So they gave us that facility. They gave us greater ship access and Singapore has always been a reliable partner on economic and regional security issues. Solid.

Q: So, Singapore was a pretty friendly environment in terms of bringing in speakers.

ANDERSON: Yes. They did not want us to lecture to them, but we brought lots of good speakers in. We didn't lecture them on human rights because that is a no-win situation. It was crystal clear we were not going to win that argument. We were not going to change the government of Singapore. It was still under Lee Kwan-yew, or he was still in the government. They had a clear policy. But there were lines between different issues. I think we could separate human rights, the Michael Fay case from regional security, from economic investment, and in those issues, we agree to a large measure.

Q: Singapore has been participating in USIA programs for a long time, Fulbrights, that sort of thing. I think there would be a fair alumni association of Fulbrighters and Humphrey….

ANDERSON: Actually a couple of comments. One, we had a long relationship on exchange programs including on Fulbright, the Singapore government funded one or two Fulbrighters each year to Harvard. Top of the line, they foot the bills. They nominated them. We reviewed and confirmed, made them Fulbrighters. Gave them like a book allowance and helped them get into Harvard, but the bill was paid by Singapore. That is a

terrific partnership on Fulbright. It is a win-win for both of our governments. Lots of Singaporeans, the best and the brightest went to the U.S. And didn't need our scholarships because they were quite affluent.

Q: Was the Asia Society operating in Singapore too?

ANDERSON: No. Asia was in the Philippines. They had an office in the Philippines. That was the Asia Foundation. The Asia Society had a Manila office and a Bombay India office, new when I was in both countries that started. Actually, Nick Platt became the head of the Asia Society and set up the office in Pakistan and the Philippines. The Asia Foundation; no, they weren't in Singapore. They were in the Philippines and Jakarta, and I think they were in Kuala Lumpur. But Singapore is too developed. It is a developed country. In contrast the Asia Foundation does more development work.

Q: And Singapore is not a third world country.

ANDERSON: I think at the time they did have, they might have had a regional person there covering the smaller countries from Singapore. When I was there I don't think they did, but they do now, the Foundation. But the Foundation does more development work and training and that, whereas Asia Society is more culture and policy.

Q: Here in the late 1990s Singapore was one of the very successful economies in Asia so I would think the USIA program for it might in fact look like a European program.

ANDERSON: It is. It was relatively small. Singapore is quite sophisticated, highly educated 100% English speaking, friendly to the U.S. basically. No question about it there. A strong friend. And hordes of Americans there. I mean every multinational corporation had their office in Singapore and many had their regional headquarters there. So, you had lots of bankers and ad agencies and marketing offices, and manufacturing - all in Singapore.

Q: As PAO would you have been a member of the American Chamber of Commerce?

ANDERSON: I was not a member but worked with them closely. They had a cultural committee and the AmCham would help work with us and fund things that we did. They were very generous, so it was a good partnership between the embassy and the AmCham on cultural events.

Q: Such as?

ANDERSON: AmCham had a cultural affairs committee, and they would raise their own money. Corporate members would donate, like I remember HBL [Ed: Pakistan based Habib Bank Limited?] for example had their regional headquarters in Singapore and they were extremely generous. We could tap that fund so if we had a cultural program, say we wanted to bring in say a jazz group, and we needed a little extra money or we didn't have the money but we had the group, we would go to the AmCham cultural committee which

I served on and they would often fund what we asked for. Because they needed help on how to spend this money. We would partner and do something jointly. Very good relationship and close. But the embassy rep on Am Cham would have been the commercial counselor and the economic officer, I think. But again, Singapore is so tiny you knew everybody. It is only 3-4 million people.

You mentioned the Fulbright association. We did start one when I was there. One of the best diplomats in the world is a Singaporean fellow named Ambassador Tommy Koh. He was ambassador to the UN. He was Singapore's ambassador to Washington. He is just a first-rate ambassador. Lo and behold he was a Fulbrighter. He went to Harvard on a Fulbright. So, when I got to Singapore I said, Hey, come on. Why don't we have a Fulbright association here with all these alumni around? I worked with Ambassador Koh to get a Fulbright association set up. He agreed, if I recall, to be the chairman or the honorary chairman, so I did get a Fulbright association going in Singapore. I believe it continues today. That is a good way to stay in touch with our alumni and recognize them and keep the partnership going.

Q: Because they can be good sources of information and good raconteurs.

ANDERSON: Oh, they were all prominent think tankers, academics, journalists, and foreign affairs people. Yeah, Singapore was a great place to be because the quality of their foreign affairs office is first rate. The diplomats are sharp, well educated, sophisticated, engaging, interested in the U.S. and plugged into a couple of great think tanks in Singapore. They have two or three first rate think tanks. They are doing good research. They do good publications. They have opinions on global issues that some countries just don't care about or have the capacity to focus on foreign affairs. So that is a blessing about being in Singapore.

Q: Did you have the opportunity to notice public affairs programs that other embassies were doing, the Japanese, British?

ANDERSON: Sure. The Brits had a huge British mission there. One of their biggest British consuls in the world is literally next door to the new U.S. embassy in Singapore. So yeah, they were very active. If I recall China was, Malaysia I am sure was, Indonesia I am sure, all of the surrounding countries.

Then Singapore to their credit, a lot of people over the years criticized Singapore for being a wasteland of culture and having no indigenous culture because it is multi-racial and made up of Malays, Chinese, and Indians who came from elsewhere and settled in Singapore. But the Singapore government is very active culturally. The ministry of culture had wonderful museums. First rate culture, first rate world class, and they were always very interested in getting more American performers, either commercial or unofficial. They spent lots of money on trying to create a cultural venue, a regional hub for culture and education. And just stimulating cultural diversity.

Q: What was one of the more successful American groups that…

ANDERSON: Oh you would ask me that. I will have to double check. I will come up with something specific. We were busy with the move to the new embassy. I was busy privatizing student advising. The first time that had ever happened anywhere in the world. USIA ordered me to close our student advising service that we had.

Q: What was the service doing?

ANDERSON: Giving free advice to students to try and get them to come to America, trying to get more foreign students from Singapore to come and study in America. So we do that around the world.

Q: Recommending schools?

ANDERSON: Sure, advising them, giving them free advice, and helping them jump through all the hoops of coming to an American university. It is complicated, testing and GRE and English and all the tests, and admission standards and explaining what we have, 3,000 universities or some such. So, we were doing that and were doing that in many embassies directly or as part of the Fulbright program depending on the country. But it takes money. So at the time we were moving into the new embassy, USIA was taking huge budget cuts in Washington.

I had to close our library and our advising service shut down. To keep student advising going, I said, why don't we try to privatize it. So we talked to Peterson's which was a big New Jersey based company, well known. They were interested in getting into the advising business commercially. They thought, hey, Singapore was an affluent community, English speaking, and very interested in sending students to America, so Singapore should work commercially. So we signed an agreement, a legal document, between USIA and Peterson Corporation of Princeton, New Jersey in which we would turn over lock, stock and barrel. Our advising service, our brand name, and we would recognize them as the official U. S. government advising service in Singapore. They had to comply with certain standards that we set. They had to give some free counseling. They had to have reference materials freely available, and they could charge modest fees for more detailed advising and counseling services. But they got our sanction, and initially they got our space, because we were still outside the embassy. So for I think it was about six months to a year they got our space rent free, because we had already paid for it outside of the embassy premises. They could not move into the embassy with us, that was not allowed. They were commercial, plus security regulations would not allow that. But the main factor was they were now commercial so they could charge, although that would have been the best solution frankly. They should have been right next door to the visa section or the USIA public affairs office in the brand new embassy. That was a great experiment, Ballyhooed. Washington loved it. A great experiment, privatization, a public private partnership. It should work in middle class Singapore. I thought it would work.

It went as a private venture and lasted maybe a total of two years. It just did not work as a business model. They could not make enough money from people willing to pay a fee for extra services. People would come in for the free initial service and access to the information, but they wouldn't, you couldn't charge enough for the extra counseling and other services they thought they could do. So, the business model just didn't work. The lesson learned was, if America is serious about getting foreign students to the U.S. then the U.S. government must subsidize that process. We have kind of learned our lesson and have gone back to that. It is still totally underfunded. But it is now called Education USA.

Meanwhile the technology and the internet came on and it was much easier to get information and to apply online and all that. So, the market kind of changed. But I still would argue the U.S. government has a need to provide some services to students, especially poor students who are interested and serious about going to the U.S. to study. We do it in bits and pieces. We do it well in some places and we do it horribly in some places. We don't do it, we do it so-so in some other places. But the model of privatizing didn't work and won't work. But, it was a noble effort.

Q: Were you there at the time of the currency problems that started in Thailand?

ANDERSON: The Asia financial crisis? No, that was at the end of '97 I believe. I was there at the tail end, but Singapore was not affected. More affected was Bangkok, Malaysia and Indonesia. Singapore was stable and pretty well off. It was not a big problem while I was there. Maybe it came later.

Q: Anything else about being a public affairs officer in a small but rich country.

ANDERSON: No, I think the only thing is about setting budgets, you cannot only look at the size of the country. Because Singapore historically and today punches its weight way above its size. It is strategically located. It houses a U.S. Navy logistics center. Its harbor can take our aircraft carriers. They freely welcome our ships and our planes, and they welcome foreign investment. So, Singapore, forget it is a dinky little dot on a map. It is strategically located, is pro U.S. and is a stabilizing force for that whole region. It definitely needs an active public diplomacy program above and beyond its tiny size. But, when I left Washington said. "You only need one person there." So, I lost the second person. But Singapore is involved regionally. We hosted the first WTO meeting. Singapore is an active player in ASERAN, APIC, all of those things. So it is a major venue for codels (Congressional delegations). They all traipse through there because it is a major regional player.

Q: Did you get dragged into some of those visits?

ANDERSON: Oh, of course, all of them. One was the founding of WTO (World Trade Organization) in Singapore. The first, what is it called, the first WTO coordinating world summit was in Singapore. It was huge, a big deal so I was the press control for all of that. APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) was held one year in Brunei [Ed 2000]. So I

was detailed to run the press for APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation). I forget where I was pulled out of.

Q: I think that was earlier.

ANDERSON: It was Brunei. Clinton, everybody was there in tiny Brunei. So we had to bring people in from all over the region. Brunei has a tiny embassy of five people or something.

Q: OK, but when you have WTO meetings and whatnot, what is the public affairs officer's responsibility?

ANDERSON: Well you are the, you work with the USTR (U.S. Trade Representative) who is control so you provide the bodies for the USTR person. I mean they have one press person.

Q: And provide local expertise.

ANDERSON: Local expertise and support. The bodies to run a press center, to organize a press conference repeatedly. The embassy supported it because they needed bodies for escort officer, admin stuff. But on the press side it is advising and handling the foreign press. All of that is APEC, the U. S. delegation relies on the embassy to provide all of that.

Q: Anyway, here we are. It is the remarkable Friday the 13th of April. We are returning to our conversation with Mike Anderson. Welcome back from your trip to Japan. I think we had finished your Singapore assignment and we are ready to do Manila. You were in Manila from the summer of 1998 until the summer of 2002, right? Manila must have been very interesting from a public affairs perspective given the long association with America since 1895.

ANDERSON: Yeah, lots going on. It was an interesting time. It was my second time there. I had been a JOT in Manila and then served there for three years in my first job and then went back later as a public affairs officer. The Ambassador was Tom Hubbard and then we had Gene Martin as DCM. Then we had Chargé Mike Malinowski. Then he went off to Nepal and we had Bob Fitz as Chargé. Bob left finally and then we had a new ambassador, Frank Ricciardone. I think I had two ambassadors and three DCM/Chargés in that period.

It was an interesting time. The major event of course was 9/11. I mean 9/11 happened during my four years there. People Power had happened. That was fascinating to see from an inside the embassy perspective. That was the fall of President Estrada, the movie star president turned senator. Then he fell in a kind of a popular uprising again and Gloria Makapagal-Arroyo, the daughter of the former president of the Philippines, she had been vice president under Estrada, and she took over as president. So politically that was a fascinating thing to see up close within the Philippines. Then it was also the time when

USIA was consolidated into the State Department. From a PD officer management perspective it was very interesting to see how that transition happened.

Q: So, let's set the stage a little. What was the USIA public affairs component of the embassy at the time you arrived? How many people?

ANDERSON: When I was there, we had a big program. We no longer had any branches. We closed both Davao and Cebu, but we had a big embassy program and a cultural center out in Makati called the Thomas Jefferson Cultural Center, a wonderful facility specifically designed and built for public outreach in the Philippines. So that was closed while I was there unfortunately. We moved that operation, closed the public library, and moved everything onto the embassy compound down on the waterfront in Manila, which has the best sunsets in the world. Wonderful old embassy premises. It used to be the home and offices of the governor general when the U.S. had the Philippines as a colony.

Q: Now did this move affect security in the public's access to USIA material.

ANDERSON: Certainly. One reason, if I recall properly, we closed Thomas Jefferson out in Makati some distance from the embassy for a couple of reasons. One, budgetary because USIA was getting hard hit during the latter part of its existence on budget cuts. Two, also security became a problem. The Philippines had terrorists and there were several incidents from time to time and the RSO felt that a separate cultural center apart from the embassy was increasingly difficult to protect and I don't think I was there, but there was one bombing incident against the cultural center in Makati, and lots of threats and things like that. It was a combination of a number of factors. All combined around the same time to close the cultural center, move everybody into the embassy, consolidate USIA into the State Department and then 9/11 hit. All of those things were big players in my four years in the Philippines, plus the Philippine domestic turmoil.

Estrada was kind of a populist. Had voted against the continuation of U.S. bases when he was a senator. Ran on a kind of a pro poor campaign, a little anti-U.S. Once he got into office he was friendly to the U.S. He was not particularly liked by the intellectuals of the Philippines, the intelligentsia. The business community didn't like him. He was perceived as corrupt and practicing cronyism, and not up to speed as a president. Remember he replaced Cory Aquino who everybody loved, the Saint, and then Ramos who was a hard working, efficient, pro-U.S. but also competent in what he was doing and had a world vision. He was West Point educated and was I think a very good president after Cory Aquino left office. There was a lot of turbulence at that time. Also, the major Philippine domestic issue working its way through the Philippine senate was the visiting forces agreement. This was an arrangement under which the U.S. could continue to cooperate militarily with the Philippines. If you remember, our two huge bases at Clark and Subic had been closed six to ten years earlier. Clark because of the volcano which erupted, Pinatubo, and Subic by the Philippine government who virtually kicked us out. So, on my return to the Philippines in '98 the huge issue was the U.S. interest and the Philippine government interest in restoring some semblance in military cooperation.

Q: Because with those base changes the status of forces agreement lapsed?

ANDERSON: Exactly so we needed a new agreement. If we were to have training and ship visits. Also 9/11 reminded the Filipinos they have a huge problem in the southern part of the country with the Islamic, some of the Muslim activists down there want to separate from the Philippines, and then that got wrapped into 9/11 Al Qaeda, links to terrorism, Afghanistan linkage, and remember there had been a big much publicized assassination plot against the Pope coming to the Philippines and there was a report that terrorists wanted to blow up planes coming out of the Philippines. So, there were a lot of things happening all around the same time. In the Philippines, 9/11, I think 18 or 20 Filipinos lost their lives in the World Trade Center bombings and there were Filipinos on two of the planes that went down linked to 9/11.

Q: In fact, I think that has been kind of forgotten these days that there were large numbers of other nationals at the Twin Towers. The casualties were not all U. S. citizens.

ANDERSON: Absolutely. People forget the world trade center was an international trading business center, and there were hundreds of foreigners working there either for American companies or for foreign companies.

Q: You had served in Manila before. But now you are the senior USIA officer at the embassy. How many people are working for you?

ANDERSON: I think we had about 60 staff. There were maybe four or five other Americans. The post was downsizing also. Once we closed the bases, a lot of people said, "Hey, we are not interested in the Philippines anymore." But people forget, the Philippines was our only colony, and there are huge people to people links in Philippine veterans. There is a massive VA operation in Manila. I think there are a couple of VA offices worldwide. The largest is in the Philippines. There are thousands of Filipinos who get benefits since they had served in the U.S. armed forces. There are all kinds of people to people ties, a huge consulate, huge visa demand, and lots of marriages. A number of them linked to the many years we had bases in the Philippines but not all of them. A big American business presence, so the Philippines was a big embassy, always has been. Again, we had a secure mutual defense treaty with them so we had some close links on military security etc.

Q: You were saying the domestic situation in the Philippines was unstable. When President Estrada fell, was that a coup or an election?

ANDERSON: Not an election. It was People Power II they called it. It was a revolution. People went out into the streets and protested, and I think the crucial step was the Philippine military chief of staff or defense minister, I can't remember who it was, withdrew his support for the government. The Church was strongly against Estrada. The old business community was against Estrada because he wasn't part of that old boy network. He was really an outsider. His strength was with the masses. The public loved him, and poor people loved him. For some reason he resonated with poor people and had

mass support coming out of his 30-40 years as a movie star. He was a very popular celebrity, and that certainly helped him get elected.

Q: What was USIA's role as these political changes were taking place?

