

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

DONALD MICHAEL BISHOP

Interviewed by: Charles Stewart Kennedy
Initial interview date: September 14, 2010
Copyright 2014 ASDT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background

Scotch Plains – Fanwood High School, NJ	
Trinity College	
Wall Street	
Georgetown University	
McGuire Air Force Base, NJ	
Phu Cat Air Base, Vietnam	
Maxwell Air Force Base, AL	
Kwang Ju Air Base, Korea	
Ohio State University	
U.S. Air Force Academy, CO	
Entered Foreign Service	1979
Hong Kong; Assistant Information Officer	1981-1983
Taegu, Korea; Branch Public Affairs Officer	1985-1987
Seoul, Korea; USIS Policy Officer	1987
Taipei, Taiwan; Information Officer and Spokesman	1987-1991
House of Representatives, Capitol Hill; Congressional Fellow	1991-1992
Training Division, U.S. Information Agency	1992-1994
Course Director for Incoming Foreign Service Officers	
Dhaka, Bangladesh; Country Public Affairs Officer	1994-1997
Beijing, China; Deputy Public Affairs Officer	1997-2000
Lagos, Nigeria; Country Public Affairs Officer	2000-2001
Abuja, Nigeria; Country Public Affairs Officer	2001-2002

Beijing, China; Deputy Public Affairs Officer	2002-2006
Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, The Pentagon Foreign Policy Advisor to the Commandant	2006-2008
The Air Staff, The Pentagon Foreign Policy Advisor to the USAF Chief of Staff	2008-2009
Kabul, Afghanistan Acting Director of Communication and Public Diplomacy Country Public Affairs Officer	2009-2010

INTERVIEW

Q: Don, let's start at the beginning. Where and when were you born?

BISHOP: I was born in Nashville, Tennessee, on October 2, 1945. You can tell by my accent that I didn't spend much time in Tennessee. My father, Robert Milton Bishop, was an aviation cadet from upstate New York sent to Nashville for classification in 1943, and he and hundreds of other cadets were parked at George Peabody College for Teachers, across the street from Vanderbilt, for some weeks. He was smitten by a Peabody coed from Nashville, Anne Selene Rowan, when they met at a USO dance at Father Ryan High School.

They were married at Maxwell Army Air Field in Montgomery in 1943. During the war, whenever my father moved to a new phase of pilot training, or to a new assignment, my mother packed up and followed her man -- Florida, Alabama, Mississippi. My mother went home to Nashville to have the baby, me, just as the war in the Pacific was ending. The atomic bombs fell in August, the war ended in September, I was born in October, my father was separated from the Army Air Forces in November, and we moved to upstate New York. I grew up in the northeast -- New York, Connecticut, New Jersey.

Eleven months before I was born, my father's first cousin, Donald Michael Sullivan, who had also been his roommate at Union College and the Best Man at his wedding, was killed in the Hürtgen Forest of Germany, an infantryman in the 28th Infantry Division. When I was born, I was given his names.

Since I was born just a few weeks after the war ended, I always thought I was one of the very first members of the "Baby Boom," but I gather those who study American demography call those of us born in 1944 and 1945 the "Victory babies."

Q: Where did the Bishops come from? What do you know about them?

BISHOP: I'd call my father's family Yankee. His home town was Elmira, New York. What I know of the family history is that the Bishops came into western New York from New England early in the nineteenth century, part of the internal migration that followed the opening of the new land after the defeat of the Iroquois during the Revolution and the land grants to veterans. My father's family were pretty much upstate New York and northern Pennsylvania people, whose roots were in New England.

My father's father, Milton Wilcox Bishop, was born in 1900. He had gone to France in World War I and served with the American Expeditionary Forces in Lorraine, under General Pershing. His unit at the front was the Air Service's 10th Balloon Company, commanded by Captain Dale Mabry. They were in action at Saint-Mihiel. Have you been to MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa? The highway that leads to the base from the city is Dale Mabry Highway, named for my grandfather's company commander.

After the war -- he was good with figures, and he was a good organizer, so he became a bookkeeper and office manager, and in retirement a public bookkeeper. He worked for a lot of different companies in upstate New York, for Armour and then later for Moore Business Forms. This was in Elmira and a lot of other towns. In his late fifties he was President of the Rediform Federal Credit Union. He and my grandmother retired to Avon Park, Florida. For many years he did local accounting and taxes for small businesses, and he kept the books for the federal housing projects in that part of Florida.

He had married my grandmother, Florence Elizabeth Crofutt, when he got back from France. She was also a bookkeeper and office manager. Her great contribution, in the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s was to help organize the March of Dimes for Chemung County, New York, twenty years of work that was, I've always assumed, uncompensated -- all to help end polio. This was in addition to raising my father and his sister Mary Lou, and after her unexpected death, Mary Lou's daughter Kathy.

My sister Anne and I happened to be in Elmira when the Salk vaccine inoculations began, and my grandmother put Anne and me at the head of the line. Neither she nor my grandfather were what I would call demonstrative people, but I imagine it was the happiest day of her life, to see all those years of work bear fruit, guaranteeing her own grandchildren would be free of polio.

Q: And your mother's family?

BISHOP: On my mother's side, in Tennessee -- her grandfather Joseph Deerie Rowan had emigrated from Ireland in 1895. He was an optician. He had a horse and buggy to carry his sets of lenses around town. He did house calls to give eye exams and work on your glasses. He was an immigrant, but the family became American, and there's a whole story about that.

My grandfather, John Patrick Rowan, was born in Nashville in 1898. He inherited from his father, the immigrant, a sense that the family was Irish. Think of the social circumstances of the time. The Irish immigrants in Tennessee were Catholic in a very

Protestant state, and I'm sure his father had an accent. So my mother's father, John, if he were challenged by toughs in the neighborhood asking him, "What are you?" he would say, "I'm Irish."

Tennessee even today doesn't have many Catholics in its population, so my grandfather's family certainly felt that prejudice, that disposition, against immigrants, particularly the Irish and Catholics, as he was growing up.

Come 1917, when America entered the First World War, he was 19. He joined the Tennessee National Guard without telling his parents. His cavalry unit was federalized in July of 1917. He went to the training camps in South Carolina in August of 1917 with the newly formed 30th Division, "Old Hickory." The War Department waved a magic wand over his cavalry unit, and they became the 114th Machine Gun Battalion.

I've learned subsequently that the British and the French sent teams to South Carolina to help train the Americans. Then, when they went across the Atlantic, the 30th Division, in the II Corps, was given to the British under Douglas Haig, even though the rest of the American army was gathering in Lorraine under General Pershing. This was to demonstrate allied solidarity. Two divisions were sent to the French, two to the Belgians, two to Italy, and two to the British sector. So the 30th Division, my grandfather included, went through formal phased training with the British Army in Flanders.

My grandfather told me when I was young that the British officers and NCOs, in his experience, were just wonderful people. They trained them well, liked the Americans, and knew how to turn them into better soldiers.

When the 30th Division went into combat, its great moment was breaking the Hindenburg line at Bellicourt in late September, 1918. My grandfather was gassed in another operation in early October of 1918. The action was formally called the Battle of La Selle River.

He told me that, in order to simplify supply and logistics for an American unit in a British area of operations, they wore British-made uniforms and carried Enfield rifles, not Springfields. In that October operation, the 30th Division leapfrogged with Australian units, and many Commonwealth units, including the Dublins, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, were to the left and right of the Americans. When he was picked up, after being gassed, the stretcher bearer asked, "What are you?" He said "I'm Irish" and passed out.

He woke up in a British field hospital, because the British provided all the medical infrastructure for the American divisions too. He was in a room being tended by nursing sisters -- when my grandfather told me this, it was the first time I had heard this use of "sisters" to mean nurses -- and there was a flag on every soldier's bed, say a New Zealand flag, an Australian flag, or an English flag. There was an Irish flag on his bed, thinking he was in one of the Irish regiments of the British Army. At that moment it all snapped in his head, and he realized, "No, I'm not Irish, I'm American." That was his Americanization moment.

Later in life, if he heard appeals to give money to the Irish Republican Army affiliates that raised funds in America, my grandfather would have none of it. That time the British had made him respect them, and his moment in the hospital made him very much American.

Q: What did he do after the war?

BISHOP: After he returned to Nashville from Flanders and France and he recovered from the gas attack, he married Selene Jackson Brien. He became a plumbing contractor. My mother was the first of their five children.

During World War II, my grandfather spent some time in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, helping build the housing in the secret city. After the war, he understood that the returning veterans would want homes, and he knew that the Tennessee Valley Authority had made electricity plentiful and cheap in the South. He came up with a design for a home water heater -- tank, circuits, heating coils -- and my grandmother sewed up the insulation for the first few models. He founded a company, Rowcon, to manufacture the home water heaters, and the Nashville family prospered. The company's manufacturing plant was located where LP Field is now. Alas, my grandfather died early, when I was in college, probably from the lingering effects of the mustard gas on his lungs.

My grandmother Selene's roots were Irish too, but Protestant. The Brians had come to America around the time of the Revolution. The family was really part of Tennessee society. During the Civil War, several Brien brothers were prominent Unionists. Her grandfather Robert Carruthers Brien had managed Belle Meade plantation when it bred its famous thoroughbreds.

My grandmother's father -- this is Manson Milner Brien, "Pappy Brien" -- had married a Catholic, and my grandmother was very consciously Catholic. I can remember she always carried her Rosary beads in her purse, along with a small piece of white lace to put over her hair. Those were the days when women should cover their heads in church. I knew my grandparents' home in Nashville when I was young, and it was conspicuously full of love and faith.

My mother was born in 1922, the oldest of five children. She grew up and went to school in Nashville, except that in the early 1930s, the Depression and the lack of work for plumbing contractors led my grandparents to fall back on a farm that the family owned in McEwen, Humphreys County, Tennessee. I believe they were there about a year and a half. I visited the farm when I was a boy, and I saw the house they lived in. It was a log cabin -- one main room on the ground floor, and the kids in the loft. They used firewood in the fireplace and in the stove. The cabin had a floor of hewn wood -- I suppose Tom Lincoln's log cabin had a dirt floor -- but otherwise, my mother grew up (for a few years) in a log cabin! Too bad she never felt the call to run for office!

Q: Your parents met during the war. How did the war shape your family?

BISHOP: My father graduated from Elmira Free Academy and had then gone on to Union College in Schenectady. He was Class of 1939 in high school, so he was due to graduate from Union in 1943. He graduated early because they accelerated the degree program for the war. At Union, he signed up for the Army Air Force's light plane program. That's how he went into the Army Air Forces and became a pilot and then an instructor pilot, focusing on training for instruments flying. He met my mother along the way, in Nashville.

During the war, the Eastern Flying Training Command concentrated much of its instruments instruction at Columbus Army Air Field in Mississippi, and after he earned his wings and commission, my father was part of the cadre under Captain Paul Stoney that trained new pilots on what was then called the "full panel" instruments system.

I often heard my parents talk about living in Columbus, when they were newly married, and about Captain Stoney's famous Tex-Mex barbecues. Later, when I was in the Air Force, I realized that their Captain Stoney and Major General Paul Stoney, Commander of the Air Force Communications Service, were one and the same. He visited Kwang Ju Air Base while I was there, probably in 1972. He remembered my father well.

It happened that I was at the Embassy in Beijing during the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the war, and I had the chance to meet many of the "Hump pilots" who had flown from India to China over the Himalayas. The skill they needed most was the ability to fly the route, with its winds and storms, on instruments. Many of the Hump pilots learned those skills at Columbus. The war ended sooner than expected because of the atomic bomb, so my father didn't go overseas. But I felt a little swell of pride when I met the Hump pilots in Beijing, thinking that some of them got through the war thanks to my father's instruction.

Q: And after he was "demobbed"?

My father had been the editor of his high school newspaper, and he worked as a cub reporter for the *Elmira Star-Gazette* during his college summers. While he was a student at Union, he worked for the college public relations office, and he was the campus stringer for the *Schenectady Union-Star* and *The New York Times*. They paid him by the column inch.

In the Army Air Forces at various duty stations, they always needed somebody to help out at the base public relations office, to be the base Public Relations Officer or "PRO." When he was still an aviation cadet at Carlstrom Field, Florida, he learned the PRO business from one of the real greats, John Frisbee, who after retiring from the Air Force became a noted aviation writer.

When he got back to Elmira after the war, my father explored some other possibilities, but when his alma mater, Union College, offered him a job as Assistant Director of Public Relations, he took it. He sort of backed into a career in public affairs. He worked

at Union a few years, and then he became Director of Public Relations at Trinity College in Hartford. He spent almost ten years doing college public relations.

Q: Okay, well, why don't we talk about your schooling? Where were you living when you began school?

BISHOP: Yes, that was when my father was working at Trinity College. My first memories are of living in faculty housing on 79 Vernon Street next to the Trinity campus. Later my father bought a new house in Newington, 21 Colby Circle. Newington's a little west of Hartford, just a few miles' drive from the Trinity campus.

My parents sent me to the demonstration preschool at St. Joseph College for Women in West Hartford. The head of the school was Sister Mary de Lourdes Kenny, quite a famous and well loved Catholic educator, the author of *Baby Grows in Age and Grace*. For postwar Catholic mothers, her book was equal in importance to Dr. Spock's. When she visited our classroom in her white habit, it made quite an impression!

I went to kindergarten in Newington, Connecticut, at North Newington School, and then went to Elizabeth Green School. I was in the public schools of Newington through the fourth grade.

Q: Let's talk about the time in Connecticut. As a kid, what was life like there?

BISHOP: It was a suburban life in a new post-war suburb. My father had bought the house new using his G.I. Bill benefits. It was a neighborhood that largely had other veterans in it. Of course I was pretty young, but it was certainly a happy time in a small postwar cinderblock house. My father drove back and forth to the college every day. I had, by the time we left Connecticut, three brothers and sisters -- Anne, Betsy, and Robert. Two more came later, Regina and Rowan.

I did all the normal things, Cub Scouts, church, baseball and so on. Newington as a residential area had not yet filled in, and just a short distance from our house, it was still open fields and a small pond. When I first saw "It's a Wonderful Life," with the Bailey boys sliding down the hillside onto the ice of a pond, it took me right back to Newington. We did the same thing, except that luckily the ice never broke.

Between living next to the campus the first few years, frequent visits to my father's office, attending the football games and carillon concerts and other college events, I certainly spent a lot of time on the Trinity campus. It was my own 80 acres of playground. Of course, it's the school I later went to as an undergraduate, so I have a lot of memories of Trinity.

One is President Eisenhower's visit to Trinity to receive an honorary degree in October, 1954. Trinity's president, Albert Charles Jacobs, had been Chancellor at Columbia when Eisenhower was that university's president, so the two were close. My father was heavily

involved in all the college planning and the arrangements for the President's visit, with a special focus on the press.

Of course, Connecticut notables from the governor on down also attended. That was the day I met Governor John Lodge, about whom more later. My father gave me a press ticket to wear in my hat so that I could get up close to things, and he kept two seats in the front row open for my mother and me. When my mother and I walked across the quadrangle to take our really primo seats, we found we were sitting with Senator Thomas Dodd, future Governor and Senator Abraham Ribicoff, and Senator Prescott Bush.

Q: Prescott Bush, the father of one president and the grandfather of another. And also with the father of the current Senator Dodd.

BISHOP: Yes. I was too young to understand much of what the President had to say, but I could see him looking closely at the member of the faculty who was reading the citation for the honorary degree, in Latin. Even as a boy I had heard that the classics professor's nickname was "No Top" because he was quite bald. Eisenhower set everyone at ease when he began his speech by noting that his Latin was a little rusty, but he carefully watched Professor Notopoulos as he read the citation. Notop was smiling, so the President assumed he was saying complimentary things. We all laughed.

Q: Your father was in college public relations, and then went to Wall Street to work at the New York Stock Exchange.

BISHOP: Yes. The President of Trinity College who hired my father to work at the College in 1948 was G. Keith Funston. A few years later, Funston was elected President of the New York Stock Exchange. As he left for Wall Street, he told my father to let him know if he ever considered leaving Trinity. Two years later, in 1955, my father was offered a position as the Public Relations Director at one of the SUNY campuses. When he heard the news, Mr. Funston asked my father to come to New York to be his Special Assistant at the Exchange.

We moved to Fanwood in suburban New Jersey in the summer of 1955. My father commuted into Manhattan every day by the old Central Railroad of New Jersey. When people ask me where I'm from, I can give them lot of answers, but New Jersey is where I went to high school, and that's how I usually answer.

Fanwood's a good-looking suburb, all residential. You got there from New York by taking U.S. Route 22 West from one of the tunnels. Jean Shepard called it "the slob road of America" and "grubble." It was not a limited access highway. You entered the traffic stream directly from the parking lots of stores and diners and bowling alleys. I speculate that Lady Bird Johnson's original inspiration to beautify American highways happened on that road from Newark to Plainfield rather than the road to Damascus. Shepard could humorously say "Hieronymus Bosch, Salvador Dali, you have nothing on New Jersey's great and immortal Route 22." We Bishop kids found it a route of neon wonder. We

drove it to the first generation of big box stores in strip malls we called “shopping centers” in awe -- “2 Guys from Harrison” and “E.J. Korvette's.”

This career move took my father from the campus to Wall Street, working not as a broker or as a trader, but in the administration and regulation of the securities markets. He spent 31 years at the Exchange, retiring in 1986 as Senior Vice President and Chief Regulatory Officer.

Alec Benn got to know my father well while he was writing a history of the securities markets in the 1960s, *The Unseen Wall Street*. He dedicated the book to my father, “whose efforts to preserve The New York Stock Exchange have never been fully appreciated.”

When I read his book, I was struck by a few things Benn had to say. Commenting on my father's earlier career in college public relations, he wrote “his writing skills, directness, and lack of equivocation earned him the respect of the press -- even though he did not fit the stereotype of a hearty, comradely public relations man.” Of course, the Foreign Service tends to scrub away tendencies for “directness” and “lack of equivocation,” and I don't admire this side of Public Diplomacy, or that the Department as an institution does this. I realized I must have inherited some of my father's temperament, because I don't much like the glad-handing that characterizes most Air Force Public Affairs Officers and some Public Diplomacy officers in the Foreign Service.