ANDERSON: Well, we were, what was our role? Our role was I think to stay out of things. It was a domestic sensitive internal thing. The supreme court finally did back the takeover. It was a coup. The people took to the streets in massive protests which made traffic in Manila worse than normal. It was quite an uprising. Not as massive as the one against Marcos a few years earlier. But it was still pretty well a groundswell of support against perceived incompetence and corruption etc. on the part of the Estrada administration. But we had to remain neutral obviously.

Q: I mean this creates a new dynamic within the country. Does USIA change any of its programming? Were you getting the ambassador on the television and being interviewed?

ANDERSON: Yes. Eventually the U.S. supported Gloria Macapgal-Arroyo. Because the economy was falling apart, corruption was rampant. Although Estrada was friendly toward the U.S. He was not antagonistic, even though he had voted against the continuation of the bases there, but many Filipinos, I would say most Filipinos still wanted close ties to the U.S. We had a 100-year relationship. So, it is a very unusual and very special relationship. The average Filipino was sympathetic to the visiting forces agreement, ship visits, joint training operations etc. I think it is really important to point out that 9/11 the Philippine government was really supportive of the U.S. and cooperated fully with the Bush administration in the war on terrorism.

By then a not very nice group called Abu Sayeth had popped up in the Southern Philippines coming out of Mindanao, Jolo and Basilan and those islands off the main Mindanao Island in the southern Philippines. They turned on the U.S. and they definitely had terrorism linkages to Afghanistan and Al Qaeda terrorist groups elsewhere in the region. If you recall, they kidnapped 20 tourists including three Americans. Ironically, I had been at that exact resort just a few weeks before the terrorist action. I think that whole incident where you had two American missionaries plus a Filipino American blatantly kidnapped by a bunch of thugs cum Islamic extremists, that brought the Philippines and the U. S. closer too because the Philippines wanted U.S. support. The U.S. was at that time looking for ways to cooperate with friends all over the place, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand because there were legitimate concerns that Islamic extremism was spreading and that the U.S. was being targeted, and our allies were being targeted. So, we did send military troops into the Philippines, when I was there. Under Philippine law they did not have a combat role, but they could help train and assist.

So, the U. S. military I forget the numbers, but they, and I remember a wonderful experience. Paul Wolfowitz, he was with the defense department then. He came to the Philippines and flew down to the southern Philippines to check into the anti-terrorism things, and I got to travel with him. That was very interesting. We flew on a helicopter

and went to Basilan which was the home base of the Abu Sayyaf group. It was interesting to see how the U. S. and the Philippines were cooperating closely on anti-terrorism efforts, to the benefit I think, of both countries. But that incident, the kidnapping of the three Americans, and if you recall one of them had his head chopped off, one Filipino American was killed by the Abu Sayyaf. Then Mr. And Mrs. Birnam who were missionaries in the Philippines were held captive for about a year if I recall. That was a huge issue because the U. S. media was following it closely and it was all linked to the war on terrorism. It was a huge concern and the embassy, of course, worked on that issue very closely for many months, working closely with the Philippine government and the U.S. military to see if we could get those hostages freed. The Abu Sayyaf were nasty people. They bombed; they slit throats; they kidnapped people; they pillaged; they raped; they held their own people hostage for ransom, and they were driven by a fanatic Islamic effort to secede from the Philippines and make that part of the Philippines an Islamic State.

Q: And these incidents probably brought in a lot of U. S. press that you would have assisted and reported.

ANDERSON: Yes, lots of journalists came in all the time. So, we did briefings, we supported. Remember the State Department Rewards for Justice initiative. We placed the Philippine terrorists on our reward for justice list. So, we would publicize that actively to get the information out to the Philippine people to draw in tips. Some of that information did work and we made some cash awards to some Philippine people who gave invaluable leads on how to track down the terrorists and things like that. I believe the Birnams, that is the name of the missionary family Alicia and Martin Birnam, were held for 376 days. She was rescued and he died in the confrontation with the Philippine military against the terrorists. She escaped with her life, but her husband died in the crossfire unfortunately.

I remember very vividly, she was brought to Manila and was put up at the embassy housing compound and the President of the Philippines came to visit her. I was there for that. That was very exciting and very emotional. President Arroyo called on the released missionary who had been captive for over a year. She was rescued on June 7, 2002. Her husband died, and then she came back and the embassy took her in for several days and debriefed her, and she met with the president of the Philippines who came to the embassy housing compound to meet the missionary who had been released. She returned to Kansas and subsequently wrote a book called “In the Presence of My Enemies” which was sort of her autobiography, telling her story of what it was like being held by these nasty folks for over a year. Public affairs worked closely with the FBI. The media played a big role. The Abu Sayyaf had access to Philippine media. Journalists would go down there and get interviews and of course all of that was of extreme interest to the FBI which was assisting the Philippine government in trying to track down the terrorists and get every bit of information so these people could be rescued.

Q: Did the FBI bring in a special team just for this event?

ANDERSON: Oh yes. They sure did. Our office did a lot with the media and was sort of a liaison with the media that got into, got access to the terrorists and we did some translation. One of the radio stations in Mindanao had great ties to the Abu Sayyaf. The Abu Sayyaf would telephone them and do interviews all in the local language. So, my office helped translate a lot of that for the FBI because they didn't have that language expertise. But a lot of that video was very crucial in building up the case against the terrorists. Also the footage of the terrorists with the Birnams and other captives. All of that was crucial in building a legal case against the terrorists. All of that was a very exciting and turbulent time. I think it brought the two countries together because we did have a common enemy and that is extremists. It was very embarrassing to the Philippines that they could not rescue the hostages. They finally did eventually.

Q: In fact, didn't you receive a certificate from the FBI in acknowledgment?

ANDERSON: Oh I did, yes. The FBI director came out and he gave out certificates. It was very thoughtful. But I think our office of public affairs played a not insignificant role in getting our story out. Rewards for justice, explaining U. S. policy. Trying to convince the Filipinos that we weren't there fighting their battle. We were there cooperating. We were there at the invitation of their government. And not fighting the terrorists directly but advising and helping train. But the battle had to be fought by the Philippine military themselves.

Q: Now on October 7, 2001 the U. S. goes into Afghanistan. I would assume that USIA has a spike in public affairs work.

ANDERSON: We did but it wasn't that difficult in the Philippine context. One, the Philippines is basically pro-U. S. we have a mutual defense pact with the Philippines. They are an ally and they suffered from terrorism. They had 18-20 victims of 9/11. Second, they had people getting kidnapped all over the place, and they had an Islamic terrorism movement down south. Some of that even spilled over into Manila. There were bombings occasionally in malls, assassination attempts. So, the Philippine people were sympathetic to the U. S.

Q: How about your connection to the Philippine media itself? Is that a very sophisticated media? How would you evaluate?

ANDERSON: Feisty, free. I had been there during the Marcos years when they were throttled and were not free. But then when the People Power movement came on February 8, 1986, and Marcos was overthrown, the Philippine press which had always been very free and feisty all over the place, got even worse. There was quite a leftist anti-U.S. feeling among the intellectuals which included some journalists. So yeah, there was no problem of access to the Philippine media. They were very open. I knew all the editors and had access to them and socialized with them. There was no problem getting access in the Philippines. It is the most open country in the world. I mean it is very easy to meet people, they talk. They love to debate. They talk all the time. There are no secrets.

Gossip in the press is irresponsible and lively and feisty and today very free. Not always responsible and that is a problem we faced all the time. When it came to the bases there was a lot of anti-U.S. feeling. That we shouldn't have the bases anymore; they weren't needed. We were abusing Filipino hospitality etc. A lot of that was carrying over even to this day. So, some of that is generational. The younger people that didn't have the warm colonial historic ties to Americans were a little more critical of the U. S. and suspicious of our motives. But I think after 9/11 the Philippines realized they are quite vulnerable, and they really needed the U.S. if this Islamic threat was to be addressed. So much of the bad blood that came about after we left when the two big bases closed, much of that has gone by the wayside, to the betterment of both countries. I think there is a new maturity and a new mutual respect, and I think a greater independence on the part of the Philippines.

Q: You were mentioning earlier the centennial of the Thomasites. What is that?

ANDERSON: Most Americans know nothing about the Thomasites, but I think it is a fascinating piece of American history. The Philippines was an American colony for almost 100 years. Was really our only legal colony. We got it at the end of the Spanish American War in 1898. We always said we are not a colonial power. We are here to help the Philippines to become a democracy. Well, it took a long time for that to happen. It didn't happen until the end of WWII. In 1901 the Civilian U. S. colonial administration in the Philippines to their great credit said we need to help the Philippines become educated. So, they brought in about 1000 American civilian teachers in a massive public education effort to uplift the Filipino people and to introduce free English education throughout the entire country. These civilian teachers were recruited from the best universities throughout the country, many Ivy League and all the great universities. The first batch of them came in 1901 on a ship called the USS Thomas, which was a former military ship that sailed from San Francisco to Manila in 1901 bringing this group of eager beaver young BA graduates and young teachers to go all over the Philippines and into the barrios and small towns and the bigger cities and to teach public school and to start free schools. It was a wonderful humanitarian gesture on the part of Americans. So, when I was there we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the Thomasites.

In many ways the Thomasites were the precursors of the Peace Corps because they were civilian volunteer teachers who came to the Philippines on contracts for, I believe, two years. And they served in difficult situations. They introduced not only English, but they taught public health; they taught agriculture, and they taught democracy just by their presence. So, in many ways they were like the first Peace Corps teachers. When I was in the Philippines for the second time it was the anniversary of the Thomasites, and I said, "We can't let this go. This is a great opportunity for a yearlong celebration or observance of the close ties with the Philippine people." We undertook a whole range of projects from a postage stamp, Tee Shirts, publications, conferences, workshops, observances throughout the country. We worked with the descendants of the Thomasites, many of whom still live in the Philippines today. A lot of the teachers married Filipinos, and they remained in the Philippines and their descendants are still living. They have American

names. So we organized them. We tracked them down and said, "Hey, do you want to start an organization?" They loved it because it was a recognition of their heritage. So, they came out of the woodwork all over the country. We had a website that connected people. One of my staffers commissioned a play on the Thomasites. There was just a whole series of observances in universities, local communities, among family members. The Philippine-American study association took up the cause. We ran a big conference. We published a couple of books. We made a poster that we distributed to schools around the country. We gave small grants to encourage local grassroots activities. All of this was an effort to honor those early Americans and recognize the close bonds and friendship and the results that their efforts contributed. They started free public education. They introduced English as a medium of instruction. And they introduced basic things like public health, civics, and teaching democracy. The Philippines had not been a democracy. So, all of those things I think Americans can be proud of. And I think our public diplomacy efforts during that year contributed a lot to the relationship and got people thinking, hey, this is not just about military bases or counter terrorism or selling Coca Cola in the Philippines or something. It is about people-to-people relations in history and language and families. Because these families are still going, and they can trace their descendants to the first American teachers way back to 1901-1902. It was a very successful program and it was run by the colonial government which makes it even more amazing. I think America can be proud of the Thomasite movement and the long-term impact it had on the Philippines.

Q: How long did the Thomasite project last?

ANDERSON: Oh, how long did the Thomasites last? I will double check that for you but I think it ran for about 10-15 years. Then the colonial government ran the schools for 75 years.

Q: So, you get a lot of play in the local press.

ANDERSON: Yes, a lot of positives. All positive. Nobody said the Thomasites were neo imperialists or colonialists. No, it was all positive. These were young American university graduates who gave up their career in the U.S. after graduating from Yale, and Harvard and Minnesota and Berkley etc. they said we want to come to this colony called the Philippines. They came by ship. They suffered. They got malaria. Many of them died. They were sent out to the boonies. They weren't all in glorious, exciting Manila. They were all over the country. In that sense then they were like the Peace Corps. They were volunteers who were willing to try to do good, have some adventure. They go halfway around the world. Many of them ended up marrying locally, staying in the Philippines or contributing in other ways. A number of the Thomasites became community leaders, intellectuals, university professors, local officials. The bulk of course finished their contract, returned to the U. S. and went back to their lives in Keokuk, Iowa, and Minneapolis and all of those places. But at least they knew that the Philippines was all about and had contact with the Philippine people.

Q: I think your celebrations were ongoing when 9/11 occurred.

ANDERSON: Exactly. Let me tell you one of the most moving experiences I had. We worked with the Philippine post office to issue three commemorative Thomasite postage stamps. We planned to launch the stamp at a reception at the Chargé's residence on guess what date. I think it was September 12, or 13. Two or three days after the 9/11 bombing. So, we had invited all of these people to the ambassador's house to launch the postage stamp ceremony with the postmaster general and the Philippine guests. We debated should we cancel; should we go on with it. What do you think we decided to do? Plunge ahead. We went through that. It was a very moving evening. I remember the Chargé broke up. It was like two or three days after 9/11. People didn't know what was going on. We had just learned that Filipinos were victims. But it was a big decision. Should we cancel out of respect for 9/11 or go ahead. We decided to go on with it. It was a wonderful evening. People came, and they were, it was just a very moving event. I am glad we did it. So, we launched the stamps and that was a nice way on the part of the Philippine government to recognize the Thomasites also.

Another thing we did after 9/11, maybe a year or so later, we did an exhibit of photographs on 9/11 from New York. We were looking for a venue for that. We decided to do it in a shopping mall, the Makati Commercial Center because that is where the Philippine people are. They love malls. They use malls like public parks. Thousands of people go to shopping malls and just walk around. They go to church there. They walk, they meet friends, they intermingle. They meet friends occasionally. But the commercial shipping mall in Manila is the hub of the community. So, we decided to do our photo exhibit in the middle of the mall. The shopping mall was most cooperative. We said, "Is this going to attract terrorists; is this appropriate?" But it worked out beautifully. Thousands of people saw those pictures and were moved by them. I am glad we did that also.

Q: In other regards, the assignment to Manila was a typical USIA experience. By the way, wasn't Manila the location of a major USIA publishing facility?

ANDERSON: Yes, our regional printing center, RPC I think it is called, or RSC, Regional Service Center, I think they changed the name. It was one of only two or three in the entire world. They were crucial throughout the cold war and beyond in publishing all kinds of materials for the U.S. government. They had a state-of-the-art facility at a place called Seafront where a secondary U. S. compound stood. That was a wonderful facility with all kinds of printing presses, and a big staff mainly Filipino. They did wonderful products of all kinds. In fact, with the Thomasite public affairs campaign we worked with designers at RSC to design a logo for the Thomasites. They printed a publication. They did the poster. They did the Tee shirt design. All of that was done at RSC. It was a wonderful facility. It is still going, always under threat. People say oh what do we need it for. The cold war is over, why do we need printing presses? Let's do everything in the U.S. It is a great facility and a great asset to the U.S. government. They did not only USIA projects but they worked for other agencies, military, treasury veterans' administration. So, it was truly a U.S. government wide facility that could print anything, match book covers, posters, books, magazines, leaflets. Anything you wanted

they could do. Quickly, cheaply and high quality. It was a wonderful facility. At consolidation, unfortunately it moved out of public diplomacy and into the State Department management or administration side, so it is kind of run now as a printing shop rather than as an integral part of public diplomacy or the geographic East Asia Bureau. So, I think they are still going. But they have had some problems and the budget cutters are always trying to close them down.

The Philippines was also hugely important to VOA. The Voice of America had transmitters there, a huge operation, now closed.

Q: Well let's get into the consolidation a little bit. You are in Manila, a major post. This effort to…

ANDERSON: Consolidate, integrate…

Q: Destroy…

ANDERSON: Ahhh, make better.

Q: Perhaps, but wasn't it pushed by Senator Jesse Helms as one of the ways…

ANDERSON: It was very political. The goal of it was good on paper. They claimed the goal of it was to yield efficiency and improve effectiveness by taking USIA as an independent agency and integrating it into State. By doing that you would save money; you would become more efficient, and most of all you would get public diplomacy function closer to the policy makers within the State Department.

Q: Closer to policy makers in State? Aren't you out there with the Ambassador. You were right at his shoulder.

ANDERSON: USIA overseas was always integrated into the embassy. How can you not be? You work for the ambassador. But bureaucratically and administratively and budget wise you had a degree of independence that made you more effective, leaner, meaner, and you controlled your own resources. That ended October 1999 when State took over USIA. You are right, it was a very political move. It was a dispute with Senator Helms, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. It was all a big power effort back here in Washington, but it was explained as being a more efficient move.

Now what does that mean being a PAO? Let me talk about that for a moment. Everybody thinks it is kind of a Washington thing. But it did impact how you operated locally within an embassy. First of all, you lost your direct administrative support. USIA used to have its own lean, mean, but its own admin support staff. Local employees and oftentimes one American executive officer. So that was merged into the State Department embassy administration. Secondly, computer and technical support. You used to be independent. You would have your own computer experts to make sure you had the technical and administrative support you needed. That was lost. That was moved into the embassy

administrative section. Third, and not unimportantly, is vehicles. If you are doing public diplomacy you have got to have transportation because you deliver mail, you deliver press releases, you deliver speakers and programs out of the embassy because you are out dealing in the local community. You have got to have reliable transportation. That transportation disappeared. It moved into the embassy motor pool. You may say what is the big deal? What difference does it make? Well it does make a difference.

Let me give you an example. Many public diplomacy events are held in the evening on the weekends and/or out of town. Embassy motor pools are notorious for working 8:00 to 5:00 Monday thru Friday. We don't have the funds to pay overtime. We don't like having to have drivers work on the weekends because we have to pay them overtime. So, our flexibility was reduced somewhat. Now in general it has worked pretty well. Not everywhere, but in Manila it worked fine because I got along well with the various people, the admin officers, the motor pool people etc. But from a management point of view we became a little less efficient and less accountable, and less independent. Ultimately less effective therefore. Did it save any money? I don't think so. Did it make us more efficient? No! But is it working? Eh, it took a while for the bugs to get worked out. But to the credit of the Congress, they firewalled the public diplomacy budget, when USIA merged into the State Department. Our budget continued to be earmarked for public diplomacy, and our representation money, the money we had to spend on entertaining local contacts. That again was firewalled by Congress. So in that sense we were able to control our resources. That has continued to this day. Very interesting years after consolidation, the public diplomacy budget is still earmarked and fire walled from others who may want to tap it. This has given us a degree of autonomy and the resources we need to continue. For example, if our representation money had blended into the embassy rep money that could be used by the ambassador or the DCM or the admin counselor, or the political officer for whatever he or she wanted to do.

Q: It would have gone into a pool.

ANDERSON: Yeah, one big pot. We would have been one part of that. But the temptation to tap that money, public diplomacy at most posts I have been to generally have the most money after the front office after the ambassador to spend on representation, because that is our job. We get out into the public. That takes money to hold receptions, dinners, lunches, buy somebody a cup of coffee. Whatever. So, in the embassy the ambassador has to entertain, that is his job, and the public affairs section has to entertain big time to do their job. Other elements of the embassy obviously need a little money, but they don't need as much as either public affairs or the front office. Fortunately, that has continued pretty well I think for my experience because Congress has insisted that that money in the State budget continues to be singled out and not just put into one big pool under the ambassador or the admin counselor.

The other challenge we had in terms of consolidation was we closed our cultural center, and that moved the embassy into what we called an IRC, and Information Resource Center we kept the name Thomas Jefferson. Why change the brand name? Everybody knew that TJCC, the Thomas Jefferson Cultural Center, everybody in Manila knew it. It

was a major venue for public discussion and debate and a wonderful library and a good programming venue. Much of that was lost when we had to cut that down, close our library. We had 15,000 books. We had almost the best library in Manila. It was free and it was open to the public. We lost that advantage when we had to close it and move into the embassy premises which were smaller and suffered from tight embassy security. So the average Filipino, the student, the academic, the journalist is not going to want to go from using an easily accessible cultural center in Makati, the commercial center of Manila, go all the way downtown to the waterfront through all that traffic and then stand in line and go through the horrendous embassy security to get into a smaller facility.

We realized that and we changed the nature of that facility. We also understood that we had to work much harder to get out of the embassy into the local community as never before and do more partnerships with universities and NGOs and think tanks and Philippine government offices etc. Which we have done and that is working pretty well. But it was a great resource to have what I called a full-service cultural center that did everything from programming to films, books, magazines, and internet connections. We did all kinds of programs for all different groups all the time. Democracy, on culture, on business, on rule of law, on intellectual property rights, on military security issues, on the environment. You name an issue, we could and did do public programming at the Thomas Jefferson Cultural Center. That advantage of this facility has been lost. I should add when we re-opened on the embassy grounds as the Thomas Jefferson information resource center, on our opening event our guest of honor was Mrs. Aquino. That was a wonderful tribute on the part of her that she would take time out to come to the embassy and dedicate the "New and Improved" Thomas Jefferson Center.

Q: Which nobody could get into.

ANDERSON: Nobody could get into, but we had to work hard, but you are right nobody can get into it, so it changed the whole nature of what we did. But I thought it was a nice gesture on her part that she would be the guest of honor. When her husband was assassinated in honor of him, public affairs set up a fellowship called the Aquino Fellows. Each year we picked two Philippine journalists to go to the U.S. on an international visitor program. We have had all the top, best and brightest Philippine journalists in that program now. It has been going since I believe about '86 or so,a number of years. We have had just fantastic Philippine journalists on that program. They come to the U.S. for I think it varies from two weeks to a month. They investigate a project. They speak to American audiences. They exchange views with journalists and others on Philippine views in America. It is just a terrific exchange program that has continued in honor of Senator Aquino. That continues to this day. Mrs. Aquino was personally involved. We did the screening, and we did the nominating, but believe me, she picked the top people, and we let her do that. That was only proper since it was named in honor of her husband, and she actively was involved. She let you know if she liked our nominees and if she didn't like them. Generally, we agreed. Then she would always attend the luncheon. The ambassador would host a luncheon at which the two recipients would be honored, and Mrs. Aquino always came to that with members of her family. That was always one of

the best events of the year. The Ambassador would always host it and we would always get a great turnout, and Mrs. Aquino would always come and do the honors so to speak.

Let's see if there was anything else on consolidation. One other thing I did when I was PAO in Manila, PAO's spend much of their time just worrying about space, facilities. How do you get people into programs? Where do you house the Fulbright program? Do you have a public library? Can you have a library, etc.? When the Thomas Jefferson Cultural Center closed we also lost the space for the Fulbright commission which in the Philippines is called PAEF, Philippine-American Education Foundation. That is the bi national commission that runs the Fulbright program. So, we needed new space for that facility. During my time as PAO we found new office space in a commercial building in Makati, not too far from where the Thomas Jefferson Cultural Center had been. It was in the same building where the agricultural service and the commercial service at the embassy also were housed. It was a nice modern building with good security. It was a great location right within the main commercial center of metro Manila. So that new office was opened.

It included a student advising service so we could give free information to Filipinos who were interested in studying in the United States. At the opening event guess who we had as our chief guest. I mention this not to name drop but because it shows the close relations the U.S. embassy has with Filipino officials. Our chief guest was the President of the Philippines, Gloria Macapagol-Arroyo, who made time on her hectic schedule to come to this facility, cut the ribbon and be the chief guest. I think that illustrates how close U.S.-Philippine relations are and how important people to people ties are with the Philippines, when you had the president of the Philippines taking time out to come and cut a ribbon to open this tiny little office of the Fulbright commission in the Philippines, I think that says a lot. I was proud that we could get her there and that she would deem the Fulbright program important enough to come over and actually physically open it.

Q: In the Public Affairs Section you said you had about six people. How did you divide up your responsibilities? Was somebody in charge of university contacts, somebody in charge of media?

ANDERSON: Our program was very traditional and very consistent with what USIA and public affairs does around the world now. You have an information office and you have a cultural affairs office. The information office generally handles press relations, writes speeches, it does the press attaché functions and does all the new media stuff, the website, the internet, twitter, Facebook, all of that stuff is generally under the information officer. She generally has one or two other officers under her. In Manila I think we had one American assistant. One AIO. So you had the Information Officer and then the Assistant Information Officer.

Then on the cultural affairs side which did a grab bag of everything from libraries, English teaching, speakers, cultural events, university relations, student advising, all of those functions were under the CAO, the Cultural Affairs Officer. In Manila we had I think we had one ACAO, and that person did exchanges more than anything else. So that

was the Fulbright program and the International Visitor program, and then the Cultural Affairs officer did everything else which was speakers, cultural events, visiting artists, poets, photographers, theater arts, musicians, jazz, hip hop, whatever it was. Came under the cultural affairs officer.

That person also covered what we call the IRC (Information Resource Center) and what we called them American Corners. In many ways the Philippines was ahead of the use of the information resource center. Many posts now have American Corners. There were many bookshelves, many research facilities totally underfunded and not very effective in many places. They were basically a bookshelf of American books. But in the Philippines we were doing that years and years ago. We were doing that all over the Philippines. We called them American Resource Centers. I think there were about 20 of them all over the Philippines. They were way ahead of the American Corners, but it was the same idea. You get a local organization, a local university to partner with you and host a mini library or resource center, funded by the U.S. but housed within a local university. I think we had 15 or 20 of those all over the Philippines. Those were natural programming venues, and they worked quite well, actually. We would donate books each year, and we would consciously bring speakers and the ambassador would visit, and public diplomacy officers would visit and give lectures and meet the students and talk, and encourage American studies associations, encourage English teaching. We were increasingly concerned that the standard of English in the Philippines was plummeting due in part to nationalism and in part to a ministry of education policy shift away from English medium schools more towards Tagalog national language in the Philippines. This was all part of a nationalism movement. Partly anti-U.S. partly anti-U.S. bases, but just a rise of nationalism in the Philippines.

You saw this same pattern in other countries, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Korea, Japan. All over the region there was this upsurge in local pride and local independence and just the feeling that we want to be on our own in our national language is important. So, on my second time back to the Philippines I noticed a sharp decrease in the standard of English. It was really a generational thing. The older people had been trained in English, studied at universities, and had an English medium program. By the time by say 10, 15, 20 years ago that had changed. The younger people wanted to study their national language and the ministries of education in many cases consciously moved away from English in an effort to develop nationalism and make university education more widespread and less elitist.

The tragedy of that of course is what Singapore figured out early that the world is becoming more globalized, and if you want to be competitive internationally, intellectually, and trade wise, business-wise, you have to know English. That is why Malaysia and Singapore had such a head start. The Philippines had that head start but they gave it up when they consciously turned away from English for a bit. That affected their competitiveness and their ability to attract foreign investment, their ability to compete intellectually. Philippine universities suffered, I think, as they turned away from English. For decades the Philippines had the best English anywhere in Asia. That gave them a real advantage, and they lost that. They are still suffering to this day when it

comes to things like the IT industry. They are just not as competitive as India or Singapore or Malaysia. Of course, you have countries like Korea that are shifting to English, focusing on English. Vietnam, Indonesia to this day is giving English much more attention because they realize it gets you a niche and a degree of competitiveness that you wouldn't have if you only used your national language. The Philippines to this day have not recovered from the loss of English. Now many of them would argue, come on , we still have a good standard of English, better than most countries by far, and what we gave up when we shifted to Filipino or Tagalog, we developed a sense of identity and nationalism which was crucial but the price you pay. That is debatable I think, but that is not ours to decide. That is for the Philippine people to make that decision.

Q: Earlier you were mentioning chiefs of mission during your assignment. Now you are the PAO. How is your closeness of interaction with the ambassadors and chargés during your four years?

ANDERSON: We had great relations all the time. Terrific. Public diplomacy in this day and age is just an integral part of any embassy. I noticed that the last time, that is a trend of the last 15-20 years. Ambassadors tend to get it now. They know PD is important. You have got to have good support from the republic affairs section of the embassy and the PAO must be integrated into the country team. That has never been a problem in any of the places I have been. The ambassadors get it, and PD has always been part of the country team and a major player. Increasingly ambassadors see the need for proactive public affairs, public diplomacy, and use of new media.

I have just come back from Tokyo where our ambassador there, a political appointee, a Silicon Valley lawyer has more twitter followers than any other U.S. ambassador in the world. The only one exceeding him and it is understandable is Susan Rice at the United Nations, She is an active aggressive user of Twitter and she has something like 100,000 followers. But Ambassador Roos, the ambassador to Japan who actively engages himself in Twitter, knows what it is all about because of his Silicon Valley background, 50,000 followers. That is amazing. 50,000 people follow his tweets. He uses it actively. He is out there four or five times a day to check out his twitter activity. So, he is sending out four or five different messages a day and attracts followers all over the world. He tweets in Japanese and in English. He is not just in English. Our public affairs staff in Tokyo translates everything into Japanese. Nothing goes on only in English. It is also in Japanese. It is crucial to communicating with the Japanese public.

Q: Of the chiefs of mission you worked for in Manila, who best understood PD?

ANDERSON: I was there four years and I had two ambassadors and three chargés. Ambassador Hubbard got it, and Ricciardone, the last ambassador was terrific. He really got it. Ricciardone went from Frankfurt to Cairo I believe. Cairo, Turkey, and then Iraq. He has had all tough Middle East assignments. He was terrific on public diplomacy of all kinds, but Hubbard was good also. The last ambassador there was fabulous for PD, Ambassador Kinney. She actively used new media, actively engaged on television, traveled all over the country and she totally got public diplomacy. That was like her

number one priority. PD is not just like public relations. It is listening, communicating, engaging, using a variety of means to promote mutual understanding, and to help local people not just understand U.S. policy and what we were doing in Afghanistan or Iraq or whatever, but also to understand American culture and society, and I think that is really important. Of course, Secretary Clinton understands it. Secretary Powell also got it. Powell I think was very effective as a communicator, and as a listener and as an engager. But Secretary Clinton is first class in understanding the importance of public affairs, public diplomacy, soft power, promoting mutual understanding and engaging young people.

Q: Given the extent of your Philippine contacts, who was most interesting to work with?

ANDERSON: As a group I would say it was the Philippine women journalists. I had a great advantage because I had been in the Philippines during the end of Marcos and the arrival of Mrs. Aquino. Those were heady days, and part of the fight there was for press freedom. The Philippine press under Marcos had been crushed and harassed and the press was not very independent at all. Some of the major players in the fight for Philippine press freedom were women journalists, very feisty, strong independent women. I had known some of them in the mid 80's and many of them were now, when I went back the second time, were major editors or broadcast personalities. I knew them as friends, colleagues. That relationship has continued to this day. I just can't say enough of them. The women in the Philippines, the journalists were very brave. They took on Marcos. They supported Mrs. Aquino, they fought corruption. They often disagreed with us on the basis of policy. But they were democrats. They wanted democracy, press freedom, autonomy, and many of the values Americans stand for. I disagree with a lot of them on some policy issues, but we had no problem agreeing on the importance of the press, the importance of an informed public for democracy, all of these things.

So, I would say the most interesting group of all of our contacts were the women journalists. They have continued to this day. They are the editors of leading newspapers in the Philippines. I can list some of them out. I will check my files and give you a few names. But they were people like Tina Palma, the leading broadcaster. Ann Tovares, who if I recall was part of the activists who took over the Philippine government television station and declared on the air when Marcos fell. The best investigative journalists were often women in the Philippines. They won awards. They fought corruption. Today they teach journalism. Or they are editors or columnists or top broadcasters in the country. There is a whole list of them and they were celebrities in their own country. It was an honor to get to know them. They kind of took me under their wing. We had close relations with the media in all of those years, in part because we shared a common interest in Democracy. Simple.

Q: As you said you had some advantage out of returning to a place you had been before, so you had already made a set of contacts that you can start out with, so the Foreign Service got its money worth sending you back to places you have been before. I know a lot of our interviewees say that.

ANDERSON: Oh, that is a huge advantage. It makes so much sense. Not just in terms of language but you know the culture and you have got the contacts. So when I returned, let's see, I left the Philippines in '86 and I returned in '98. I was gone 12 years, but when I returned 12 years later, much of the same power structure was still there. The anti-Marcos people were now the establishment. They were now in the government. But I knew them. The Filipinos are a wonderfully hospitable and open people; they like Americans and they had close contacts with the embassy under Marcos. Those continued and I was able to build on them because I knew almost all of the top people. So, it was seamless for me. I know at my farewell party if you looked at the guest list it was probably the same people who were at my farewell party 12 years earlier at the ambassador's house, because those same people were the movers and shakers in the media, or academia or NGOs or whatever.

Q: Now during the time that you were in Manila we had a change in administration. The Bush administration came in in 2001. Did that change in administration make any policy changes or differences while you were out in Manila?

ANDERSON: No, I don't think so. Because Philippine interests and our interests overlap so much in terms of regional security, and anti-terrorism. The other difference is that Filipinos are basically friendly to the U.S. regardless of whether it is Clinton or Carter or Bush or Aquino or Estrada, I mean that warmth and genuine friendship and shared interest is still there. That doesn't change with administrations.

Q: Were there any major U.S. government visits.

ANDERSON: All the time.

Q: I see that Secretary Albright came in July of '98 for an ASEAN meeting.

ANDERSON: We had people all the time. Although we didn't have as many people as we did earlier under the Marcos times. Because once our bases closed our relationship soured for a few years, cooled off and changed. It is only kind of getting back to normalcy now a few years later because the closure of those bases had such an impact on both of those countries. Because the U.S. felt wounded and disappointed and let down and the Filipinos felt they had kicked the Americans out. Now what happened a few days ago in South China Sea, there was a flap between the Filipinos and the Chinese over the Spratly Islands. Déjà vu all over again. Filipinos share our interest in the South China Sea vis a vis China. We want the South China Sea to be open for free flow of goods and services. The Chinese see the South China Sea as their territory. Nothing changes.

Q: Anything else in your notes that you wanted to go over.