And another of Alec Benn's comments struck me: “All over the world there are and will continue to be men (and women) like Bob Bishop ... who inconspicuously struggle to save their organizations from destruction.... They first fulfill their designated responsibilities to their organizations, then find that the attitudes of those above them limit further improvement, and so, because of their characters, challenge those in power to make much-needed changes. Sometimes these idealists succeed, sometimes not. Seldom are they appropriately rewarded for what they accomplish for their organizations -- they may even be punished -- but most prosper anyway because of their abilities.”

I find it interesting that I also spent my life in a large institution, the Foreign Service, and I guess I have “prospered” by reaching the Senior Foreign Service. But in recent years I've been trying to keep Public Diplomacy effective through some lean and difficult years, years characterized by too little money and too many Under Secretaries who never understood what Public Diplomacy is about. So in this way too, I am my father's son.

Q: Do you mind if we focus for a time on social topics in the 1950s and 1960s? I'm curious. When did your family get its first television?

We were the last family on our block to get television. It was, I believe, in 1952, when we lived in Newington, and I loved it! I plumped myself in front of the screen as soon as I got home from school. I loved *The Lone Ranger* and *Howdy Doody* and those other early kids' shows. Oh boy!

My father became alarmed, and he laid down the law. In order to watch TV for an hour, I had to read for an hour. I think he imagined that I wouldn't read very much, and I would do wholesome things outdoors. I said to myself, this is a piece of cake, just take me to the library. I read, and read, and read, and read, so that I could watch, and watch, and watch, and watch. I logged every hour I spent with the books, and I quickly accumulated quite a bunch of hours, and for sure I could watch all of my favorite programs. Parents still wrestle with the problem of too much television, and they try various carrots and sticks. My father was a pioneer of a strict policy.

They call the 1950s television's golden age. Besides the kids' shows like *The Lone Ranger*, this was the time when Milton Berle, Jackie Gleason, Sid Caesar, and Lucille Ball were stars, and when Ernie Kovacs pioneered so many visual tricks. I watched them live. And yes, we always watched the Ed Sullivan show -- "coast to coast with our favorite host" as it was immortalized by the song in *Bye Bye Birdie*.

As I think back on early television, three other programs made an impression. One was *The Goldbergs*, drawing its humor and its sentiment from a teleplay writer's typical Jewish mother in the Bronx. Another was *I Remember Mama*, a TV series that derived from the Kathryn Forbes novel, *Mama's Bank Account*, and the Irene Dunn movie. Both programs were introducing America's ethnic diversity to broad audiences, and certainly anyone who watched *I Remember Mama* had any prejudices against immigrants dented. The third was the series *You Are There*. Walter Cronkite and CBS journalists "covered" historical events like the Ides of March. "Our correspondent Sander Vanocur is on the floor of the Senate right now. Sander, when is Caesar expected to arrive?" At the end of each program, Walter Cronkite would intone, "March 15, 44 BC – a day like all days, filled with those events that alter and illuminate our times. And you are there."

In the 1950s the television stations also used to run B&W films from the 1930s and 1940s to fill up non-prime time. I saw plenty on WOR Channel 9's "Million Dollar Movie." I'd just like to say, though, that to this day I can't watch any of the Three Stooges films for more than two or three minutes. I still can't stand their form of slapstick. Similarly, the *Our Gang* comedies were staples of 1950s television – I didn't like them then, I wouldn't like them now if they were still shown. I have no idea why Sparky and Darlene and Alfalfa were popular at one time – brainless, not to mention what the character Buckwheat was communicating about African Americans.

Q: And in New Jersey?

In my teens in New Jersey I watched all the Warner Brothers westerns, and I can still sing all the theme songs. Eventually I began to watch the television documentaries, which were a good source of information about the world beyond home.

Both in Connecticut and later in New Jersey we had one television and one telephone. When we were speaking on the phone to friends, Mom and Dad could hear everything. Let's say this arrangement cramped mischief.

We had only one radio, on top of the refrigerator in the kitchen. I didn't have my own radio in my room, so I had to listen to whatever my mother was listening to. When we lived in New Jersey, it was almost always WOR in New York City. It had some eccentric program hosts, like Dr. Carlton Fredericks, Ph.D., on nutrition. On vitamins and supplements, he was a visionary or a quack, take your pick. Tex McCrary and Jinx Falkenburg still made daily broadcasts from a hotel dining room. But I also listened to Jean Sheppard, the Garrison Keillor of the 1950s and 1960s. He was amazing. Garrison Keillor tells a tale of Lake Wobegon once a week on PBS. Jean Sheppard spun up a story of Hammond, Indiana, on WOR every day. I heard a lot of good wholesome radio.

So what wasn't I listening to? I was not listening to music much. I never heard Elvis on the kitchen radio. I was aware of the rock and roll revolution, but I wasn't hearing the tunes because I didn't have my own radio.

I mention this because it was in the 1950s that advertisers began to break out a separate youth market, inducing in American popular culture the notion that young people are naturally different -- more hip, more aware, more with it -- than their parents. In the 1930s, everyone in a family listened to the same schedule of radio entertainment programs, and the generations were joined in their appreciation of Fred Allen or Bing Crosby or Jack Benny. By the fifties this was changing, but not so much in the Bishop home.

I don't think I could have articulated it at the time, but in retrospect I've thought about this some. I was relatively isolated from the popular cultural trends of the 1950s, so I was less vulnerable to the notion that there was some chasm between me and my parent's generation. I knew enough about history to understand that I was an heir to a great patrimony, much of it bought with toil and blood, symbolized by the efforts of Americans like my father and two grandfathers, and the sacrifice of Donald Sullivan.

I missed the idea that the world was made for me, or made anew when I was born, or that the world was waiting for my, or for my generation's, great new insights. Rather than placing "change" at the center of my worldview, I rather accepted a continuity in our society and culture, and the idea that in time I would receive this patrimony to carry into the future for the next generation. I knew I intended to be a family man like my father and grandfathers.

Q: Did you have records?

BISHOP: In Connecticut and New Jersey, my parents had a 78 rpm record player built into a handsome radio console, but for some reason, my parents didn't buy many records. We had only two popular records in the house, so I remember them both -- "The Big Brass Band from Brazil" and "The Atchison Topeka and the Santa Fe." Naturally I can sing those two songs from memory. We also had a record album of songs of New England Colleges. I can sing any of them. Did you know that "Lord Jeffrey Amherst was a soldier of the King," and that "Eleazar Wheelock was a very pious man"?

Q: The Eleazar Wheelock who founded Dartmouth?

BISHOP: Yes. And I wonder whether that old Dartmouth song -- about Wheelock using "five hundred gallons of New England rum" to "teach the In-dye-an" -- is still sung in Hanover.

When we lived in New Jersey, my father was ill for a few weeks and had to stay at home. He filled up the time by assembling a 33 rpm turntable from a kit. Then I heard more music at home. His tastes were not very *avant* -- he liked Mitch Miller and the Gang, and 101 Strings. Listening to one album over and over, I memorized all the "Songs of the Civil War." I still sing them to myself.

What I wasn't hearing was my generation's rock and roll, and we never owned one of those record players that played the 45 rpm discs with the large hole in the center, unless you bought one of those plastic thingies that adapted each record for a multi-speed turntable.

If your sentiments are being formed by patriotic music in school and at home, and you are not getting the Beach Boys or Elvis, you become more emotionally associated with your parents' generation rather than your own. At least this was the case with me.

Q: What about your friends? Did you go over to their house and listen there?

BISHOP: No. I don't know why not. My friends had comic books, however, which were banned in our house. Which meant that much of my Scout camp time was spent reading the other kids' comic books. At home, though, I was missing out on Archie and Jughead and all that. There were some parts of American culture I was a big part of, and others I wasn't a part of.

Q: From your comments on watching television, I gather that you became a reader. Were there any books that particularly influenced you?

BISHOP: Yes. I remember pretty well the Lucy Robbins Wells Memorial Library in Newington and the Fanwood Memorial Library in New Jersey, and I was a regular in the library at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High.

I had the usual exposure to the ordinary children's books when I was very young, *Make Way for Ducklings*, *The Little Engine that Could*, *Scuffy the Tugboat* and so on. I remember taking out the Childhood of Famous Americans series of books about American history. They were distinctive, I recall, because their only illustrations were silhouettes. I'm sure I read the complete series.

In the summer of 1955, when we moved to New Jersey, we left the day after school ended in Connecticut. I arrived in Fanwood as the summer vacation was just beginning. I didn't have any playmates or friends, and school, where I would make friends, was many weeks away. So the Fanwood Memorial Library, just a few blocks from our new home,

became my hangout, and in that summer of 1955 I read, and I read, and I read, and I read. I went through The Hardy Boys series from *The Tower Treasure* to *The Secret of Pirate's Hill* all in one go.

Shelved right next the Hardy boys was the War Adventure Series by R. Sydney Bowen. The series featured an American teenager, Dave Dawson, and his English friend Freddy Farmer, both with pilot's licenses, caught up in the war -- *Dave Dawson at Dunkirk*, *Dave Dawson at Guadalcanal*, *Dave Dawson on the Russian Front*, *Dave Dawson with the Flying Tigers*, and so on. They were aces and more. I've heard in recent years that another fan of the series was Stephen King! In any case, I read through that series the same summer.