ANDERSON: There was one little thing. I like history and I know you do. When I was in the Philippines another anniversary happened, not just the Thomasites. The Thomasites were win-win for everybody. Everybody was happy with that. But on September 28 of 2001 there was an anniversary that bought back lots of memories. That was the

anniversary of the Balangiga massacre or the Balangiga incident. No Americans know anything about it. Back in 1901 we were fighting the Filipinos. We were fighting to keep control of the colony and the Filipinos were fighting for their independence. They wanted to kick us out because we were seen as the colonial rulers who wouldn't leave after the Spanish American War. On September 28, 1901, way down in the southern Philippines on an island called Samar, American military were there, and there was a very nasty incident in which the Filipinos rose up and killed 40 American troops in a little town called Balangiga. American troops were based there suppressing the Filipino insurrection in their fight for independence. The Filipinos turned on the American troops and butchered 40 or more American troops. In retaliation the American troops which were led then by a general, a notorious guy named General Jacob Smith. General Smith ordered that Samar be turned into what he called a "Howling wilderness." He ordered the killing of all Filipinos 10 and older to suppress the anti-American movement down there. As part of that incident the American troops took three church bells from a Church in Balangiga. This was war booty. The American army took the three bells from the Catholic Church in this little town where they had been based and took the bells out as booty. They felt it was their right as the dominant powers. To this day the three bells are outside of the Philippines. Two bells are in an air force base in Wyoming. One bell is in an American base in South Korea. Throughout my time in the Philippines occasionally this issue would pop up and somebody who was a Philippine nationalist would say, "Please return the bells. You stole them. They are church bells; why did you take them; you don't need them. What do you want them for?" The Philippines is independent. The U.S. kept saying No, it has to be an act of Congress to get the bells back. They are under the U.S. military. No, no, no.

While I was there the centennial of the bells came up. Of course, this little community way down in the Philippines, a place called Samar, invited the embassy to send a speaker to go down to commemorate the massacre of the 40 American soldiers and the stealing of the three bells. This town is way down south, not quite Mindanao but close to it. The ambassador declined to go. The DCM was busy so it fell in my lap. So I said, "Sure I would be happy to go." One, I like history and two, I felt it was very important for the embassy to go to this event. Come on. It means a lot to the village and it means a lot politically that we are shown to at least be listening and marking this occasion. So I went down there. It took a day to get there, or longer. No airport there. You have to go overland. You fly into some town and then you go overland for a couple of hours. But it is very isolated. I think I went down with a Philippine staff member from public affairs. And I was on the program. Official speaker. It was just a very moving and touching experience. I think I was the only foreigner there. So you had all the villagers from this town that had such a negative image in America because this was the place that had brutally attacked American military. They had done it, the Filipinos cleverly disguised themselves as women and got past the American guards who thought what are these women going to church carrying coffins. The Americans didn't stop the Filipinos. In the coffins were weapons. The bells were rung. The coffins were opened. The men took their scarves off, grabbed the knives and guns and attacked the Americans. To their great surprise. In return then the Americans retaliated and killed a lot of Filipinos throughout that part of the Philippines. Anyway, it was a very interesting historic event. It got a lot of

publicity. Before and after that time every once in a while someone will pop up and say, "Please return the bells." I think President Ramos asked President Clinton to please return the bells. Why don't you make duplicates? Take the original bells and make duplicates. We will keep one original bell and one duplicate. You keep one original and one duplicate. Everybody is happy but it never happened. There have been lots of books written about it. There are web sites; there are plays. All the Filipinos know about this. Americans don't know too much about it, and those that do have mixed feelings. Because in many ways it was like a My Lai massacre. It was a very violent act against the U.S., but then from their perspective they were fighting for their independence.

Interesting historic thing. To extend this story, the one thing I was able to do while working for the embassy and the Library of Congress while I was there was to get the Library of Congress to change how they classified the Philippine-American War. For years they had called it a war. The Americans were fighting the Filipinos and they were right. Of course, to the Filipinos it was an insurgency and an anti-colonial effort to win their independence because they wanted to be a free people. The Library of Congress finally, while I was there, re-classified the insurrection in all their records. They now see it as the conflict was an insurrection and not a war. So that was kind of a revisionism of history, but the Filipino people really appreciated that step and it got us a lot of good points on the part of the Filipinos who said, "Hey the Americans are finally looking at that period a little bit more objectively. They see that war in many ways was a war of liberation, a war of insurgency, a war for independence rather than what the U.S. thought it was part of the Spanish-American War, and we were just fighting to control what was ours legally. We were there to help the Filipinos. We weren't there to exploit them. So, I was pleased with that and I worked on that. The Library of Congress studied it and said objectively Hey the Filipinos make a good point. So, they changed the way they categorized or interpreted that piece of American-Philippine history.

Q: Sometimes acknowledging these things is all part of soft power and improves your image and proves that you are a little more objective. I am recalling that in Taiwan one of the things that Lee Teng-hui first did when he became President of Taiwan was acknowledge the massacre of the Taiwanese by the Kuomintang army in February, 1947. Up to then it was all hush-hush. So, to get ethnic Taiwanese support for the party that performed this act, Lee acknowledged it, set up a memorial, and did a great deal for the image of the KMT.

ANDERSON: But think how the return of the bell, one of the three bells would be. It would be awesome. It would be a win-win for everybody.

Q: Soft power with a good clang in it.

ANDERSON: Right, the church had been involved and scholars. President Ramos has asked Clinton I think twice. The one bell is at the air force base in Wyoming. But veterans groups have opposed it actively. One bell is in Korea. I think it is at a marine base. That doesn't seem to make a lot of sense. If we have three, why can't we give one back? Anyway.

Q: Anything more.

ANDERSON: Nope, I think that is everything. Those were a couple of turbulent years the more I think about it. I mean, do you want to do one more or stop here?

Q: In the summer of 2002, you transfer from Manila to New Delhi, one English speaking area to another.

[Ed: In July 2002 Dr. Anderson gave a speech at the East-West Center on Malaysia. https://www.eastwestcenter.org/alumni/ewca-conferences/past-conferences/international/2002-kuala-lumpur-malaysia/andersons-speech]

ANDERSON: Back to India.

Q: As we recognized in Manila are you coming into a set group of friends and contacts that you already had known. Now your title is Minister Counselor, higher title but the same job as head of Public Affairs.

ANDERSON: And the same office. I had the exact same office, a fabulous office. But India was very different my second time there. The first time I was in India in '87-'90, India was a third world socialist nonaligned movement country that was not really doing very well and was not very interested in partnering or cooperating or working with the United States. When I went back in 2002, I had the privilege of seeing and experiencing a new and different India. It was quite a remarkable change. Not a real revolution but a remarkable policy change because India in that period shifted basically from being a centrally planned highly bureaucratic, closed to the West, nonaligned third world movement leader, into a country that was really changing and wanted to open up and find a new relationship with the United States. All of this was brought on by the changing global economic situation and the changing communications situation within the world.

I feel very privileged in my Foreign Service career to have been in India in two quite different times. You can see a dramatic policy change from the old India to the new India. During my second time in India, I was Minister Counselor for Public Affairs. We had two ambassadors when I was there, two DCMs. The first ambassador, both were political appointees as is usually the case in India. The first ambassador was Robert Blackwell who was close to President Bush and Condoleezza Rice during the campaign. The second ambassador while I was there was David Mulford who was a businessman, banker, financier, who had been very experienced under Reagan in the Department of the Treasury. He had been I think undersecretary of assistant secretary for international affairs in the Department of Treasury. The DCM, the first one was Al Tieble and the second one was Robert Blake. Bob Blake today is the assistant secretary for South Asia, I think it is called. After India he went on to Sri Lanka as an ambassador and then came back to Washington and is now the assistant secretary, so he has done very well. I guess my best memory of India is simply the huge change in the bilateral relationship.

President Bush and Ambassador Blackwell, to their credit; both were highly focused on developing a better relationship with India. They realized that India was a rapidly growing economic power, a giant, and that we simply had to improve relations with India, and our relations over decades had been checkered and directly influenced by our friendship and closer relations with Pakistan. And of course, then the nuclear issue affected how we perceived both of those countries. But for years India was not friendly to the U.S., they were close to the Soviet Union. They claimed to be nonaligned, but it was the height of the cold war and India was clearly not very cooperative with the U.S. and was quite dependent on the Soviet Union for aid and weapons and everything else. President Bush wanted to change this, and I think he did to his credit. When I was there, I did see the culmination of a strategic partnership that dramatically changed or has the potential to dramatically change how the U.S. works with India, sees India and how India projects itself to the wider world. I was there when Bush came for a visit in March 2006. That was an historic visit. Bill Clinton of course had been in India a few years earlier and had a spectacularly successful visit and did much to improve relations with India. I think you have to give President Bush and Ambassador Blackwell great credit for focusing like a laser beam and really working out the difficult nuclear and other issues that had to be resolved before this strategic partnership, which was concluded in July of 2005, to make that partnership possible. The partnership evolved under two different political parties in India, two different prime ministers. The BJP coalition (Bharatiya Janata Party) was running India during the early times while I was there, and when relations got quite close and very good. But they lost the election in 2004 and the old Congress Party under Sonja Gandhi and current Prime Minister Manmohan Singh came to power. Ironically it was Manmohan Singh who was the minister of finance years earlier who really saw the handwriting on the wall and said to India, we have got to change our economic system. We have got to be part of the global economy. We need to cooperate with the U. S. We need to open up to foreign investors. We can't go it alone. We can't afford to be tied to the Soviet Union, and India deserves to be more than just a leader of the socialist world or the non aligned movement. India is a power and needs to play a more active role.

Today India is part of the G-8. Remarkable how India has moved towards the center and towards a more open society and much of this I think can be credited not just to Bush but also to the American private sector because much of the foreign investment that got into India despite tight regulations against it were companies like GE, Microsoft, IBM etc. that saw the niche that India had on the information technology and brain power and expertise that the Western companies and countries could benefit from a lot from tapping into and partnering with. So, you had companies like General Electric which years ago saw the advantage of working in India and really paved the way for what I see as the New India. Of course, bookshelves are full of books on the New India, the powerhouse of India. Some of that is true. There has I think been a lot of disappointment that the New India has not overnight changed into a friend and ally of the U.S., but India is a democracy; you have got to keep that in mind. It is independent. It is a big country. It is powerful. It is feeling its oats. It has done very well economically. It is growing at 6, 7, 8%, second only to China. So, India is doing quite well in part because of U.S. investment. In part because of a change in its foreign policy. India is India. It is not going

to change that quickly. It is remarkable how much it has changed in a relatively short amount of time.

Q: Would one of those changes be reflected in the media and therefore impact the embassy's public diplomacy program? Does that include television?

ANDERSON: Television was all government. I think we touched on this earlier. Broadcasting was all government. I think that has changed completely now. Of course, the new media and the indigenous newspapers and broadcasting. All of that has changed. But India has always been quite free in terms of print media. But broadcasting was tightly government controlled. Radio and TV until quite recently so that has been a big improvement, a big change.

Q: Does the change in atmosphere give the Embassy's PD program more leeway to offer material.

ANDERSON: To some extent, right. I think more importantly it has been the change on the education front in terms of public diplomacy. People-to-people. You have over 100,000 Indian students studying in America. Absolutely remarkable. It is second only to China. For years India was the biggest single sender of foreign students to the U.S. That has now been bypassed by China. But still 100,000 Indians are studying in America. They are bright, hardworking students. Some stay in the U. S. to our benefit and work in Silicon Valley or in our hospitals or our business community or on Wall Street. But most go back to India and take back a genuine liking for America. A respect for our economic system, our diversity, our democracy. That has contributed a lot to closer relations with the U.S. and has made public diplomacy's job in India easier. Also English again is widely spoken in India. That is a huge advantage America has compared with Russia or China or any other country.

But going back to what we did in India. Much of our time was spent explaining this new initiative, this strategic partnership. Trying to stimulate India's awareness of America's new interest in India and realization that the stereotypes didn't hold up any more on the part of both countries. So, when I was there, we did lots of different things. We opened four American Corners in different parts of the country. This didn't replace our American centers or American libraries which we still continued to operate, but they demonstrated our expanded interest in India and got us out of the huge giant metropolitan cities into kind of second tier areas.

We did a lot with Muslim Indians. People forget India is a plural society. There are millions if not zillions of Indian Muslims, as well as the majority Hindu people and Christians. But we did a lot of special effort to reach out to young Muslims, an audience before 9/11 we didn't pay any attention to. We started to work more with Muslim universities, madrasas around the country, Muslim schools in the country. I think I mentioned earlier we had a magazine called Span which is a wonderful public diplomacy tool that started 50 years ago, when I was there it was in English. When I was there the second time we expanded it to both Hindi and Urdu editions in an effort to reach out to

younger non-English speaking, less affluent. Less elite segments of the young generations that were coming along. We did a lot of support for VIP visitors. We had Rumsfeld; we had Rice, we had Bush, we had all kinds of different American officials, presidential candidates of all kinds visiting. I noticed a definite increase in American interest in India's schools and universities. How could they turn out all these brilliant scientists and IT experts and all that? Of course, it was very simple. They had just a handful of the elite universities; a couple of them were started by America in the 1950's under Nehru. They put a lot of resources into just a handful of two institutions, the IIT, Indian Institute of Technology, which was modeled after MIT and the IIM, the Indian Institute of Management, which were modeled after the Harvard Business School. So those institutions were very elite focused, very select in who they allowed in. They took in relatively few students. They were harder to get into than Harvard. They were more competitive than Harvard.

But the bulk of Indian Universities and schools were terrible, low quality, poor, underfunded. Poor libraries. Poorly trained faculty and relatively cut off from the wider world. So, we were trying to find ways to get Indian higher education to work more closely with American Universities. Very tough because higher education in India was centrally run. The ministry in New Delhi, highly bureaucratic, highly nationalistic, and very inward looking, except for the IIMs and the IITs which were world class. The rest of higher education was I would say poor quality, mediocre, insular and had relatively little interest in America or exchange programs or Fulbright, or American scholarships or exchanging views. Any of that was just a very inward looking provincial, higher education system. To this day that has not changed much. There is a bill still pending in the Indian parliament. It has been there for the last five, six, or eight years which would open up Indian higher education to more cooperation with foreign universities, but that still hasn't gotten through the parliament. There is still a paranoia, a xenophobia and a feeling that higher education should be government run, nonprofit making, and that it has a national security issue curriculum, and that it should be controlled by Indians for Indians etc.

It is a very odd view of the world, when you look at the brilliant Indian scholars that come to America. They thrive in the U.S. because we have academic freedom. We have good research. We have great libraries. We respect brain power and diversity of views and all of that. But I would laugh when American politicians would come to India and they would all want to visit IIT and IIM and find out how India does this. It is very simple. They put a lot of money into just a handful of elite institutions which are highly competitive and well run and world class. The rest of the system is corrupt and rotten with abysmal standards and very insular looking. I think the number of Indian students coming to America is going to continue because they recognize quality and if you can't get into IIM and IIT it is hard to get a good quality education in India in general.

Q: You were talking about working with Ambassador Mulford to establish new American Corners. I think you were saying the existing major library at Connaught Place was in pretty bad shape.

ANDERSON: It was in bad shape. One, it was insecure. It didn't meet the congressionally mandated OBO standards of set back and all of that. It was basically a 1960 facility trying to serve 21st century audiences. So, one of my projects with Ambassador Mulford's full enthusiastic cooperation was to see if we could get the Washington public diplomacy bureaucracy to rethink the idea of what an American center should look like. Many centers around the world had closed. Libraries had shut down. They ran out of money. People said, "Hey the cold War is over. We don't need libraries to reach out anymore. Nobody is reading books. Why do we need this?" Well, India proves those people dead wrong on all of this. Indians do read books. They like to debate. They like programs they like culture. They want to engage with us.

Ambassador Mulford was very helpful in working with public diplomacy and myself in defining what we saw as a model American Center to serve India in the 21st Century. It would have to be different, but it would have some of the same components of an old-fashioned library or old-fashioned cultural center. This was a tough sell because we had to fight OBO which said, oh you are not complying with security needs. You can't have people walking in. They will blow the place up. Then, there were huge budget cuts in general. There were a lot of people saying hey we don't need libraries anymore. We have the internet. People don't read anymore, and you don't need venues anymore. It is all online and on Facebook and all of this stuff.

The turning point was when President Bush came to India in March of 2006; he came and really signed the deal, the strategic partnership that we worked out - all the tough nuclear, all the issues on India having the bomb and all that - were worked out. We realized that we needed a new relationship. I was able to get into President Bush's speech, his endorsement of a new model American center. Let me find his exact words. I will dig them up someplace. OK, Bush spoke in New Delhi. Gave a big public speech and in that speech his only reverence to public affairs, public diplomacy was his endorsement of a new "State of the art American Center." Now getting that in there was not an easy battle and I don't know how it happened, but those things do happen occasionally. So, we got Bush to endorse that. Of course, that is half the battle.

Bush left office and people said who is going to pay for it? What security regulations, all of these things. So today my understanding with the American Center in India when I was there free-standing, full service American facility in Connaught place, fabulous location is still there is going to be maintained and modernized. But my idea and Bush's idea of a new physical center in a new venue designed differently just can't happen. It is too expensive. Congress wouldn't provide the money etc. But the good news is they are keeping the existing facility and trying to upgrade it and renovate it and keep the great advantage because it is right in the center of New Delhi. To give that up would be crazy. It is just prime property and a superb venue. It is right behind the old Soviet information center and down the street from the British consul which has a modern spanking new cultural facility. At least it has gotten the attention it deserves.

Q: Now in addition to the embassy, we have consulates in Bombay, Calcutta, and Chennai.

ANDERSON: And Hyderabad, the new one.

Q: Each of those are staffed with a PAO. What would be your responsibility to supervise their work? What did you assign them to do out of the consulates?

ANDERSON: Now remember India is a huge country so each consulate is bigger than most countries on their own. 110 million people or whatever. India itself is like 1.2 billion, A little less. It is number two to China, but it will bypass China not too far from now. So, each of the consular districts, while they reported to me, were quite independent. The embassy public affairs office controlled their budget, set broad parameters on policy but they did most of the programming and adapted things for their local audiences. Mumbai is like the New York and Los Angeles of India. It is Bollywood and Wall Street. So, you need to do a lot of programming on the cultural side and finance, business investment trade, all of those issues. Calcutta is fascinating, kind of a cultural center of the Bengali people. It is an intellectual place leftist leaning but just a very vibrant literature, culture, music, dance. So, in that kind of a place, you would probably do more cultural and more literature and more of those kinds of things the Bengali people value. Hyderabad is High tech, an IT center. That is the newest consulate. It just opened a year after I left, and it is in the heart of central India. It is IT, young people, good university, so the programming you would do there would be a little bit different than you might do. And in New Delhi we did more of the traditional policy stuff. New Delhi is like Washington DC. It is bureaucrats and policy makers and think tanks and policy wonks, all of whom think they are the center of the universe. In New Delhi we did more of the bilateral things and security and government to government things and some of the other consulates did more of the cultural, business entrepreneur.

Q: Do you recall any successful or unique programs the consulates might have put together during that time?

ANDERSON: Well in Mumbai I remember vividly public affairs did a fabulous jazz thing. We worked with Black Entertainment Television which is a subsidiary of MTV and brought four or five of the top jazz stars of America to India. Not only would they play because Indians like Jazz and music, but they would also talk about social issues, and the issue we chose was HIV Aids. In Mumbai it is a huge problem. So, we had these giant Jazz stars, Ravi Coltrane. All of them were superstars. This was a unique public private enterprise with MTV and the U.S. embassy. Secretary Powell saw them off. Launched it. So it had the Secretary of State's endorsement. It was public-private which was kind of a new effort. We didn't pay all the bills. Hence, we didn't control the whole thing. We worked with MTV in Mumbai and we helped spread a very important message about HIV Aids. So I think that was a classic example of something in the cultural area.

Another thing we did, U.S. and India military were increasingly cooperating. We were kind of shifting away from Pakistan. We were kind of concerned about terrorism, and we were very worried, and hopeful that we would cooperate with India across the board. So to this day India has more joint exercises with us than they do with any other country,

which ten years ago would have been unheard of. But much closer relations and exchange of information.

Another thing we hosted that was quite innovative and would not have been possible ten years ago, we took a military band from Hawaii and we had them in India for two weeks, which is a lifetime in terms of cultural programming. We took them to eight different cities in India. People said oh you can't do it, it is controversial. The Indian military won't cooperate. The Indians won't come out. Their terrorists will attack. It worked beautifully. So, we took this military band all over the place, and they entertained the Indian military, but also young audiences, university audiences. That was quite successful and very labor intensive. To take a U.S. military band to eight different venues, factor in security, terrorism threat and just the bureaucracy. That went well. That was just an example of a huge ambitious cultural event we did in India.

Another thing we did for the first time we were there, we started a formal English teaching program. Everybody in the past said, Oh Indians speak English. Everybody knows English, why waste our resources. Well as in the Philippines their standard of English had declined, and Indians were interested in American English because of the call centers, the IT linkages. Indian English additionally was very British or unique. Indianglish. But there was a real interest in learning more American style English for economic and other reasons. So, we established a full time American English officer in New Delhi and we undertook efforts to cooperate with Indian universities and institutions to see how we could partner on programming.

Q: A new position? The regional English officer!

ANDERSON: Exactly. And that was what we got while I was there, I believe we received two or three more PD positions as Washington and State department trimmed, cut back on the embassies in Europe which were gigantic and linked to the cold War. State department both Powell and Rice said, "Why do we need twenty PD officers in Germany? They are our friends." So that shift started while I was in India. So India, China, and Indonesia all benefited from a shifting of personnel from overstaffed western European posts to understaffed third world or emerging posts. I was the benefit of that both in India and Indonesia.

Q: Do you recall who that first regional English officer was?

ANDERSON: Richard Boyhum. He just retired about a year ago when I did, but he is now back working on Pakistan as a WAE or a contractor.

Q: How was this regional English officer position conceived?

ANDERSON: It was part of the worldwide RELO (Regional English Language Offices) program. It was just that India never had a RELO or South Asia had never had one. So, he was posted in New Delhi and he covered three or four countries, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal. While it was a regional office, most of his time was spent in

India. The more important country this was all very strategic. The Bush administration realized that India was a very important country. It is not just a third world country. It is an emerging giant, powerful, independent country that we needed across the board to improve relations with. Across the board.

Q: Highlighting that, wasn't there trouble with Pakistan in the time that you were there?

ANDERSON: Oh there were always kerfuffles. There was a serious nuclear confrontation just before I got there, right, over Kashmir. It looked like India and Pakistan might start lobbing nuclear bombs at one another over Kashmir. That happened shortly before I got there, so the embassy downsized, drew down and tensions were high. I think that whole issue also got the U.S. to say we have got to change our nuclear policy. So, we did and we kind of made an exception for India.

Q: Now we were talking in Manila about your working relationship with the ambassadors. Here you have Ambassador Blackwell and Mulford. How were your working relations? You had career people in Manila and these were non career people.

ANDERSON: Both were non career. Yeah, Blackwell was interested in public diplomacy more from a press media point of view. Not the cultural, not the soft stuff. He wasn't interested in that frankly. But he was very interested in the press and I think was a very effective ambassador in arguing aggressively about U.S. policy and why we needed to turn things around with India. He did a lot of briefings with the press. He did roundtables with think tankers all the time, constantly. But he was focused on strategic pol-mil issues. Narrowly focused. But he had the confidence of President Bush and Secretary Rice and he did turn our policy around and he let public diplomacy generally alone. I guess he thought we were doing a good job. He was not against what we were doing but he was highly focused on the geostrategic issues, the high level negotiating strategic partnership. So do that you have to win over the Indian press because they were generally anti-U.S. just in general. I mean prickly and leftist and just in general. Anti-U.S. it had always been. He didn't win them all over. But he did meet them. He did a lot of op-eds. He advocated actively our policy towards Afghanistan and anti-terrorism and the nuclear issue. Blackwell was aggressive, assertive, out there, and in your face. He used public diplomacy very effectively, particularly the press office in briefings, op-ed pieces, schmoozing with editors. He did what I call the round tables, very often. He loved round tables.

Q: Who was your press officer?

ANDERSON: Gordon Duguid. A terrific officer, Gordon was first class. And very busy, Ambassador Blackwell kept him busy. Ambassador Mulford came in later. Times were different. Relations were much better. Tensions had been lessened. I think he had a broader vision and a business background and was stronger on economic issues. But the whole objective of the strategic partnership was to realign our relations with India, broadly so everything was included. Health environment, education, military, political, and of course nuclear. All of those issues were pieces of the new emerging relationship.

One new thing we did that I am very proud of that got rave reviews as a public diplomacy tool was we wanted to document in writing the transformation of the relationship. So we got a little extra money out of Washington and we produced a booklet 127 pages, documenting the new U.S.-India relationship. We got Secretary Powell to write the intro. We farmed it out professionally. We said let's not do it in house. Let's farm it out and do it first rate. So, we had the money to do it. We worked with India Today which is the leading weekly newsmagazine, highly independent and reputable. They had an in-house consulting firm, publications section that took on ad hoc commercial projects. So, we virtually hired them to slickly produce this publication for us. Now we ended up doing 90% of the work because it had to be re-written and everything had to be cleared of course. We had to educate them on what we wanted the publication to say. But they did a bang-up job graphically. But they had graphs and charts in full color and slick visuals and nice. It was the best publication I saw PD do ever. And we distributed it in English and in Hindi, and it was just first rate. Highly professional and very effective as a teaching tool and a PD vehicle. We sent it to journalists and parliamentarians and academics. It just went all over the place. It was so successful. That was under Blackwell I think.

It was so successful that when Ambassador Mulford came in and the strategic partnership had evolved even more he said, we have got to do something like this again. I said, "We just did it. We can produce another 120, but what we did do, we produced a 14 page very professional slick scene setter for the visit of Bush to India and Manmohan Singh, prime minister to Washington. We got Condi Rice to do the intro, and then we kind of updated everything. Again, it was very effective. What made it, the ambassador loved it because what we did in addition to producing this 14-page mini publication, we had the ambassador do a letter and sign it, and we sent that letter from him along with the copy. We sent it to everybody who was anybody in India, hundreds of thousands of people. And it looked like the letter from the ambassador was personalized. It was very well done on the embassy letterhead, and it was machine signed but it looked very personalized. It got the ambassador's personal message out. In that message he said something like give us some feedback and we look forward to partnering with you in the new partnership and all of that. Many people did answer it. We had dozens and dozens of people who took the time out to say I read the publications, here are some thoughts. The ambassador was so pleased. He said you are having an impact. That again showed the impact again if you had a well-done professional product you will get a response. Now neither of those things were cheap, especially the first 127 page book. But it was well worth doing. Those have been kept. They are collectors' items. We posted the full text on the website so anybody in the world could access it. For years the embassy had that on their website because it was such a definitive and serious publication that documented health and science and education and military and environment and foreign investment. It just documented the full range of the relationship. Where it has been and where it is going in a very readable journalistic style, so people liked it. We were just flooded with people who wanted copies, and we ran out, and didn't have the budget to reprint it again or update it. But well worth it and it came at a strategic time when the relationship was changing so it was a nicely timed tool. I think it really worked.

Q: With the three consulates in the time that you were there, did you get a chance to travel around India?

ANDERSON: Not enough. Remember each of these had a public affairs officer and each had at least one other officer. So they were mini public affairs sections competent with their own staff and under the consul general. So, there was not that much need for me to travel. I go to them once a year or something. They ran their own shops and didn't need me physically there. People from New Delhi would come and visit. The ambassador would visit. VIPs would visit, speakers would come and all that but they were kind of autonomous. I held the budget power in New Delhi and broad policy guidance and press guidance all came out of New Delhi, but programming, the contact work, that was all done locally and very effectively.

Q: You were saying that the jazz superstars program was particularly effective. Was there any other programming that was thought to be just standard as what we do and turned out to generate quite a good response?

ANDERSON: We were doing lots with Muslim audiences. Reaching out and that was fairly new. There was a big push in Washington at the time, of course, for some outreach post-9/11. India I believe may be the second or third largest Muslim population in the world. India is gigantic. Over 100,000,000. People don't think of India as Muslim; they think of it as Hindu but 100,000,000 or more Muslims. So, we made a special effort to reach out to them in their language, Urdu, and programming on democracy, freedom of Religion, foreign policy and showing we don't hate Muslims and trying to explain our policy in Afghanistan and the Middle East etc. A hard sell.

Q: What would you cite as your personal highlight of this tour?

ANDERSON: India. I got to travel. I loved travel, in India it was just fascinating. The big accomplishment was just explaining our policy change, explaining our strategic partnership and being there when that evolved. Being in on the ground floor, seeing that evolve from just an idea of the Bush administration through successful completion with the Bush POTUS visit in 2006. That happened just before I left.

Q: Now Blackwell ran into some criticism from his staff in the time he was in New Delhi.

ANDERSON: Turn that off and I will comment.

Q: We are going to finish up here. We started talking about some of Ambassador Blackwell's problems managing the embassy.

ANDERSON: I would say the ambassador was extremely hard working, highly motivated, and very energetic. He understood the importance of public diplomacy particularly on the press side. He was very aware of the role the feisty and free Indian press plays in the relationship. The Indian press kind of historically has been anti-American and a bit leftist and loves to bash the U.S. But I would say Ambassador

Blackwell was very successful in focusing narrowly on the idea of a strategic partnership. This was a huge change in how the U.S. saw India and how India saw the U.S. I think he maybe didn't pay enough attention to staff morale in other parts of the embassy but he sure was focused like a laser beam on convincing the Indian government and the Indian public through the media that it was in both countries interest to have a strategic partnership and that the way the two countries had related to one another for the first 50 years was not in either countries' interest. I was always impressed with how hard and focused Ambassador Blackwell was on this strategic partnership initiative. He certainly had the confidence of the White House and the National Security Council and people like Secretary Rice.

Q: Still some staff left because he was so hard charging.

ANDERSON: I think he was very demanding to some people, high standards. He was a workaholic, worked constantly. Highly motivated. Demanded a lot of his staff and he certainly kept our press office busy. I know that. We did lots of press events, lots of round tables, lots of by-liners, lots of speeches, supported his travels, and we had lots of high-level visitors. I recall Rumsfeld; Condoleezza Rice came out, a number of congressional delegations. So, we were kept very busy supporting the front office. I would say for us it was traditional press support things. Ambassador Blackwell knew how to use the media and work with the media and used our services constantly, and I had good access to him.

We certainly had contact. I met with him every day, every morning, and except for the political section it was the press, the DCM and the PAO, the DCM and the political counselor that met every single day with the ambassador. So, I had no problems getting access. We were just kept really busy. But I think we got results. Take a look at the record. It speaks for itself. The relationship truly did change, has changed for the better, and Ambassador Blackwell and the folks in Washington need to take credit for that. It was kind of like the change in China. Rarely do our relations change dramatically, but in the case of China they certainly changed just in a few years. India was another time which within a relatively short period a proactive ambassador and an understanding and supportive White House can turn things around and change our foreign policy. That does not happen often, and I feel privileged to have been in the Foreign Service and served in India to see this change taking place. It was very exciting, heady stuff and it culminated with the Bush visit to India in 2006 and Public Affairs was extremely active in that visit.

Q: Mike, you were assigned to Jakarta from 2006 to 2010. Let me start off with my usual question. How did you get this job?

ANDERSON: How did I get this job? I just bid on it. Nothing, I was obviously qualified because I had done research in Indonesia as a grad student. I had a little of the language. I had served elsewhere in the immediate neighborhood. It was a great job being PAO in Indonesia at this time.

Q: You had a series of overseas tours, Manila, New Delhi, and Jakarta. Is this unusual to be overseas for such an extended period of time?

ANDERSON: A little unusual. I wasn't interested in serving in Washington. Under USIA they were a little more flexible, more field focused. Then when USIA merged into State, those policies still pertained to PD officers. But it is always the need of the services. You are right I did not serve that much in Washington but that was part of it because I wasn't interested and then jobs just came up and if you are the best person, they tend to take you, I think.

Q: Now when you arrived in Jakarta give us a feel for how the embassy was organized. You were of course the senior public affairs officer, the Counselor for Public Diplomacy.

ANDERSON: The ambassador was Ambassador Pasco who had been there for several years. The DCM was John Hefron. Both were terrific to work with. Indonesia was kind of, backburner, but not a backwater. That is unfair to say, but it wasn't front and center in terms of U.S. policy even in Southeast Asia. Indonesia was the dominant country in the region, a leader of ASEAN. I think a couple of things got Washington's attention. One, was the entire post 9/11 period, and you did have a series of as you recall a series of terrorism acts in Indonesia. At least two bombing incidents, a huge one in Bali and then there were several incidents in Djakarta, including one when I was there. In 2009 the two American hotels, a Marriott and the Ritz Carlton were bombed by terrorists in back-to-back incidents. The same day. That, I think, reminded Washington and the rest of the world that Indonesia, even though it was thousands of miles away from the Middle East, was a Muslim majority country and had a small extremist group that needed attention. That, of course, got Washington's interest.

But I think the most interesting factor was the election of President Obama. Obama had lived in Indonesia for four years as a primary school student. His mother loved Indonesia and had been an anthropology student at the East-West center where I also studied. Anne Dunham Obama brought her young son to Indonesia in 1967, I think. So Obama lived in Indonesia with his mother for four years and his stepfather. Then of course Obama was elected in 2008 when I was there, and that was just fascinating. Indonesians were just ecstatic. They treated him as one of their favorite sons. They had a phrase for him, "Enac Minte." Enac in Indonesian means child. Minte was the part of Djakarta where Obama lived with his mother and where he went to school. So the media instantly dubbed him Enac Minte, "Son of Minte." I think that shows how they were really honored to have hosted Obama for several years. His mother did serious research and worked in Indonesia for a number of years on women's issues, development issues, micro financing and she did a classic Ph.D. based on her research in a Javanese village. So all of that kind of came together when I was in Indonesia.

In August 2007, Cameron Hume, who was appointed Ambassador to replace Ambassador Lynn Pasco. Ambassador Pasco moved on to the UN, became deputy secretary general under Kofi Annan for political affairs, a very senior position. So, he retired from the Foreign Service, moved to the UN and Ambassador Hume took over as a career diplomat

ambassador in Indonesia. We always joked at the embassy that the stars were aligned. Obama was elected and relations improved. Indonesia was becoming more democratic. They had a democratically elected president for the first time SBY, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The Indonesian economy was doing well; the country was recovering from the Asian financial crisis and the collapse of the Suharto government in 1998, and things were kind of moving in the right direction.