In the sixth grade, our teacher, Mr. Agresti, asked us to give him a 3x5 card each time we finished a book. The person who read the most would receive a book prize at the end of the year. When I won, he asked me which book I would like to have -- he would buy it for me. I asked for *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo* by Ted Lawson and Bob Considine. As I think it over, with its Air Force and China adventures, my choice of book seemed to foretell a lot.

Parenthetically, the great Foreign Service China hand Bill McCahill told me that *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo* was also the book that first sparked his interest in China and its people. A hat tip to Ted Lawson!

One book that made quite an impression on me, a little later, was *The Long Walk* by Slavomir Rawicz. I read an abridged edition for young people. This was the story of a Polish officer captured by the Russians in the 1940s, what happened to him in the prisons and in Siberia, and his escape. It introduced me to the brutality of communism and the USSR in general. The book has stayed with me. Poles of course could never read it then, but they can now. Recently I've learned more about Rawicz and the book, and there's evidence that he embellished the story. I haven't yet thought through the implications -- that a book so important in my life, a book that gave me much of my visceral opposition to Communism, wasn't one hundred percent true.

As I moved into junior high and high school, I read fairly broadly in the adolescent section. For instance, the books by Anna Perrott Rose, about her adopting a handicapped child, *Room For One More*, and then taking in a Latvian war orphan in *The Gentle House* -- those books touched me. I was beginning to learn more about the world. *Seabird* by Holling Clancy Holling, with its color illustrations of whaling vessels, try-pots, and Nantucket sleigh rides, along with views of the South Sea islands, is a book I read over and over. I read the series of juvenile novels on West Point by Red Reeder, and *Midshipman Lee of the Naval Academy* and the adventure novels by Robb White.

I remember once when I was sick, my father went to the library for me. He was dismayed by my reading list, so he picked out *Gulliver's Travels* and *Penrod and Sam*, and he brought me one book that I wanted. My father's books didn't interest me.

Q: A separate generation.

BISHOP: Yes, that's right. Actually, I came back to Booth Tarkington later, and there's a lot there, but I wasn't interested then.

In high school, I enjoyed English, and I realized I preferred American poetry and literature rather than British, Kipling's poems excepted. I first read *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* in high school, and I reread it every few years. High school social studies pointed me to *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair.

In time, I read through every novel written by Kenneth Roberts, stories set during the French and Indian Wars, the American Revolution, and the War of 1812. Of course Roberts opened the door to Francis Parkman. Parkman's histories are so well told, even though as history they are so old now. I also absorbed from Parkman that you have to do more than study battles, you need to walk the battlefields. Of course, Kenneth Roberts's book *Oliver Wiswell* tells the story of the Revolution from a Tory point of view.

The Light in the Forest by Conrad Richter was a good book to help a young person learn to see things from different points of view. The protagonist was a white teenager who had been captured by the Indians when he was a child and raised as a member of the tribe. When the Indians returned their captives to Colonel Bouquet in 1764, they had no desire to rejoin a society they hardly remembered.

And I plowed through the library's books on World War II – 959.40 in the Dewey decimal system.

Q: So there were books in your life. Magazines?

BISHOP: *Life*, *American Heritage*, *Reader's Digest*, *Boy's Life*, *Maryknoll*. When I visited my grandparents, I always read through their back issues of *Look* and *Saturday Evening Post*.

Q: Rounding out these questions about culture, how about the movies?

A good question! What I remember most were the Disney films -- *Old Yeller*, *Johnny Tremain*, *Davy Crockett*. I saw my share of cowboy westerns. The cowboy stars of the 40s were remaking their careers on television, so I took in Roy Rogers, Hopalong Cassidy, and Gene Autry both on the big screen at the Saturday matinees, and at home on television.

And to answer Bill Murray's famous question, yes, I cried in the theatre when *Old Yeller* died.

Q: How about music?

BISHOP: I've already mentioned that I didn't hear much rock and roll, but that doesn't mean there wasn't music around me. My mother loved show tunes and film theme songs, and some of my early memories are her singing while she washed the dishes -- say, "Buttons and Bows" and "I Love You, A Bushel and a Peck."

At the Scotch Plains Junior School -- that was from the sixth to the eighth grade -- we regularly assembled in the auditorium for what was called a "community sing." You might ask, "Why do you remember this?" In later years I came to appreciate what Yip Harburg had said: words make you think a thought, music makes you feel a feeling, a song makes you feel a thought. To a junior high school student, songs take hold more deeply than you might think.

Our music teacher, Ruth Swetland, was fond of Broadway tunes, but we mostly sang the many patriotic songs that were in the old school songbooks. Take "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean." I can still remember all the words, and it's a pretty aggressive song: "Your mandates make heroes assemble / when liberty's form stands in view / Your banners make tyranny tremble / when warned by the Red, White, and Blue." We sang those songs, all of which celebrated American exceptionalism and America's leading place in the world, every week.

If you think about how President George W. Bush reacted to threats and dealt with the world -- recall that he's just a year younger than I am -- it has occurred to me that his frame of mind rather conforms to the spirit of the school songs we sang in the 1950s. Which would mesh with the kind of "whig" history we were taught, that history was progress, and with Henry Luce's "American Century" as another premise. I mention the songs to tantalize any future graduate student or Presidential biographer!

Q: I would imagine the song "Onwards Christian Soldiers" would be in this list.

BISHOP: Yes, though I don't recall it being sung as frequently as other tunes, and I recall being a little self-conscious as we sang it because it was a Christian song in a public school.

Q: Were there prayers and readings from scripture?

BISHOP: Yes. Before 1962, each school day in New Jersey began with the Pledge of Allegiance, a Bible reading, and a song. Most of the songs would be patriotic, but from time to time a hymn was chosen by the student leader. It was in 1962 when Bible readings in school were barred by the Supreme Court's ruling in *Abington School District v. Schempp*.

Most students in Scotch Plains and Fanwood were Protestant, there was a sizable minority of Catholics, and a few Jews, but no other faiths. When school prayer and Bible readings were still permitted, the way the schools finessed disagreements over versions of scripture was that the Bible readings were always chosen from the Old Testament, read

by all three of the major faiths. By the way, our school used the American King James Version, and I liked the first Psalm best.

Q: How about life at home? Was this a cohesive family, sitting together at meals and discussing things, or what?

BISHOP: Yes, very much so. My mother had not finished college when she met my father, but she was a college girl, and she had been a substitute teacher during the war. They had compatible backgrounds, and they had a common respect for education.

When my mother graduated from Cathedral High School in Nashville -- she must have been Class of 1941 -- Bishop Adrian of Nashville gave the graduation speech. It was a girls' high school, and there were 18 in that year's graduating class. My mother told me that she left that graduation ceremony absolutely inspired by what the Bishop had said. He told them that as mothers and wives, all of American civilization would rest on their shoulders. Their great calling in life would be, with their husbands, to raise a family -- and to give their children their values -- and do their part in making our nation a happy place.

Now that sounds old fashioned, doesn't it? But I pass on the story because I don't think my mother ever lost that inspiration from her high school graduation. Of course it only confirmed the values she had learned from her parents. She was very much a home-and family-centered person.

And yes, dinner at home was always together, and we always talked. And from time to time my father would take out the song sheets that came with Mitch Miller's albums, and we sang "In the Good Old Summertime" and other tunes together.

Q: Did your family travel?

BISHOP: Yes. With my father's family in upstate New York and my mother's family in Tennessee, vacations every year meant going to the one or the other place and sometimes both. I have very clear memories of the trips in the old 1943 Plymouth or the old 1947 Dodge or the 1955 Chevrolet wagon with my brothers and sisters -- all of us young, of course.

Before the interstates, going from Newington or later from Fanwood to Nashville was a three-day trip on the old U.S. routes. Where there were only two lanes, God help you if you got behind a truck on a winding road. You could make no better than 20 or 25 miles an hour. The interstate highways only began to be built in 1956 or so, and it took a decade to lay down the basic network of what we now call the Eisenhower Interstate System.

There are many things I remember about those trips. Can you believe gasoline cost 23 or 24 cents a gallon, or even 19 cents if a town was having a "gas war." A bottle of Coke or Pepsi was 5 cents.

My mother decided that the trips would be more endurable if we got out a lot -- got out of the confinement of the car and stretched our legs, and maybe had a Coca-Cola or an RC. Her ideal was to get out of the car in wholesome and educational places. We always stopped to read the historical markers on the roadside. It was a great thing to do. My mother's idea of the perfect place to stop, though, was a historic home.

So between Newington or Fanwood, and Elmira or Nashville or Florida after my grandparents' retirement, we went to every President's birthplace or homestead, every Vice President's house, all the battlefields, and so on -- Mount Vernon, Monticello, the Hermitage, Old Sturbridge Village, Williamsburg, Hodgenville, the Seward home in Auburn, Washington Irving's snuggery, Sullivan's Monument, Mark Twain's home, the Bok Tower, and on and on. My niece Lauren told us that when she was first married, her husband asked why she wanted to visit historic homes when they traveled. Her answer was "that's what Bishops do."