It was a perfect time to be in Indonesia. Obama's election focused Washington's attention on the fact that we really needed to repair relations with Indonesia, which were kind of in the doghouse for years over human rights issues. And just kind of the feeling Suharto had been in power over 30 years. The Indonesian economy was falling apart. And of course, 1998-1999 Suharto was forced out. That marked a significant change in the direction Indonesia was going and it became democratic, and more friendly to America, more open to the world. So, it was a great time to be in Indonesia. Then the Obama administration led by Secretary Clinton who on her first overseas trip anywhere in the world in February of 2009 chose to go to Asia before she went anywhere else. Traveled to Japan [ED: February 16-18], Indonesia [February 18-19]. Korea [February 19-20, and China [February 20-21]. She did a four-country swing to demonstrate to Asia that we were serious once again about Asia. We knew this was the growth area, the most important area to both the U.S. economy and security issues. So, Hillary came, I remember distinctly, to Djakarta in February, 2009, and discussed with President Idi Ono and the foreign minister the need for a comprehensive strategic partnership. The first time ever with Indonesia. The times had changed, and we needed a more 21st century approach to relations with Indonesia, so that all evolved while I was there.

Q: Speaking of the 21st century approach to public affairs, if I recall you arranged an appearance for the Secretary at a youth television show.

ANDERSON: Ah yes, that was something else.

Q: Now let me get into that for a little bit because I mean these trips were planned well in advance. How did you get on her itinerary and then how did the planning unfold?

ANDERSON: OK, Secretary Clinton is superb at public diplomacy. On all of her trips she insists on doing lots of things other than just meeting with the foreign minister. She also does press; she always does community outreach. She meets with women or youth groups or the NGO sector. This was a big trip because it was her first overseas trip. People were asking, why is she going to Indonesia? Well Indonesia is kind of important. The president is personally interested in Indonesia, and the State Department staff asked for ideas. So we came up with a shopping list of things she could do over and above the standard predictable thing. We suggested that television is crucial in Indonesia. We said instead of meeting with a bunch of stuffy journalists at a press conference you can do that, but why don't you do something different. Why don't you appear on a Dick Clark type show? Exactly, you are right. An American Bandstand type show. It was not a talk show, but it was a young people music show, but we thought Washington was never going to buy into this. But we got her staff interested because this is exactly what we are

looking for. How do we reach young people? How do we show that we are interested in what they are interested in? The TV station loved it. They built a studio in her hotel, so we didn't have to drag her across town. She didn't have to go to the TV station, the TV station came to her. They built a set right in the hotel. Hillary loved it. She was fabulous. She was interviewed by two or three of the guest hosts, and she answered their questions and engaged with them. She has mentioned this several times when she has met with PAO's in other events, how much she enjoyed it. The television show was a smash hit. It was re-run, re-cycled, it was buzzed about. For the first time you had a senior U.S. government official appearing on a kid show. But it was great, and she was fabulous.

Q: Now in the time that you were in Djakarta, she of course was not the only high ranking visitor. I think shortly after you arrived, President Bush came to Indonesia.

ANDERSON: Of course, before Obama's election, right. Bush came in 2006. November of 2006 flew in from Singapore just for a few hours. Didn't stay overnight. Flew only to Bogor and met with the president of Indonesia, so it was a simple POTUS (President of the United States) visit. Very easy. Much of it was driven by security, timetable. So, we didn't do anything really creative PD with him. Everything was at Bogor at the palace for easy control of security. He did a press conference and had good talks, but it was a quick visit, and he didn't stay overnight.

Q: When were the bombings in Bali and Djakarta?

ANDERSON: There were a number of them. There was Bali, the famous Bali bombing, the bad one that killed over 200 was in 2002 before I got there. There was another one in Bali; I think it was 2005. And then Djakarta had several bombings. One of them happened while I was there. It was discouraging because we had no incidents for a time, then in the summer of 2009 terrorists hit back-to-back, two American hotels. It was awful. It meant a lot to me, because I knew one of the bombings targeted a group of American businessmen, a morning breakfast meeting that they always had in the Marriott Hotel. I learned a lesson from that. Mix your meeting schedules. Don't meet in the same place all the time. Anyway, a member of the Fulbright board was one of the injured. Another injured person was a former president of the American Chamber of Commerce. A number of other businesspeople were injured. I think three died. But it was a coordinated back-to-back like ten minutes apart, two major hotels in Djakarta were bombed by the same group. So that was a frightening signal. I think it finally woke up the Indonesian government that it had to work more closely with the U.S., Australia and other friends and allies and that Indonesia had a small but serious terrorism problem. So that I think helped in some ways to convince the Indonesians who were kind of in denial that they did have an extremist problem, small but lethal, that needed more coordination.

Q: Let's walk through that incident for a moment. Where were you when you heard of the bombings?

ANDERSON: I was in my office. It was an attack on a breakfast meeting so it was like 8:00 or 9:00. We had TV on all the time. The television broke, the news channel broke in with the news of two bombings. It was awful.

Q: Now how does the embassy respond to a circumstance like that?

ANDERSON: Well, you convene an emergency action committee meeting. The country team gets together. The RSO (Regional Security Officer) gathers information as quickly as he can. We had good relations with the local police, good relations with other embassies, so you share information quickly and you try to communicate as fast as you can to the American community what is going on.

Q: Were there any special responsibilities that the public affairs section of the embassy might undertake?

ANDERSON: You monitor the media. We got it as fast as anybody, because we had the television on all the time and Djakarta TV was very good. They covered it quickly, immediately, instantaneously. But it was scary because the embassy knew the people one of the hosts of the breakfast lunches. Both were American hotels. We have all been to those hotels for events all the time, and I believe the Marriott Hotel had been bombed earlier, so this was the second bombing of the same American hotel, so that tells you security isn't very good when the same venue gets hit again.

Q: Moving to a different area, after the 9/11 terrorist attack, there was comment that the number of foreign students coming to the U.S. dropped off fairly sharply because we had changed our rules for students from Muslim countries. You said there had been a perception that the number of Indonesian students had declined.

ANDERSON: Oh declined. It plummeted. It was cut by about 50%.

Q: What was the cause of that?

ANDERSON: The highest number, Indonesians for years sent their best and brightest to the U.S. You had a number of scholarship programs, USAID, Fulbright Rockefeller, Ford Foundation etc. So many of the technocrats in Indonesia were U.S. educated. We always used to joke about the Berkley Mafia, the Indonesian economists who for years had gotten their PhDs and Berkley or elsewhere in the U.S. They returned and made a major contribution to the development of Indonesia. They were in the Sukarno and Suharto cabinet and in development plans and all of that. Major contributors to the brain power of Indonesia and to economic planning. But yeah there is no question there was a sharp dramatic drop in the number of Indonesian students going to the U.S. It went from about 13,000 per year, plummeting to about 7,000. A sharp decrease.

Q: What was the cause?

ANDERSON: A number of different things. I would say primarily 9/11. The perception that Americans didn't like Muslims; they didn't like Indonesians. Americans didn't like foreign students and therefore you couldn't get a visa, or that you would be hassled. That either in getting a visa or getting into the U.S. that you just weren't welcome. That was one factor. I think much of that is kind of unfair, but it was a perception across the Islamic world, that the U.S. was unfriendly to Islamic students. And remember Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim majority nation. 86% of 240 million people are Muslim. So, although the Middle East and Pakistan and Iran and Afghanistan are far from Southeast Asia it is still part of the Islamic world. The perception in Indonesia, as it is in the Middle East, is that the United States is unfriendly towards Muslim students regardless of where they came from.

Another factor definitely was the costs. After the Asian financial crisis, the Indonesian economy fell apart and the middle class weakened and just couldn't afford to travel overseas or send your kids overseas as they once did. American tuition continued to rise.

Then a third very important factor was increased competition from the neighbors. You had Australia next door aggressively marketing Indonesian students because Indonesia is at the doorstep of Australia. Australia by then had changed its policy from kind of being part of the West to kind of being more pro-Asian because it was part of Asia whether you liked it or not. So Australian universities were actively recruiting Indonesian students. The Australian government was aggressively giving scholarships as was New Zealand, as was Singapore right next door, as was Japan. As was Germany, Holland, the UK, France, etc. Everybody wanted Indonesian students for diversity and because they are an important part of the region and culturally are unique and can contribute a lot to any university.

Plus, the U.S. had issued a travel warning. I will find the right word. I always get that wrong. After the bombings in Indonesia the U.S. government put in a travel warning or advisory. Let me check on the right phrase to be sure we get it right. But it basically said the U.S. recommends that you avoid going to Indonesia. Also Australia had the same policy because the bombings were targeted at foreigners. That was the perception of some of the Djakarta bombings and the two Bali bombings were directed at, although many local people died, they were still targeted at foreigners, so a number of countries advised their citizens either to avoid traveling to Indonesia or to travel with extreme caution. And the U.S. published such a warning. To the great credit of the Obama administration and Ambassador Hume, during my time in Indonesia we lifted the travel warning because we realized that was scaring American students away from Indonesia. It was scaring foreign investment away from Indonesia. It was turning Indonesians off. They said, "Hey come on. Yeah we have had some bombings but you are hurting tourism. You are hurting investment. You are hurting our country." So to the Credit of Ambassador Hume as ambassador he fought to have that travel warning lifted. He succeeded in doing that through working with DS (Diplomatic Security) and the Consular Bureau so that was lifted.

The lifting of that had a huge psychological effect. Many universities took a closer look, a new look at Indonesia. Some of them had stopped sending exchange students or anything because they said it is dangerous, and if the U.S. government says it is dangerous we are not going to risk sending our students and faculty. The embassy took a more realistic approach that Indonesia was fighting terrorism. That the incidents were isolated and had diminished, and that Indonesia was cooperating with the U.S. on the war on terrorism.

Q: One of the arrows in the Public Affairs quiver is the Fulbright program. How is it implemented in Indonesia?

ANDERSON: Great program. I was co-chair of the Fulbright board in Indonesia called AMINEF, American Indonesia Educational Foundation. We had a big program, a good program. We were able to increase it while I was there, but we did a couple of other things that I worked on that were important. One is we renewed the Fulbright agreement which had expired. These bi-national arrangements are tortuous things to negotiate. They are for a set number of years usually. Then when they run out it takes a huge effort to re-negotiate and re-sign it. We went through that in Indonesia.

Q: What were the issues involved?

ANDERSON: It is a bi-national agreement, so you have to get the State lawyers to agree; you have got to get the host country to agree. The issues? How many, what areas to focus on in terms of scholarships. Who foots the bills? Fulbright is supposed to be reciprocal and bi-national meaning both governments, they are partners. So, they each have a commitment to it. What are the terms that each side is agreeing to? In Indonesia until the renegotiation, all the money was coming from the U.S. So, all of the grants for the budget were U.S.; Indonesia gave free office space. I think that was about it. We re-negotiated and got the Indonesian government to actually put in some of their own money, so the number of grantees, Fulbrighters could be increased, and we got a greater buy-in on the part of the Indonesian Ministry of Education. So that was a big breakthrough. It showed that when they welcomed the Fulbright program, which they saw was not an aid program but as a mutually beneficial partnership in higher education. So, we were pleased with that commitment. Also, I need to stress one major development while all of this was going on was the comprehensive partnership. This was a formal agreement between the two governments to expand our degree of cooperation and our commitment to a closer relationship. All of this paved the way for President Obama to visit Indonesia.

Planning the visit was a nightmare. Obama was supposed to make his first official trip to Indonesia. Coming home in March of 2010, if I have my dates right. I think I do. That did not happen despite all the planning. The vote on health care came before the U.S. Congress at about the time Obama was to come to Indonesia so the White House embarrassingly said, “Oops!” So he has to be in Washington. The Indonesians understood that so the visit was canceled despite months of planning. It was re-scheduled for June of 2010. So, the embassy and the two governments planned, went through all the scenarios and came with all the deliverables and things. If I recall that visit was canceled. Let’s see what caused that cancellation. I think it was the oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico. [Ed:

Perhaps the April 20, 2010 Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill?] That blew up just as Obama was to come to Indonesia. So again the White House had to inform the Indonesian government the trip had to be postponed. Both of the postponements were hugely disappointing, not just to the embassy which had spent weeks and weeks planning this, but it was a great disappointment to the Indonesian people who were very excited, very honored to have Obama as president and were looking forward to him and his family making a sentimental journey back to Indonesia. Well that didn't happen. Then it was re-scheduled for November, 2010. To my personal disappointment I rotated out of Jakarta by July of 2010.

The Obama visit was re-scheduled for November, 2010 [Ed: November 9-10 in Indonesia. The trip started in India, November 6-9, Indonesia, Korea, November 10-12, and Japan, November 12-14]. That visit did happen. It was a great visit. It was appreciated by all sides. But it was very frustrating to have to cancel the earlier visits, and very costly as you know. All the amount of planning and advanced teams, pre-positioning, security and all of that has to change. But Obama did finally come. It was a great visit. It cemented the comprehensive partnership and really advanced the relationship in a positive way. Obama spoke; his major public appearance in Indonesia during his visit was a major address at the University of Indonesia. It was like a rock star. A fabulous speech. It was greatly appreciated. He threw in a few words of Indonesian which everybody loved. Just very successful as a trip. He had hoped to visit elsewhere in Indonesia. He always wanted to take his family to Borobudur near Jogjakarta. That is where his mother had done her research. In his book he openly says my family has to visit the wonderful world here in a site called Borobudur. It actually is a Buddhist temple, fabulous. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site and a major religious center and tourist center. But his visit to Djakarta got cut back a bit.

These visits– I learned so much. To get the president to come is a huge accomplishment. To get the president to stay even overnight is an event. Bush, as I said, went to Indonesia but didn't stay overnight. That causes comments. People always notice that. They always want him to stay longer, do all the cultural things that take time and effort and are huge security factors. But anyway, the visit finally did take place. It was successful. But the family didn't go with him unfortunately as I recall. It was a curtailed visit a bit because again something came up. But he did get the comprehensive partnership off the ground and the number one plurality of that partnership is education, higher education cooperation. So, among the other areas of cooperation, security, terrorism, the environment, public health, trade, science and technology, all of those elements of our relationship received a boost from both the presidential visit and the formal signing of the comprehensive partnership. The first ever between the two countries.

Q: Now the partnership, one of its targets was to increase the number of students going back and forth. We talked about the numbers that dropped off literally on both sides. Was the Indonesia-U.S. partnership successful in increasing the number of students?

ANDERSON: Well, the partnership is an ongoing effort. It is not a one shot. But the embassy country plan, and it is the first embassy country plan I have seen in any embassy

anywhere in the world where the number one priority of the entire embassy was promoting greater education cooperation. It had a number of components to it. One was increasing the students. Doubling. I mean it had a specific goal within four years doubling the number of students going in both directions. Now that was extremely ambitious if I could be so objective. Because the figure of students going from Indonesia to the U.S. was around 7,000. So, we were saying in four years we were going to double that up to 14,000 or so. Then going the other way the number of Americans plummeted to 100-150 American kids going to Indonesia, a ridiculously low number. That was again linked in part to the 9/11 and the travel advisory and just a lack of American interest in Indonesia. It is a country we know nothing about and yet it is the world's fourth largest country. It is the world's largest Muslim country. It is a member of G-20. Indonesia was invited to become a member of the most elite group of economies in the world. Indonesia was a leader of the nonaligned movement. It was a member of OPIC, a member of APEC. It was very active in the UN.

Q: Active in ASEAN.

ANDERSON: Active in ASEAN. It was a founding member and dominant member of ASEAN for years. But Americans for one reason or another just don't know much about Indonesia. For years Indonesia was very low key, it was not that interested in a more active relationship with the U.S. and was not a democracy. It was a military-run government under two dictators for 40-50 years. Sukarno, the founder of the country, who had an anti-American tinge for sure and was very nonaligned movement, the Bandung conference focused and tilted more towards socialism and communism. So, there was a lot of cold war baggage that affected our ability to cooperate with Indonesia.

Now when Suharto was overthrown in 1998-1999 that changed. Democracy came into Indonesia and really changed things. Indonesia is a remarkable success story. The economy is doing well, growing 4%, 5%, 6%. I think it is the third fastest Asian economy now after China, Surprise, surprise and India. But Indonesia is like number three. It has a democratically directly elected president who was educated in the United States, speaks English, likes America, and actually had proposed the comprehensive partnership. That actually came from the Indonesian side. Yudhoyono had proposed it in Washington in a speech in 2008. So the Indonesians had proposed a closer link to the U.S. to their credit. So the stars were aligned. Things were happening within Indonesia and the rest of the world. And Obama's election and increase in interest in Indonesia actually got things moving forward and actually got the relationship at a higher level. A new level.

Q: In the public affairs world, one's image is an important aspect of any relationship. Getting into education now, having an educational advising service which helps students find a school in the U.S. is important. You had an opportunity to enhance that.

ANDERSON: Exactly, student advising, the free student advising service was part of the Fulbright commission programs. We got extra money under this initiative to expand it, get into social media, get into more active marketing of the U.S. We realized that times have changed. The U.S. cannot sit back; American universities cannot sit back and expect

Indonesian students to be pounding on their door. That is not realistic anymore. So we needed to sell American education. We needed to explain our visa process. We needed to explain 9/11 that no there was no war on Muslims. We welcomed diversity; we welcomed Indonesian students. Muslim students. And that we were serious about increasing cooperation university to university, people to people with Indonesia. So, we undertook a whole range of activities. One was beefing up student advising. One was expanding Fulbright activities. One was expanding a whole range of exchange programs from an AFS high school exchange program, to international visitors, to speakers, to Muslim outreach, to programs geared to reach the madrassas. We did a whole series of things, but the cumulative effect was to increase cooperation people to people. Especially university to university. Well, that was an area that needed improvement and where things could be improved.

We had other partners, USAID was involved. It established six or eight linkage programs. They gave grants to American universities to tie up with counterparts in Indonesia. We got money to do things on the science and technology front. We just did a number of different activities across the board to foster mutual understanding. Public diplomacy had the lead in a lot of that but not all of it. It was truly a mission-wide activity.

To the credit of Ambassador Hume, he understood a couple of things. He understood public diplomacy, so he aggressively used it, which was good. He supported our activities. He understood the importance of higher education, that that was one area where the U.S. actually had something to contribute. We have a great higher education system, the best in the world, and Indonesia's higher education system was quite weak. That was an area where the U.S. really could contribute. So, the more linkages, the more exchange programs, the more contact we had, the better for both sides. It was clearly a win-win for both sides and both peoples. We pushed that.

Now you asked if we had been successful in increasing the numbers of students. I think we have learned it is very difficult to make changes quickly. The cost of American universities continued to go up. International competition for Indonesian students continued to intensify. The U.S. was the only player in town 20-30 years ago. Therefore Indonesia's students, the best and brightest, wanted to come to Harvard and Berkley and Chicago and Minnesota and Purdue, etc. We have lost that huge advantage, because there are a number of good universities around the world now and the number of our scholarships has dropped. Scholarships from other countries have increased. So as American educational costs have gone up, we have lost market share. We got sloppy, we got lazy, we got arrogant, and we got tough on our visa policy and our immigration policy.

Q: Around this time Congress reorganized USIA. Did you still have the American Center, the American Library?

ANDERSON: No, that was all lost. Thank you for bringing that up because Ambassador Hume deserves much of the credit for this. For years we had American libraries in Indonesia which were venues where young people and others could come in and take out

books and read American magazines, speak English, and meet Americans, cultural groups, speakers, whatever it might be. Those over time were eliminated due to a combination of budget cuts, the demise of USIA and heightened security concerns. American libraries worldwide were always targets for anti-Americanism, including in Indonesia. During the nasty old days under Sukarno, American libraries were regularly attacked. Demonstrations if not nastier incidents. I think several were burned or attacked certainly. In Medan, Surabaya, and Djakarta. Keep in mind we had consulates in Medan, and Surabaya and the embassy in Djakarta. So over time our public spaces, our cultural centers or libraries were closed. Now the comprehensive partnership comes along. We are in the 21st century and brainstorming on how we could improve relations with Indonesia. The public diplomacy section and the ambassador all agreed, can't we establish or create a 21st century secure cultural center, American center, whatever you wanted to call it. I am laughing because if you read one of Obama's autobiographies, he even talks about going to the American Library in Djakarta. His mother was an English teacher. She had a contract at the embassy to teach English to I think some USAID participants. So, when his mother Anne Dunham was teaching on the embassy grounds, Little Obama, Barack, would be dropped off at the American library at the embassy. Obama remembers that. Because he would go there and page through Life magazine and books about American killing time while his mother was a few doors down teaching English. One of Obama's books has a wonderful reference to the value of the American library. So anyway, to make a long story short, we worked closely with the ambassador and came up with a new and exciting kind of cultural center. We said, let's sell it to Washington and see if we can make it happen, and what would be better because Obama is coming to town. This is the perfect deliverable.

If we are serious about engaging with Indonesian young people and promoting mutual understanding, we need to have a new kind of American center, an American venue. So we came up with a unique concept to sell to Washington and we did it. What we wanted to do was we said let's not have people come into the embassy because that is scary and the walls are high and you have barbed wire and armed guards. Indonesians don't want to go into the embassy, it is not friendly. Besides the embassy has all these regulations and no room and the security restrictions. Now where do young people hang out in Djakarta? Now Djakarta is a booming city of 10 million people with a rapidly growing middle class. A rapidly expanding free market system. Booming economy 4% growth, 5%, 6%. 7%. Rising consumerism. Young people in Djakarta as they do in Manila and Bangkok and Seoul, hang out at the mall. So the shopping mall was the hangout for young people in Djakarta. One figure I saw in Indonesia there was something like 70 different malls in Djakarta alone. These were major shopping malls, American style. Air conditioned. So, we said, why don't we set up a cultural center in rented space in a shopping mall. It has never been done before. One, that was where young people hung out. Two, it was a way to comply with embassy and DS security regulations.

We would have a contractor manage the facility on behalf of the embassy, so public affairs of the U.S. embassy was not directly running a wholly owned cultural center. In effect we farmed it out to an Indonesian company, thereby getting around very tight security regulations. We got approval from DS. We got approval from OBO. Most

importantly we got money out of the public diplomacy office in Washington. The undersecretary was Judith McHale. Ambassador Hume went to Washington at least twice. Sold the concept to her and the rest is history. It took about eight months to a year but in December of 2010 the first 21st century cultural center opened in Djakarta in Pacific Place Mall. Third floor. It was called "@america," the symbol for "at," small A, America. Catchy, hi tech. It was unique in that it was in a commercial mall; it was high tech. It was a public private venture because we had a contract with a local company, and some of the content, hardware, and software came from the private sector.

I will give you an example. We went to Google and said, "Google, you have got all this slick high-tech technology, you have got Google Earth. You have a technology called liquid galaxy. Can you lend us that technology; showcase it in this place called "@america." We will give you credit. You are loaning it to us but it will really help young Indonesians get excited about technology, and about learning about America." Google said, "Yes." So they lent us liquid galaxy, which is a software technology that will let you visit America and access google earth, which is what I think it is called. So you go into "@america" and you can visit America through this technology. We went to Cisco and Cisco lent us Zoom, a state of the art video conferencing set up. So our venue in the shopping mall could connect to America so you could do video conferencing. We went to the Smithsonian and said, "What can you give us in terms of exhibits? You spend zillions of dollars on exhibits for nice Americans on the mall, but what can you lend us that would enhance "@america?" They said, we have a nice exhibit on oceanography. "@america" and Indonesia are trying to partner on environmental issues. We will lend you this technology. We went to NOAA, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration and said what can you do? They said we are going to do bilateral marine biological research with Indonesia. We are sending an American NOAA exploration ship to Indonesia called the Okeanos Explorer to do Marine Biology research jointly with Indonesia. We will share those findings, the video, the scientists, the venue. So one of the first substantive topics on display at "@america" was related to the environment and was related to marine diversity. The idea of "@america" was to do different themes on bilateral issues and to integrate hi tech, social media. So, it was a combination of an old fashioned cultural center where you did programs. You had speakers, you did music groups etc. but in addition you had hi tech and in addition you had the social media factor because in America they did You Tube. They had a web site. They did Twitter activities. We had I-pads. We went to Microsoft and got 30 I-pads so kids going to "@america" could check out an I-pad literally and we had special applications on it. So, kids could play with that technology while they visited "@america." We had 30 units. That was a smashing success. One, because it was kind of state-of-the-art technology and two, because young Indonesians are really into new media, new and social media. Facebook. Blackberries, mobile phones, SMS, texting. Hugely popular and just booming in Indonesia. So "@america" played on that interest, and on the wonderful American software and technology that we have.

Q: Another one of the typical USIA programs was the American Corner.

ANDERSON: Yeah, we had that.

Q: That survived in Indonesia too?

ANDERSON: We had mixed results. I will check the correct number. I think we had ten. American Corners are mini book collections or mini reference connections that are embedded in host country libraries around the world. They are supposed to replace public libraries. Of course, they don't. They are bookshelves. They are something small. In Indonesia we deliberately set them up, we thought they would be most successful attached to major universities, attached to university libraries. So, the American Corners are in ten universities across Indonesia as part of the host university library. We would provide some computers, reference books, internet connectivity and some magazine subscriptions and basic reference materials. The host university would provide free space, staff, one or two librarians or clerks, security and program venues. I would say we got mixed results in Indonesia. Some places worked well because we had a wonderful partner university that understood what we were trying to do and really partnered with us, and really turned them into mini programming venues. So, embassy speakers could be hosted by the American Corners. Other places they collected dust, either because the host institution didn't provide, or didn't live up to their side of the bargain. They didn't take care of it; they didn't open it up to others, they didn't creatively program with us. Worldwide American Corners, again mixed results. They worked very well in some countries. I think Russia has been very successful. That is where the idea started. In other places they didn't. But they are not American cultural centers. They are not American libraries. They are mini collections of books that we try to maintain and update and keep active. It is tough because they are in different venues and everything depends on your host and what they are willing to put into it. It has to be a real partnership with the world. Mixed results.

Now getting back to "@america" for one minute. By the time I left in 2010, "@america" was about one year, just a little over a year and a half old. At the end of the first year, they had attracted– guess, how many visitors do you think visited "@america" in the shopping mall? 100,000. That sounds pretty impressive to me. So, 100,000 people visited "@america" in the mall in Djakarta. They either dropped by or they were invited to specific programs. That combination, I don't have the breakdown of the number of programs but it would be dozens of programs and just open hours when anyone could walk in. "@america" was open seven days a week and open the same hours as the mall. It was like 10:00 A.M. to 8:00 or 9:00 P.M. whatever. So, it tried to follow the mall hours. But we very quickly realized you can't count on walk-ins. People, at first it was a novelty. People did walk in, but it was in one corner of the Pacific Place Mall, third floor, and I think the figure was 70% of that 100,000 patrons were invited.

They came for a specific program, or they were a group of students that were invited in for a specific visit. We did a lot of school visitations and bussed students in from all over. We would run programs targeted to different youth groups or different audiences, primarily 18-35. That was our target group. So high school students through young professionals. Also, the Mall in Djakarta was right across the street from the stock exchange and also a number of office buildings. So, we were very eager to program for

and welcome young professionals who were working in the area. Our thought was that over lunch hour many of these people would pop by "@america" and play with our equipment, talk to Americans, engage, and come to noon hour programs. Practice their English, get information about American universities, and would be curious about what this place was and would come back for other programs.

Q: Now did you also have other traditional things like visiting orchestras, visiting speakers and the like?

ANDERSON: Oh sure. We did all the traditional things. Everything from book discussions, to discussing English, to lectures, to speeches by the ambassador, to cooperative programs with other embassy sections. We worked with the foreign commercial service to promote U.S. products. We worked with USAID to promote discussion of development issues. We worked with the Fulbright commission to showcase American Fulbrighters and alumni of American universities who came back. We opened our facilities to alumni groups to use. We partnered with a lot of NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) on joint programs like human rights, everything.

Q: One of the themes rationalizing disassembling USIA was that the United States is master of the universe and everybody will obviously be interested in this. What you are saying is with our lack of attention and with competition from other universities, other speakers, other cultural centers in town, that we weren't the only game in town and in fact we had to make an effort to get an audience.

ANDERSON: I think a couple of things. The world has changed. Asia has changed. A major initiative of the Obama administration is the pivoting to Asia. Have you heard that phrase, pivot? It is really a rebalancing. It is saying Asia in the 21st century is the most important part of the world. Economically it is where the big economies are and it is where the big security threats are coming from. The rise of China, North Korean nuclear threat, South China Sea disputes, the importance of keeping the sea lanes open. The emergence of India and Indonesia. The rise of new regional groupings , or the rise of new commercial and trade agreements like TPP, Trans Pacific Partnership. All of these things make it more important that the U.S. be active in Asia and have good friends in Asia. We can't do it alone. And we just need to realize that times have changed. So yes we have more competition from all of these countries that see Indonesia as an emerging Asian and global player. The fact that Indonesia is in the G-20 now. Ten years ago, 20 years ago that would have been a joke. Fifteen years ago, Indonesia was a basket case economically. The economy had collapsed from the Asian currency crisis in 1998. Indonesia has come back, re-organized, expanded, opened up to trade. So definitely there is much more competition for culture and everything.

Q: One wag used to say, you cultivate friends, you can't order them up. I suspect the public affairs program is part of cultivating people, demonstrating an interest in their concerns. Did you get a chance to travel around Indonesia very much?

ANDERSON: Not enough but I traveled a bit, sure. Remember we had public affairs offices in the consulate at Surabaya, the second biggest city, and then over in Medan, Sumatra, we had a very small consulate. Each of them did public diplomacy things. I traveled a little bit. Not enough. We had our staff travel a lot. We brought speakers all over. We made a conscious effort to get out of Djakarta, it is not the center of the universe, and get to the different provinces and different cities. Indonesia has half a dozen cities of a million people or more and also great geographic differences within Indonesia. Papua is totally different from the rest of Indonesia. That is the furthest province way over in the east, that has a Melanesian culture. It is non-Islamic. It is way behind the rest of the country. It is rich in terms of resources, there is a huge American mine there, Freeport, and vast minerals and forest and fishery resources. Then you have Bali which is a major Hindu cultural center for Indonesia. It is the only place in Indonesia where Muslims are not the majority. It is a major international world class tourist center. Then you have Sumatra, you have Kalimantan and a zillion islands. Indonesia has 13,000 islands. Huge country, Indonesia, 3,000 miles wide. It is like the distance from California to New York. It is just vast. For a PD to be effective we had to get out of Djakarta.

One key thing I have got to mention, because it really just started, not because of me, but when I was there, there was an intense focus on new and social media. Public Affairs in Djakarta is widely recognized within the State Department as a leader in innovative use of new media. Whether it is web sites, Twitter, You Tube, Facebook, communicating SMS, use of mobile phones. Indonesia is fascinated by this new technology. So, we got some extra money out of Washington to experiment with Facebook. In Indonesia we had more Facebook followers than any other embassy in the world. Indonesia is one of the major users of SMS in the world. In many ways Indonesia has leapfrogged. It is an archipelago so it is perfect for new media. You can't have land lines all over Indonesia, so things like internet and mobile phones are just perfect for Indonesia. We tried to capitalize on much of that within the embassy and with some of our programming.

For example, we wanted to increase contact with young people. So, we said what do young people do? They blog, they Twitter. They use Facebook. They send tweets and SMS messages. So, there was a very innovative group of young Indonesians that organized a group called Pesta Blogging. Pesta means fiesta or celebration or conference or however you want to define it. They started an annual gathering of bloggers. Young kids that would get together and would share experiences. We got in on that early and sponsored, I think, it was the second annual Pesta Bloggers. We gave them a small grant. But we were innovative, creative. We were the only embassy to do it. It was perfect because it showed we were interested in listening to young people. It showcased American IT technology, hardware, and software. It showed the embassy was willing to take a chance and reach out to a new group of young people. We have continued to do it. I think this is the third or fourth year. We get kudos and compliments. It is a fabulous outreach activity. We have done it now for about three or four years. Young people now know it. They all welcome the embassy participation. We bring in a few American guest speakers or bloggers. We do video conferencing.

When I was there, we funded expert bloggers to go around the country to teach young Indonesians how to blog. We held a series of these in different places, four or five different places around the country linked to the Pesta Blogging leading internet. It was much appreciated, and we would always have an American speaker or two either virtually or in person. The Ambassador went for several years as a guest speaker. It tied in nicely to the Obama administration's focus on internet and the importance of fostering free communications and openness and press freedom and the free flow of information and the new social media.

When Secretary Clinton visited, for the first time ever we embedded an Indonesian blogger with the Secretary's traveling press. We picked a bright young Indonesian woman who loved new media and was a blogger. One or two and we embedded her within the traveling press. So, she was blogging during the two or three days that Hillary was there. Hillary met her and it was just great. Again, one of the first times the State Department had allowed a local non-American journalist to be embedded with the Secretary's party. She followed her all around the two or three days she was there and blogged. It was great.

Q: When you were in India you talked about the tremendous reaction you got with the Jazz group you had. Was there an equal musical success in Indonesia?

ANDERSON: Yes, we brought in groups. We brought in a hip-hop group once or twice. We brought in a pop music group. We did some of those things. We partnered with the NBA (National Basketball Association). We brought in several stars, big name NBA players. That was under a public-private partnership initiative. Which again was a big initiative under Secretary Clinton to partner with American businesses. The NBA was eager too; they had learned how popular basketball was in China, Philippines, Taiwan, a little in Singapore. But they were interested in looking more broadly within Asia, so they were eager to get a toehold in Indonesia, so they cooperated with us. We did several things. The Ambassador hosted a big event for an NBA superstar that led directly to a cooperative agreement signed between the Indonesian basketball association and the NBA to train young Indonesian basketball players in a summer camp or something. That was not directly our doing but our involvement led to that commercial partnership training. And that has continued to this day.

Q: We were talking about branding and American image when we were talking about students but the public affairs program has to handle kerfuffles. I think when you were there the NAMRU image problem arose. What is the background?