I also remember a wonderful boat trip. My grandfather in Elmira kept an 18' cabin cruiser in Montour Falls. He arranged for my father and me to spend a week on the boat with him -- just us guys, three generations bonding. We traveled up the old Chemung canal to Watkins Glen, then sailed up Lake Seneca to the north end and traveled the length of the Cayuga-Seneca Canal until we reached the Erie Canal. We traveled a few miles on the main canal, and we turned back.

I can remember stopping in canal towns in that area of New York, tying the boat up along the main street of Seneca Falls, walking across the street to an old soda fountain for a sundae, seeing the barge loads of cargo moving across the state, tracking our progress via the Coast and Geodetic Survey maps and the buoys, and seeing how the locks worked. Besides the chance to see my father and grandfather in different ways, I learned some ABCs of internal waterway navigation and New York geography. I can't hear the old song, "The Erie Canal," without thinking of that trip.

So as I grew up I got to see a lot of our country, or at least the part of it east of the Mississippi. I have very strong memories that as you moved from the North to the South the country changed. This was, of course, before there were fast food restaurants and before there were highway bypasses around cities and towns. To get past Scranton, for instance, you had to drive into, through, and out of Scranton. It took you half an hour to get downtown, and you had a good look at the city as you passed through every intersection and traffic light. Then it took another half hour to get out of town.

You saw the old squares, the old downtowns, the factory districts, the rivers and the bridges, the churches, and the parks, and you got an idea about what a factory town or a farm town or a river town or a college town looked like. And driving through the country I learned from my parents about corn or tobacco or bluegrass or peanuts or citrus, or horses or dairy cows. My father had really enjoyed college geology, and he might stop the car and show us all dramatic sedimentary formations, or wax eloquent at Luray Caverns or the Natural Bridge.

And of course eating was hit or miss. For lunch, my parents had to pick out a likely looking restaurant, but before you went in you had no idea what the menu offered, or how expensive it was going to be. You had no idea how long it was going to take to choose and order the food and to feed six. With fast food and the standardization of recipes, Americans have gained time and convenience, but we have lost a lot of local and regional culinary delights. I still remember the coleslaw burgers -- with crushed pineapple mixed into the coleslaw -- from a stand in Avon Park. Talk about good eating! And I still have a fondness for boiled peanuts. Gas stations in rural Georgia and central Florida had tubs of peanuts boiled in brine next to the gas pumps. They were free when you filled up your tank.

All this meant I got a feel for the particularities of our country. The terrain and the climates were different, the foods were different, accents were different, the local heroes were different, the livelihoods were different, and attitudes were different.

Q: And there were differences on race.

BISHOP: Yes, those were the times of racial segregation. As we moved south in the car I began to notice it. In one town in North Carolina, I recall a lovely, right-out-of-the-19th-century town park surrounded by homes and churches. At the edge of the park, though, they didn't just have the "white" and "colored" public rest rooms, they had "white" and "colored" drinking fountains too.

The white drinking fountain was quite respectable, but the colored drinking fountain was an upright pipe sticking up out of the ground. There was no faucet. The pipe burbled water which poured out onto the grass, covering the whole area with mud. As I think about it, I can see the indignity afresh. Before African Americans could get a swallow of water from the pipe, they had to walk through the mud to get a drink. Even when I was eight or ten, I could see the unfairness of segregation.

I sensed when I was young was that segregation was a wrong. With more education and more years, I have realized more -- how segregation was profoundly damaging -- both for African Americans whose rights were denied, whose futures were stunted by the system, but also for whites, whose characters could also be debased or deformed as they tried to maintain the system of social superiority.

Of course I had southern relatives. They were different from other southerners, though, because they were Catholics. I always sensed that the Catholics of Tennessee, although they were in a religious minority rather than a racial minority, had a different attitude towards African Americans than was the case among other southerners.

I never, for instance, heard the N-word spoken in my grandparents' or my relatives' houses. They themselves had drawn the right moral lessons, even if a family had "colored" domestic helpers.

The point I want to make is that, yes, race and segregation was a feature of life in the Fifties and even into the early Sixties, when the civil rights movement burst on the country. But even as a young person I could sense the unfairness, and I knew it was an issue in American life that could not be ignored. My Aunt Patricia told me recently that I was quite outspoken about race when I was visiting Nashville as a boy.

I found that you could talk about racial topics with southerners, and I could voice liberal opinions, but I learned how to talk about them in a certain way. With the right word choices, the right tone of voice, and an attitude of dialog, not lecture, you could have a good conversation.

It occurs to me now that my traveling between the North and the South in the United States laid certain groundwork for a career in diplomacy. I was practicing Little League diplomacy when I saw the different regions and cultures within our own country, when I visited and talked with my southern relatives, or when I moved around Nashville. It contributed to my future career, I don't have any doubt.

Q: It was often said, "You people up in Connecticut, New Jersey, you talk great about civil rights, but you don't really have much contact with blacks, whereas we down here in the South, we've got these problems, but we basically get along and we've been doing this for a couple of centuries."

BISHOP: Yes, I heard that too. Once the Civil Rights Act was passed, once the traumas of the early Sixties were behind, in a way, some have said that blacks and whites in the South now have a more congenial relationship than is still the case in some towns in the North. Maybe, maybe not. We northerners could be quite preachy about race and point to the obvious signs of segregation like separate facilities. It's also true, though, that there was prejudice and discrimination in the north – it just took different, less obvious, more subtle forms.

Newington and Fanwood did not have many African Americans, and I did not have many African American classmates in school. And it was only in 1955, the year that we moved to New Jersey, that the schools of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Consolidated School District were desegregated.

The way that they did so was to take the school located in the African American section of Scotch Plains, the school that had had all the African American students, School 3, and make it the school for all the fifth graders in the two towns. The numbers of school seats worked out right.

So I was bused, I guess we could say, to what had been the school for the African American students. It was in the corner of town where African Americans lived, and I noticed that this pocket of Scotch Plains was a little different from the suburban main part of town -- the housing was smaller and poorer, and you could still see outhouses.

Q: How did your parents feel about this? What did they pass on?

BISHOP: My mother, I think, very much had inherited the values of her family, which we would probably now call liberal southern values. And she made our household as race-blind as possible.

Do you remember the way kids used to choose things, saying “Eenie, meenie, minie, moe”? In our home, the next phrase was “catch a tiger by the toe.” I thought that was the way every American said it, and I recall being shocked the first time I heard it said otherwise, using the N-word.

And no racially dismissive or charged conversation was ever allowed in our house. So I wouldn’t count my parents liberals in everything, but they were liberal in regard to race and fairness and had good, healthy attitudes that they passed on to us.

All that said, I have another memory that has stayed with me. It was a month before I graduated from high school, May 1963. As African Americans and Freedom Riders claimed their rights in Birmingham, buses had been burned, and Bull Connor used fire hoses to break up the demonstrations. Everyone has seen the videos. I saw them on the television evening news, and like most Americans I was shocked, angered, distressed, agitated. How could this be happening in our own country?

The scenes were fresh in my mind as I walked the next day past a local gas station, and by chance there was a car from Alabama, filling up. The driver must have been in the rest room, but the sight of the license plate with its little heart logo and “Heart of Dixie” infuriated me. In a moment, though, I realized that the family or the traveling salesman whose car it was had had no role in suppressing the riots, and indeed the owner from Alabama might be as distressed as I was. For a moment I had sensed how fury could be misplaced.

Q: You mentioned your mother's Catholic high school. Tell us about the religious and moral side of your family.

BISHOP: I was certainly shaped by growing up Catholic. Except for that year in preschool, I never went to a Catholic school, but my mother made sure that I attended catechism, Sunday School so to speak. Formally these were “CCD,” Confraternity of Christian Doctrine classes, and my mother made sure I went through the program for twelve years.

The core of the CCD approach to Catholic education revolved around *The Baltimore Catechism*. The catechism approach to religious instruction went out of favor many years ago, but educationally there are things to say in its favor. *The Baltimore Catechism* stretched out teaching in Catholic doctrine across 12 grades. If you were in the third grade, week number seven of the school year, the Catechism prescribed the topic, and every third grader in every Catholic school in the country studied the same subject in religion or doctrine. So did the kids like myself in CCD. Doing that was no small educational and social achievement.

I was getting the lite version, but the subjects were the same for me as they were for the kids in Catholic schools. I realize now that even though I had had Catholic education lite, very lite, it succeeded in building a certain scaffolding in my mind. If I peel back my thinking to be conscious of the intellectual premises that it rests on, mine are Thomist.

Poor, poor, pitiful me! A warped victim of *The Baltimore Catechism*!

Q: Let the record show I am hearing sarcasm!

BISHOP: At the same time, because I was attending public schools, I was not being socialized fully into the 1950s forms of Catholic piety – rosaries, novenas, Saints’ days, and Marian devotions. Nor was I part of the ethnic dimensions of Catholicism that many other Catholics my age were exposed to – no St. Patrick’s Day or festivals or processions honoring Italian saints. I didn’t become an altar boy.

Let me say a little more about the influence of the Church on one young American. Growing up Catholic in the 1950’s gave you a certain worldview. We Catholics were still a minority in the United States. Before President Kennedy’s inauguration, there was something of a feeling of dispossession.