ANDERSON: OK a huge major issue of interest between our countries is public health, whether it is malaria, or TB (tuberculosis). If you recall in the mid-2000s, four, five, six, seven, the world was suddenly faced with the avian influenza scare. Indonesia had more cases of one deadly strain of avian influenza. I will look up the exact. I think it was H-151-I whatever it is. But Indonesia had more deaths from bird flu than any other. It was the H-5N-1 bird flu virus. For a number of years, the U.S. Navy had a research facility in Djakarta called NAMRU-2, Naval Medical Research Unit. I think it moved from Indonesia several times within Asia. But it was basically a U.S. military research center

into tropical diseases. It was there with the permission of the Indonesian government obviously. But around this time the bird flu controversy got more attention. Indonesia was a lot of the focus of the WHO and other media and worldwide attention on the bird flu problem/ A new minister of health came in, a very nationalistic minister, and she was very defensive about bird flu, about sharing of samples with the WHO, and with NAMRU and just the sensitivities of public health problems. The NAMRU agreement had expired and was being re-negotiated. It was a huge controversy. A lot of sensitive issues on sharing of samples and what was NAMRU doing there, and was it working for the U.S. military or was it helping Indonesians. All these issues came in. Amidst all of the intense focus on avian bird flu disease and Indonesia's handling of, or poor handling of, it etc. Of course, it was in the U.S. interest to cooperate on public health issues as we do around the world. Whether it is malaria or HIV aids or whatever it is. Anyway, it became very political and emotional, and the Indonesian press was very suspicious. There always has been some anti-American feeling in Indonesia. If you remember, Indonesia for years was a leader of the nonaligned movement. There were a lot of people still that felt the U.S. was unfair, the U.S. was neocolonial, etc. So again, we spent a lot of energy and a lot of time, much of it behind the scenes. Much of it trying to convince Indonesia that NAMRU should continue, that it was in the country's joint interest to have a medical research facility going on. I believe NAMRU was certified by WHO as one of the venues to receive the bird flu samples, etc. NAMRU employed Indonesian scientists and Indonesian public health people. It was physically attached to the Ministry of Health. But anyway, it became very emotional and very antagonistic. The Indonesians just negotiated for months and months behind the scenes. Ultimately Indonesia decided we don't want you. So NMRU closed. They would not give diplomatic immunity to the NAMRU scientists. The NAMRU position was we cannot have X number of people working in your country as U.S. government employees in cooperation with your Ministry of Health if you won't give them diplomatic immunity. So it closed. That was a difficult, sensitive thing to handle because there were a lot of,…the press was used by some people within the Indonesian government to foment a distorted story about what NAMRU was doing in terms of the agreement and all of that.

Q: How would you characterize the quality of the press in Indonesia? Did you have many press contacts?

ANDERSON: Oh sure. I would say we worked closely with the press. We had great access to them. It was an emerging free press, not well trained. It was used, for decades, to being under a dictatorship. Sukarno had no press freedom and Suharto had press controls and licensing and regulation. So, in 1998 the Indonesian press became suddenly free. I would say it was feisty. Immature may be too harsh, but it was learning how to be a free and responsible press. It had never been free, so it didn't know how. It was learning how to be free. Also broadcasting had always been under the Indonesian government, always. The press had private ownership, but radio and television were tightly, centrally controlled by the government of Indonesia in Djakarta. That suddenly changed and there were private TV stations and dozens of radio stations popping up all over. So, we did our best to work with the Indonesian press. We gave a lot of international visitor grants. We encouraged Indonesians to apply for Fulbrights to study in the U.S. and we had to be

quite patient. There was a lot of goodwill going on there too. The Indonesian press knew what was going on. They couldn't be free, but they respected American style press freedom and, in many ways, tried to follow our standards. They didn't always do it. It is still being written and they are still working on those issues.

Q: On the organizational side of things, how many people did you have working for you, and what were their responsibilities? How was public affairs organized?

ANDERSON: We had a traditional set up. Half was cultural affairs which did the culture and educational exchanges, speakers, cultural programs, the "@america" initiative. English teaching, working with the universities, NGOs and a full range of exchange programs including Fulbright. Then the other half of our operation was what we called the information office or the press. They did press relations, they did speeches, ambassadorial interviews, press conferences. IP visit support, and increasingly all the new and social media things fell under the press office. That part was all new to us. Nobody knew what Twitter was; nobody knew what Facebook was. Nobody knew how to run a website. Nobody was trained in that and there weren't budgets for that, so we had to learn along with Washington how to do that. It meant partly getting new resources. It meant partly retraining your staff. It meant partly not doing some things we used to do but were no longer important because of the new media. The new media can take an awful lot of time. You don't just slap up a website or start producing stuff for YouTube or churning out 140-character tweets left and right.

Q: Who ran these two sections? Who were the officers?

ANDERSON: By name you mean? We had a cultural affairs officer. It was Ann Grimes most of the time while I was there. She had three ACA officers, three assistant cultural affairs officers, and then on the information side the press side, the information officer or the press attaché or the embassy spokesperson. You had three titles. It was Max Kwack for part of the period. Then it was Paul Belmont. Then under that officer we had two AIOs, assistant information officers. One handled print media and one handled audio visual and increasingly new media which rapidly became the tail that wagged the dog. Very labor intensive. Nobody knew, nobody understood that you had to learn it. Washington was somewhat helpful in that they sometimes gave us additional resources to do things, or they would send somebody out from Washington to help us train. Then increasingly they ran training programs in new media. They oriented ambassadors and new PAOs and whatever and set up new support offices in Washington. They have come a long way in just a few years.

Q: Talk about the organization. How large is the embassy altogether during the time that you were there?

ANDERSON: It was rapidly expanding. We were still in the same old embassy from the 1950s and 1960s. Now there is going to be a brand-new embassy in Djakarta. They are building it right now as I speak. It is going to be a wonderful new state of the art facility. When I was there it was a decrepit old embassy compound, bulging at the seams and

expanding as the relationship expanded, so we had DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) there. We had USAID. We had military, we had NIH (National Institutes of Health). We had NAMRU. NAMRU had a separate facility in the Ministry of Health. They must have had ten Americans plus a big Indonesian contingent.

Q: Now was public affairs housed in the embassy?

ANDERSON: We were all on the embassy grounds, yeah. In the old USIS building.

Q: So there was a separate USIS building.

ANDERSON: There had been a building, the USIS building, which was an historic building tracing back to colonial days. It is a protected historic building to this day. Now, what is an interesting, on-going project as we speak is the new embassy going up on the same premises. The Indonesian government insisted on approving the new embassy plan that the USIS building partially be protected and preserved because it dates back to the post-independence period. The USIS building had been the venue for the Indonesian government delegation that negotiated independence with the Dutch in 1945, 1946, 1947. Those were where our offices were. It is also where Obama visited because that is where the USIS library was. While OBO, in planning for the new embassy, worked with the Indonesians, the Djakarta city government declared the building a heritage site. They worked out a deal where the façade of that building will be protected, saved, and relocated.

When the new embassy opens in a couple of years it will be a very nice kind of a gazebo or welcoming facility, a welcoming center for visa applicants to go through. It will have the façade of the original USIS building. Then the plan is to have kind of a mini museum or exhibit which explains the history of the building and the premises. Because the land is prime property right in the heart of Djakarta, it is the equivalent of being on the mall here in Washington. Just next door from the vice president of Indonesia. Kitty corner from the president. I mean it is prime property. That is why the embassy did not want to move. They had the option of relocating because the Indonesian government would have loved to obtain the embassy property. But it is just so valuable. The location is right in the heart of the center of Djakarta. So, the decision was made to tear down the old embassy and build a new high rise. Then under that agreement, we and OBO agreed to protect part of the historic building, preserve it, and relocate it. So, it is going to be very interesting.

Q: Now you were there under a couple of different ambassadors. I think you say Lynn Pascoe was there when you arrived. What kind of atmospherics did he set for the embassy?

ANDERSON: Well different kinds. He was there during 9/11 and the bombings and the time when we would have had the travel advisory. We would have restrictions on military cooperation due to human rights violations from some years earlier. And then he was there during the turbulent period after Suharto when there were I think three presidents in four years as Indonesia stabilized and then evolved into a democracy. So, he was there in

an interesting and difficult time. Kind of a time of being hunkered down. A lot of anti-Americanism post 9/11. A lot of disagreements with our policies towards Iraq and Afghanistan. And he was there during the latter part of the Bush years.

Then Cameron Hume came in right about the time Obama came in, so it was really a sharp demarcation. That was really an emotional time because of Obama's connections to Indonesia. People thought our foreign policy should change and it did. We did much more outreach to Muslims actively. We changed our travel advisory policy. We tried to be more user friendly on visas. And we started a comprehensive partnership. It was a huge change in the level of relations and our interest in Indonesia, and that was mutual. It was clearly in the interest of both countries to have closer ties.

Q: As we wrap this up, did you have any further comments?

ANDERSON: My assignment in Indonesia demonstrated how small change can have a big impact. We did lots in 2008 in terms of public programming on the Obama election. We sent journalists to cover the election in the U.S. We had speakers come to Indonesia. We hosted all kinds of events. We sent embassy officers all over the country talking about democracy. Indonesia was very interested because it was a new democracy, and it was about to hold its own second direct presidential election. That was in 2009 when Indonesians voted only for the second time in the country's entire history, voted for their second president. So, democracy was in the air and there was excitement, ecstatic excitement over Obama, and opinion of the U.S. skyrocketed. No question of cause and effect. Obama came in, to the credit of Bush who had improved relations with Indonesia. Our relations with Indonesia were improving, but they zoomed under Obama. So, it was a good example of how Obama did impact our foreign policy. I remember he gave a speech in Cairo with some outreach. There was a wave of optimism that our policies would change and that we would listen more. I think we consciously worked on that, and we did that. The evidence of that is in the examples I have given. The comprehensive partnership, the expansion of exchange programs. The use of new media to reach younger Indonesians.

The start of the "@america" experiment. Can you run a new kind of cultural center outside of the embassy, run by local people on contract, and run as a kind of a partnership, public-private, and can you do it safely? There were a lot of people who said, "You are crazy. You can't have a cultural center. You are going to get blown up." So we worked closely with DS, OBO. We had tight security. We worked closely with the Pacific Place Mall. We chose that mall deliberately. It had the best security. They bought off on the need to have a secure facility. They didn't want it blown up obviously. There had been no incidents. We had tight security. There had been some complaints. People say, "It is in a mall but you still hassle us. You still check us. You still run people through a meter and all that." Yes you do. The shopping malls in Indonesia do that because there have been bombings. The hotels all do it in Indonesia. It is not out of the ordinary at all. You go into a five star hotel or shopping mall, you are going to get screened. That is part of life in the 21st century in many countries now.

It was a good time to be in Indonesia. It was exciting. We could do things. The Indonesians were willing to engage with us. They were interested in us. They still disagreed with many of our policies. That didn't change, but I think we did get some recognition that we were going that extra mile, that we did want to engage. We would listen. We did lots of focus groups before "@america" was set up. We didn't just go and set this place up. We researched it. We did focus groups over many months. We asked young people what are you interested in? An open question, tell us what you are interested in. We knew we could not run a successful cultural center if it were a propaganda place. If you had programs on how great our policy is towards Afghanistan or Iraq, no one is going to come. No one is going to believe it. You won't have young people. They are not interested in that stuff. They are interested in education. They were interested in environment. They were interested in pop culture, of course, music. They were interested in English. They were interested in entrepreneurship, business. They were interested in sports, so we deliberately planned the content of "@america" to reflect as best we could their interests, their agenda. That is why we did the environment thing. We did lots of sports. We did music. We did student advising. People could come to "@america" and get free advice on the premises. They didn't have to go to another office someplace. That was a great service. We streamed many of the "@america" programs on the website, so you didn't have to come to the mall. You could be sitting in Djakarta or Medan or Surabaya or Bali and tap into the programming. You could send your feedback in or text us. We did a lot of evaluation. We got feedback from people, and we adapted the venue physically as well as programmatically to what the feedback we did get. It has been an evolution.

We had to change lots of things. For the record I want to thank Undersecretary McHale back in Washington. She took a chance by signing off on this project. I have to credit DS because they went along with it. OBO actually cooperated. All of this had to be approved. You couldn't just do it because it was going against the state policy. One policy was that we don't do cultural centers anymore. The other policy was all of the security regulations. The great debate over do you have the same standards, and what is security going to do, what role is the RSO going to play with "@america". Is it legally an embassy venue or is it not an embassy venue. All of those issues had to be fought ad nauseam, and the battles had to be won with the signoff of people in Washington. So that was a huge should I say internal battle, and a lot of people in Washington were dead set against it. It is too expensive. It is insecure and it can't be done. We don't do it. Why are you wasting money in a shopping mall? What, a shopping mall? That is ridiculous. Some people wanted a traditional cultural center versus others who said, that is ridiculous; they are out of date. Nobody does cultural centers anymore.

Q: "@america" is an astonishing accomplishment. Did other Jakarta embassies have similar cultural affairs programs?

ANDERSON: In Djakarta the Dutch, the Brits, the Germans, the French, the Russians, the Chinese, the Australians, all had active user-friendly cultural programs, and most of them had cultural centers open to the public. In fact, the Dutch center was terrific, and they opened their center to other groups. So, the Dutch cultural center in Djakarta was

widely respected as a cultural center serving Djakarta. So local Indonesian groups would do programs there, film festivals, concerts, lectures, because it was a great multipurpose facility.

Q: So, the public diplomacy world can be mutually supportive?

ANDERSON: Extremely, especially in a place like Indonesia, China, India.

Q: Now you retired in July of 2010. That is not quite two years ago. What have you been doing in retirement?

ANDERSON: Oh I have been unpacking. I haven't unpacked successfully. I did sign up for WAE (When Actually Employed), which is an interesting program the State Department has to use its retirees. I signed up with EAP Bureau (East Asia and Pacific) and have done two stints with them. It is a great program, a great way to keep your toe active and earn a little money and still not have a day job. So I did two things. I worked for three weeks in EAP in the China desk with the East Asia strategic dialogue with China. It was fascinating. Three weeks here in the department doing public affairs outreach. Then most recently I spent two months in Tokyo as the acting information officer, the acting press officer during a staff gap. That was fascinating. It was during the time of the first anniversary of the earthquake tsunami and we did lots of special events linked to that. Again, I was filling a staffing gap; so that was interesting.

Let me mention one other thing. You asked how I have been keeping busy. I have done a little travel around the U.S. and one trip overseas and am going overseas to China in November for a conference. I have spent a lot of time attending events in Washington, think tanks, university conferences, workshops, seminars, luncheons. Washington is just a fabulous place for anyone who wants to stay up on foreign affairs. I go to lunch at the East-West Center, the Aspen Institute, Hudsons (Institute), CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies), Georgetown University, GW (George Washington) University, American University. I am on the board of the Public Diplomacy Alumni Association. It keeps me in touch with fellow PD officers. That is an interesting group of colleagues that are interested in foreign affairs. There are just so many things going on in Washington that you can stay very active in foreign affairs. It is absolutely true.

Q: Let me put you on the spot. Since you have had such a creative career mostly overseas. Could you be tricked into picking which of those assignments were the most interesting or exciting?

ANDERSON: How to pick the best assignment? How do you define that, professionally or personally? You mean the most fun or that I contributed the most?

Q: Contributed I would think and most fun.

ANDERSON: I guess both India and Indonesia were satisfying because we had both presidential visits, and we had a real change in the bilateral relationship. Both India and

Indonesia while I was in those countries got a strategic partnership going on, actually launched and implemented. So that was rewarding strictly from a foreign policy accomplishment point of view.

From a personal professional point of view the most rewarding was my very first one and that was the Philippines. That was ’82 to ’85. That was the time of the end of Marcos, so it was very clear that we were working. U.S. policy changed away from backing Marcos to supporting democracy in that country. It was just very exciting to be on the ground there when all of this was taking place. We had two fabulous ambassadors, Mike Armacost, and Steve Bosworth. Just the right professional diplomats at a critical time in the relationship. When our policy shifted and there were huge challenges moving from a dictatorship to a democracy, from Marcos to Mrs. Aquino. And I was there for much of that, and it was very exciting to be observing from an inside point of view.

Q: I would assume that you would recommend a career in public affairs.

ANDERSON: Absolutely.

Q: How might one prepare oneself?

ANDERSON: A liberal arts generalist I think in terms of a university degree, preferably a masters. The older you are joining the Foreign Service, the more you have to contribute and the better you can cope with the challenges and frustrations and opportunities that the Foreign Service offers. Obviously, curiosity about the world. You have to be interested in current affairs, foreign affairs. If you are not interested, forget it, because that is your bread and butter. No matter what job you have you have got to be interested in current affairs because that is the nature of our business. Curiosity about the world obviously. If you are satisfied with the U.S. stay at home. If you are curious about how the rest of the world lives and is similar or dissimilar to us I think the Foreign Service is a fabulous career. You get just a priceless chance to live in a foreign culture, in many cases learn the language, learn the culture, the politics, the history. You are just constantly learning. I found that very exciting and stimulating. You never got bored because you knew in one year, two years, three years. You would be off on another assignment learning a new country. Then as I said I felt very lucky because I had the chance to return to two countries twice, so I could build on my interest, contacts, experience, and I think I was a much more effective officer the second time around.

Q: We appreciate you giving us your time. Thank you very much for your experience and insights.

End of interview