Something else to mention: The Catholic Church was firmly anti-Communist. No doubt the whole story could fill many scholarly books, but my boy's view of things was partly due to the “prayers for the conversion of Russia.” From 1929 to 1964, every Catholic mass said anywhere in the world concluded with an additional short series of prayers. I’ve learned since that the intention was more nuanced than the short title, “prayers for the conversion of Russia,” indicated, petitioning rather for the freedom to express the Catholic faith in Russia. But our priests always announced “the conversion of Russia” as their purpose as the prayers began.

I can still remember the final prayer in the series: “Saint Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do Thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host -- by the Divine Power of God -- cast into hell, Satan and all the evil spirits, who roam throughout the world seeking the ruin of souls.”

I suppose the ordinary American Catholic knew Joseph Stalin had not only been snared by the devil, but had become his collaborator, and that the Catholics of the United States must be among the first to defend us in battle. Here, I won't go on to any deconstruction of the prayer and the times. Just know that these commonplace ceremonies helped shape the mind of many young Catholic Americans like myself.

There's another thing. Catholic schools and the CCD program during the 1950’s were very big on teaching apologetics, the ability to answer crude Protestant calumnies about the faith. It developed an ability to hear a groundless accusation and to have the argument ready to refute it, whether you did it angrily or whether you did it politely.

Just like traveling between the North and the South helped make me a diplomat, so did this informal practice of apologetics. It was useful in when I joined the U.S. Information Agency, because you were always hearing calumnies against the United States. The frame of mind I learned in CCD, how to defend the Catholic faith, helped prepare me to defend the United States intellectually later.

Q: While we're on this, was the priest important, with respect to what movies to see?

BISHOP: Well, that's an interesting question. In the early Fifties, I can remember, both at St. Mary's parish in Newington and at St. Bartholomew's in Scotch Plains, once a year everybody had to stand up and take the pledge written by the Legion of Decency. Everyone promised to guard young people and families from the worst of the insidious entertainment coming out of Hollywood. I don't doubt they strongly supported the Hays Code.

The Legion of Decency had a system of movie ratings. Films were rated as "morally unobjectionable," "morally objectionable in part," or "condemned."

One summer when I was in Nashville with my cousins, the Carol Baker movie, *Baby Doll*, had crossed the Legion of Decency red line. It was condemned. Nashville Catholics were abuzz, "We cannot go see *Baby Doll*," and I didn't go see it.

Q: But it was a good depiction of southern life at the time.

BISHOP: Oh, right, yes. That was the South I really knew so well.

Q: We're being sarcastic again.

BISHOP: Yes!

I never did go see *Baby Doll*, but the name of the movie stuck in my mind. Some decades later, I was channel surfing, and they were showing *Baby Doll* on cable. I figured I was now old enough, and my moral grounding was firm enough, that I could watch it without danger to my faith!

It was, shall we say, a great disappointment. Carol Baker was sultry, but it was a cheap stereotyped plot draped in Spanish moss. The Legion of Decency's antennae were stretched a little too tight that time.

Q: Thinking about social hierarchy at those days, and particularly when you get to New Jersey, where the Italians and all were Catholic, in society at that time, this was thought of as a step lower than sort of the New England Yankees or Irish. Did that play a role or not?

BISHOP: It was the same in catechism class as it was in my public school classrooms. There were many kids with Italian names and there were kids with Irish names. So we had the normal range of Caucasian ethnicities.

This was not, however, Hell's Kitchen. This was not Jersey City. We lived in a suburb full of college-educated people. Again as I think about it, all the fathers were veterans. The cohesion of young Americans from all backgrounds in the armed forces during the war, the melting pot of the military, so to speak, had gotten us as a society over that focus on ethnicity and religion, and the veterans brought those attitudes to the suburbs.

I don't think my mother would have batted an eye if I dated an Italian girl or a German girl that was Catholic, meaning someone whose families had come from those countries. But it was of great concern to her that I meet Catholic girls.

Q: I grew up as a Protestant, and was more or less told, "It's not a good idea to date Catholic girls, "because your kids would be brought up Catholic."

BISHOP: My father was Episcopalian, and he had agreed before any of us was born that his children would be raised Catholic, so this was a non-issue in our house.

Q: What about Jews?

BISHOP: If I had noticed in the Fifties that there were African American kids in Scotch Plains, I hardly noticed whether a family was Jewish or not. This was another prejudice that my parents willed away from our family circle.

My father, once he moved to Wall Street, worked with plenty of brokers and bankers and people who went to synagogue on weekends. If, in the fifties and sixties, Wall Street firms were still thought of as "Christian" or "Jewish," in his work at the Exchange he dealt with everyone. It made him very broadminded. He made deep friendships with a large number of Jews in the course of his work. When I say this, I don't mean this in the sense that "but some of my best friends are Jewish" -- I saw real respect and real friendship. My father's example has lasted with me. For instance, I am very much vexed by the anti-Semitism in the world, and I think our public diplomacy narratives need to combat it.

Q: Were you getting much of a feel for the outside world?

BISHOP: In elementary school, in Connecticut, I think the short answer is no. I had a feeling for the country because of our summer travels. I think I had a better sense of America, our country's extent and variety, than my classmates, but as yet the world had not intruded into my consciousness, or much of it. That came later for me.

In seventh grade I had a great social studies teacher, Jack Mohn -- I still keep in touch with him, now retired in New Jersey. He took us through our first American history survey, and I loved the whole course, every day of it.

Eighth grade in New Jersey was the year for World Geography, and I had another absolutely superb teacher, Bill Gianakis, whose full name was impressive -- Pericles Gianakis. His family's background was Greek, as you can guess. Before taking up teaching, he had briefly been an engineer and had worked in the Mediterranean. In his classroom, I sat exactly in front of the big Denoyer-Geppert map of Africa. I stared at it for the whole year, and I believe I could still trace out French West Africa, French Equatorial Africa, the Belgian Congo, and the other colonies, for this was Africa still divided up by the European powers. In any case, his class really got me going. Eighth grade geography may have been my favorite class of all time.

One of his class activities was for us to make passports for ourselves out of construction paper. A little work with sharp blades and linoleum print blocks, and we had entry stamps. I filled up my passport with the most exotic locations possible. It was during this passports-and-visas exercise, actually, that I first heard of the Foreign Service.

My father had been a stamp collector as a boy, following Franklin Roosevelt's example, I guess. He introduced me to the hobby, and it teaches a lot of history and geography. I can't say I'm still a stamp collector, but I have an affection for the hobby, and visiting a local stamp show, even now, makes for some pleasant hours.

Q: Did you get into things such as McCarthy?

BISHOP: That was in the early 1950s. I was aware of it, but I was too young to really understand.

Q: While you were in both elementary and high school, did the Soviet Union intrude?

BISHOP: Oh, yes, yes. And of course, there was Sputnik.

Q: That was nineteen ...

BISHOP: Fifty-seven. Yes, Sputnik got everyone in our nation charged up. It had effects on my mathematics education, good and bad, and it had effects on what I learned in science later. I studied "new math," the School Mathematics Study Group curriculum, for Algebra II, in 1961, and the "new physics," the Physical Science Study Committee course, in 1962, because of the great national focus on catching up with the Soviets.

Q: Did you feel a threat?

BISHOP: Oh, there was this ambient threat: "They're gonna drop the bombs off the satellite, just like pennies off the highway overpass!" I didn't feel it much. I can remember a few air raid drills. I can't say, however, that I was struck by fear during the Cold War. Many of the retrospective representations of the Cold War that you see in movies seem to have an obligatory scene of kids crawling under their desks, implying fear. I was there, and I didn't feel it. Nor did I sense an existential threat.

Q: What high school did you go to?

BISHOP: Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School in Scotch Plains, New Jersey. Fanwood and Scotch Plains had a consolidated school district. I went there from ninth to twelfth grade. I graduated in 1963.

In eighth grade, as we were getting prepped to go over to the high school, they assembled all the eighth graders to give us a preview of the high school curriculum.

One of the things I remember was the counselor dissing Latin, “The only people who have to study Latin are those who want to be Catholic priests.” He said it in a tone that implied anyone who had the priesthood as a career goal must be dimwitted, and I felt insulted. Even today it makes me mad, this old disrespect for Catholics. So I signed up for Latin, not because I wanted to be a priest, but because I wanted to give the counselor a poke in the eye. What good did Latin do me? Actually, it did a lot, because it expanded your vocabulary as you learned the cognates and helped you learn to write better English. And the textbooks provided quite a lot of sidebar material on the classical world of Greece and Rome.

I wanted, though, to get to the modern languages as soon as I could. In Latin, if you took freshman year, you might as well take three years, which I did. And I began Spanish as a sophomore.

With my course schedule full of Latin and Spanish, as well as the required English, social studies, and mathematics, it was the sciences that had to be sacrificed. You only needed one Carnegie credit in lab science to get to college, so I said to myself, “I’ll take physics.” As a result I skipped freshman earth science, I skipped sophomore biology, and I skipped junior chemistry. When I hit senior physics, my classmates had taken all those other science courses. Physics was rough going for me.

I had another great social studies teacher in the twelfth grade, Charles Armerding. He offered an honors course titled “New Nations” in my senior year. Just the title had a certain buzz in 1962. We had to choose a new nation to write our paper about, and I chose Swaziland. In 1962 I might have been in the top two or three dozen experts on Swaziland in the United States! The second term I chose the Seychelles. To write these papers on obscure colonies, I took the train to New York to get the colonial reports from the British Overseas Information Service. In a way, that introduced me to their public diplomacy.

By high school, I was increasingly conscious that I wanted to do something in my life that was international. Of course, I had to go to college first. And for my generation, you always knew that you would have to serve in the armed forces, and with any luck you could have your first international experience with Uncle Sam in uniform, all expenses paid. After all, hadn't Elvis gone to Germany? I figured it wouldn't be hard to begin an international career after college.

My best subjects were history and social studies. I was pretty good at Spanish. Otherwise I had all the normal courses.

Q: What about athletics and sports?

When I was 11 or 12, I was hit with asthma. The most awful-tasting medicine of my life would end the attacks, but our family doctor also barred me from athletics. For several years I sat on the bench in Phys Ed class if the class was doing anything strenuous. This meant I missed out on the normal development of athletic skills.

To be “true to my school,” I got my letters as manager of our high school's baseball team. I note with satisfaction that both Franklin Roosevelt and George H.W. Bush were baseball managers!

I finally got over the asthma by the time I was a high school junior, so as a senior I played Junior Varsity soccer. The JV coach, Albert Formicella, was very encouraging.

Q: Did you get involved in music, dramatics, anything like that?

BISHOP: Oh, I felt obliged to take some music so that I would have more than the rudiments. I took one year of the flute as a freshman. At the end of the year they had band tryouts, and I didn't sign up for the evaluation. I wasn't much interested.

Then there was the junior play of 1962. Instead of performing something like *Romeo and Juliet*, very ambitious, or the less ambitious *Our Town*, a high school perennial, we performed a piece of fluff called *The Peace Corps Girls*. The Peace Corps had only been around a year, but it had already inspired a play. I played the isolationist senator who didn't much like the idea of the Peace Corps, until my daughter flummoxed me by signing up as a Volunteer to go to the Philippines. My dramatic career was brief and forgettable.

Q: Were you in activities outside of school?

If I think about influences on me, I've talked about family, school, and church. There's another. My grandfather had been a Boy Scout, my father was a Boy Scout, and I would say Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts had a very strong effect on me. One is that I still feel the patriotism that the Scouts engendered.

I participated right up until I went to college: hikes, summer camps, troop meetings, merit badges, and all of that. Even now, if I meet a man and we discover in conversation that we were both Scouts, we're on the way to being friends.

The outdoor activities of the Scouts were good and wholesome, and I have great memories of hikes and camping out in the hills of New Jersey, walking the Appalachian Trail, canoeing in the New Jersey bog iron country around Batsto, or on the Delaware

River, and going to Camp Watchung in the summers. The Scout troops in our council's area all competed in an annual Klondike Derby around Surprise Lake in the Watchung Reservation -- every patrol pulling a sled through the snow, stopping to perform Scout skills like first aid and compass, for points, against time.

With the merit badge system, you had to meet a "counselor" to certify that you had checked the boxes for a badge. It led you to meet interesting adults that you would not ordinarily meet.

The Scout leaders sent me for a weekend session at Camp Lyon -- I remember it was cold, and reconstituted Army surplus pea soup was served with every meal -- where we were taught the ABC's of goal setting, scheduling, and counseling. I was a patrol leader, and at the next patrol meeting I applied the skills to schedule an evening's activities, rather badly I thought. The Scoutmaster, though, noticed how I was using what I had been taught, and I ended up as Senior Patrol Leader!

I spent two weeks of several summers at Camp Watchung near Glen Gardner, New Jersey. The days were full of activities to earn rank and merit badges and to develop "Scout skills." Scout camp brought together boys from different parts of the Council, from different faiths, from the parochial schools and the public schools, and from different classes in a wholesome way.

I remember learning first aid from an older Scouter in his sixties, surely, C.J. Hellen. He was blind, and he walked around the Camp with a seeing-eye dog, but he was an excellent hands-on teacher. I seem to recall that he had met Dan Beard when he was a young Scout, so he passed on to us a sense that we were next in line as part of a great American movement. The Camp had a rifle range, run by a West Point cadet, Alexander Zakrzewski. He gave me my first lessons in marksmanship. He took a commission in the Air Force, and he was a highly decorated Forward Air Controller in Vietnam.

Each day closed with a retreat ceremony, with a little carbide cannon and recordings of "To the Colors" and "Retreat" accompanying the lowering of the flag. In my last summer, I was a C-I-T, a "counselor in training," the first rung on the ladder to becoming an adult leader.

If you'll indulge one more memory of the Scouts, it's linked to some broad trends in American society. Rookie C-I-T's were commonly asked to be song leaders after meals in the Camp's dining hall, and it was something I enjoyed doing. Looking at old handbooks for Scout leaders, we might lead the other boys in singing "We are climbing Scouting's ladder," a rewrite of the hymn "We are climbing Jacob's ladder," or a faux railroad song, "The Dummy Line." ("There was a Scout, his name was Jack / pitched his tent on a railroad track / the Dummy was around the bend / what color flowers did you send?") Some of the other C-I-Ts might lead the Scouts in "Green Grow the Rushes, Ho," a song that had migrated to Scout Camp from Bible camps.

I liked the old Scout songs, but I was beginning to hear some of the new “folk songs.” I learned the Woody Guthrie number, “This Land is Your Land,” at Camp Watchung, along with the Pete Seeger standard, “If I Had a Hammer.” It occurs to me that singing about the “hammer of justice, the bell of freedom” was setting me up to respond to President Kennedy's inaugural address a few years later.

This was another interesting example of song migration, for these songs were sung at the progressive camps for red diaper babies in the 1940s and 1950s. Whatever their left wing origin, their use at Scout camps indicated these songs expressed widely felt American aspirations, and they fit into a common American musical vernacular. I don't doubt they affected the way we thought about our country, and perhaps the songs laid some emotional groundwork for the civil rights movement. On the other hand, none of us, I am confident, embraced Pete Seeger's radical critique of American society, as he hoped.

So the scouting movement had an important influence on me as well. Alas, the Scouts have been controversial in recent years, and the percentage of young American boys who are in the Scouts is not what it once was.

Q: The scouting, I never did get very far. I never could pass the darn signaling. Later, when I went into the service, I had a whole week of being exposed to the Morse code and I never could tell a dash from a dot. Can you imagine a week of sitting and listening to this meaningless noise coming over your earphones?

Did you ever run across any of the dark sides of things? The child molestation? I never did when I was in the Scouts.

BISHOP: No, I never saw anything. I cannot imagine any of my Scout leaders doing those things. The possibility of abuse was not on any parent's map. No one conceived the dangers then.

Let me mention one other thing I remember from Scouting. In Scotch Plains and Fanwood, the Catholic school had a Scout troop, and the public schools had another troop. I was in the public school troop, and the other Scouts were Protestants. When we went on weekend hikes, the leaders would organize a Sunday morning prayer service in the woods, singing “The Church in the Wildwood,” perhaps. I was the only Catholic in the troop, and I was required to attend mass.

The leaders took it in stride. One leader hiked with me back to the road, and we drove in his car to a town some miles away. He dropped me off at the Catholic church while he went into a diner and had a cup of coffee, I imagine. Then we drove back and hiked back to the campsite in time for lunch. He and I walked a few more miles than everyone else! The new respect among faiths that had developed during the war, the postwar interfaith movement, and the ideals of Scouting came down to a lot of effort to take one boy to mass. I much admire those men and the Scouts for demonstrating their commitment to a boy's faith.

Q: It sounds to me like you were double-dosing on wholesomeness – be true to your school, go to mass, be a good Boy Scout. Didn't this make you a bit of an outcast, or what in my time was called a goody boy?

BISHOP: Oh my, what a choice of words! [Laughter]

I say that I was properly raised. Yes, my time was filled with wholesome things like Scouts and school and church. Once I became a reader, I didn't feel I always had to be with others all the time -- "hanging out" might be the word for it. And because of my asthma for so many adolescent years, I wasn't absorbing so much locker room culture.

Both my parents were anxious to keep bad influences away from the family, and that included things like ethnic slurs or jokes. Saying something "off color" was unthinkable in our home, which was good. But it also meant that comic books and certain music, radio and television weren't allowed in our home. I don't think my mother objected to Elvis, but American Bandstand and Buddy Holly weren't part of my life.

Speaking of Elvis, one summer in Tennessee, driving across Nashville with my grandmother in the Oldsmobile, she was explaining to me that the best American singers were all Tennessee boys. She had a generous and expansive view of who was a "Tennessee Boy." If a singer had recorded in Nashville and owned a house there, he was a Tennessee boy too. Perry Como was, for instance, a Tennessee boy in her definition.

She was going on all about these guys, and I mentioned Elvis. He was a Tennessee boy too, a real one from Memphis. Her voice got kind of sad, "Well, yes, he's a Tennessee boy, but he's a little ... common." That was as far as she could go to voice disapproval of someone.

In 1962, when Nelson Rockefeller got divorced and married Happy Rockefeller, it caused a major stir in our house. My mother could not believe that Governor Rockefeller would be so craven as to ditch his wife for a younger woman. I remember her saying, "How can we believe any of his public promises if he can't even keep the most important promise of his life, which is to his wife and family?"

Divorce among public figures has now become so common that my mother's reaction seems more than quaint -- to hear it now sounds retrograde, illiberal. Yet I find myself agreeing with her. Public and private lives have to be in harmony, to fit together, and a basic integrity is an important part of that. Getting ahead of our story, when President Clinton was involved with Monica Lewinski, I thought of my mother's words all the time. I don't mind saying my respect for President Clinton was impaired by the affair. I might have had different views on policy than Jimmy Carter, but because he was an honorable family man, he began with plus points in my book. It's the same for President Obama. I'm my mother's son.

Q: In high school, how much did you get a feel for foreign people and all?

BISHOP: I don't recall there being an exchange student program in my high school, so no one went off, and nobody came back to tell their stories.

At the Stock Exchange, my father worked on the rotational training programs for foreign stock exchange executives sent to New York to learn about securities markets. My parents invited some of them to our home. I remember Mr. George Falsen from Oslo, Mr. Vincent Yuan from Taipei, and Señor Arturo Barcelon from Buenos Aires. They were good guests, never tiring of my questions about their countries.

And perhaps I could mention one other international influence. Sometime soon after we moved to New Jersey, my father discovered a Chinese restaurant in Plainfield, Lichee's. A white tablecloth place, we frequently ate there on Sunday afternoons. This was an old-style Cantonese restaurant serving "Americanized" Chinese food, and with six of us ordering on the old-style menu, usually choosing three dishes from Group A and three from Group B. Ah, I can still remember the oh-so-exotic Egg Drop Soup and the succulent Moo Goo Gai Pan!

Years later, in China, I was always complimented on my skill with chopsticks. I learned at Lichee's!

Q: Did the family make any trips abroad or not?

BISHOP: No, we were always going to Elmira or to Nashville or to Avon Park. I was pretty well traveled east of the Mississippi, but I'd never been west, and our only "foreign" trip was to see Niagara Falls from the Canadian side. The view is better.

Now, of course, when I took Latin, I learned a lot about Rome and the Greeks, too. Learning about the Greeks was a kind of freebie when you took Latin. And when I took Spanish, there were the cultural lessons that went along with it. All my teachers raved about their year in Spain.

Q: For many young people, the Kennedy-Nixon election in 1960 really touched a core. How about for you and your family?

BISHOP: My mother, growing up in the South, was by default a Democrat. My father, great-grandson of the Union Army, was a Republican. In 1960, of course, every Catholic in America felt the strong tug that Senator Kennedy could become the first Catholic president. If you recall, however, there was an ugly sort of undertone -- the White House would have a hotline to the Vatican so that President Kennedy could call the Pope every day, things like that. This anti-Catholicism was a residue from our nation's history, and it led to Senator Kennedy's famous speech about religion in public life.

During the campaign, Vice President Nixon and Senator Kennedy criss-crossed the country, and the Vice President spent a day giving stump speeches across central New Jersey. When it was announced that he would pass through Fanwood and say some words to voters, the principal let out school for the day. I was a high school sophomore. The

intersection at Midway Avenue and Martine Avenue was near our home, so I turned out for the big event. Of course, the Nixon campaign motorcade was more than half an hour late, but everyone was eager to see and hear him. Probably there were a thousand people gathered, filling the intersection, the five streets that came together there, and all the corner yards.

It happened that the chairman of the Fanwood Town Council was our own local John Kennedy, a Republican. He put a banner across the Martine Avenue intersection, "Jack Kennedy Greets Richard Nixon." There was no "stump" or platform for Vice President Nixon to stand on, so when his car stopped and the crowd pressed forward, he was helped onto the hood of the car so that he could give his speech. As he was gaining his footing on the hood -- no doubt the car had been waxed and the soles of shoes in those days were leather -- he noticed the banner and almost lost his balance from the double take. "He's here? Am I going to have to debate him?" "Jack" reassured him that he was among friends, and the Vice President proceeded to give his talk. I don't remember his talking points, but I did notice that he was quite a good speaker in that setting -- with a good and confident voice that projected well, with good emphases and good gestures.

During the election campaign, I suppose I was for Nixon when I thought about policy, but I also felt the strong pull of Catholic identity. Even to this day, I don't know, if had been able to vote, which candidate I would have voted for. My head said Nixon, my heart said Kennedy. Over the years I've come to think it's usually better to follow your head.

I should mention that January 20, 1961, the same snowstorm that blanketed Washington reached New Jersey, and so school was cancelled. I was a sophomore when I watched the inauguration live on our black and white TV. We all saw, or have all read, what President Kennedy said. I thought he was speaking to me, and he placed American ideals at the center of America's destiny, and our contribution to the world. I was only one of a whole generation who was inspired by his words. And as you'll see when we speak of Afghanistan, I pay attention to inaugural addresses.

The 1960 election cycle influenced me in another way, too. I watched the 1960 Republican National Convention on television, which nominated Richard Nixon, but the name of Barry Goldwater had been mooted as a nominee, and if I recall correctly he received convention votes from a few contrarian delegates. I had never heard of this "conservatism" before, but when I saw a paperback copy of *The Conscience of a Conservative* at the bookstore soon after the inauguration, I bought the book and was taken with its arguments about limited government and original intent. My high school teachers were happy to indulge having a conservative in their classroom.

Q: What sort of a role, by the time you were in high school, did New York City play?

BISHOP: New York was close. I visited my father at the office a number of times. He could take me onto the floor of the Stock Exchange, and I was thrilled to stand in the middle of its frantic energy. On another visit, he arranged for the two of us to visit the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. We went down the deep elevator shaft into the earth

to see the gold reserves. The gold held at the Fed for each nation was in its own wire cage.

My visits to New York might include lunch at one of the Horn & Hardart Company's automats. Between the kitchens and the tables where customers sat was a wall of primitive vending machines. Through the individual windows you could see sandwiches or pieces of pie, say, and your quarters, dimes, and nickels could open the little glass door for your dish.

It was traditional in the high schools of suburban New Jersey for everyone to travel to Manhattan's theater district to see a show once a year. I saw Robert Goulet do *Camelot*, and I saw Robert Preston play *The Music Man*. Theodore Bikel was the star of *The Sound of Music*. Even as I tell you this, I want to sing the tunes. In Spanish class, we went into New York to see *El Cid* on the big screen. I add here that in high school we went a few times to the American Shakespeare Festival at Stratford-on-the-Housatonic.

The city was there. Our fathers all took the train to the city. But in terms of getting to know the city, or feeling its variety, or much of its cuisine, the pulse of New York, these things were not on my radar. That came a little later, when I worked there in the summers, but not in high school.

In 1959, during the Eisenhower Administration, the Soviet Union had a big exhibition in New York. I attended with my father.

The big draw was models of different Russian satellites hanging from the ceiling. I gawked at Sputnik along with everyone else. On the way to the satellites you passed through a lineup of gorgeously painted Soviet tractors and combines, representing Soviet agricultural might. Not being a farm boy, I couldn't really judge the mechanical and agricultural qualities of the Soviet farm equipment, but I do remember that they handed us a booklet. It was printed so poorly -- nothing like *Life* or *National Geographic* or even *Readers Digest* -- that I noticed the difference between what they were showing us, the best of Soviet aerospace achievements and the best of Soviet agriculture, with the cheapness of the pamphlet. I said to myself, "Is this all they can do? Is this their best printing?" At best, they had misjudged the quality expectations of this typical American visitor. At worst, their printing technology didn't match their prowess in space.

1959 was also the year that Nikita Khrushchev visited the U.S., and Vice President Nixon visited the Soviet Union. I followed the news of Khrushchev's visit to the farm in Iowa, and the "kitchen debates" in Moscow. Both nations were deploying public diplomacy.

My father and I also took in the big British exhibition in the same venue, Madison Square Garden, in New York in 1960. That was another great public diplomacy effort, by an ally, in this case, rather than a rival.

So I was being drawn into this world of public diplomacy, seeing the presentation of one country to another society. Although I was on the receiving end at that time, I don't doubt

that was all reinforcing what I was learning in geography and in the news, and I was moving myself towards an international career.

TRINITY COLLEGE, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT, 1963-1967

Q: Well, I take it, you were going to college?

BISHOP: Oh, yes, I'd known since the day I was born. It was a given in our family.

During my junior year in high school, Trinity College, where my father had worked, announced that it was organizing something new, a "Transition to College Program." A good high school student could attend Trinity during the summer between junior and senior year, to take one or two courses and get a feel for living in the dorm away from home. The courses at Trinity would be graded, and for credit, and could be transferred to another school. I agreed with my parents that this is something I would like to try out. I spent six or eight weeks at Trinity in the summer of 1962.

I looked over the college catalog and the degree requirements at Trinity. I thought that this program would allow me to check off the boxes for some required courses that I had little interest in. I signed up for Philosophy 101 and Art 101. Everything was set, but a week or two before traveling to Hartford, my mother had an anxiety attack about what I might learn in Philosophy 101 – it might challenge my faith. So at the last minute I changed my courses to take a double load of college Spanish.

There were about six of us in the course, so that we got a lot of individualized attention from Professor Arnold Kerson. I enjoyed studying the language, and I made my personal "breakthrough" to fluency in Spanish that summer.

I remember the classes, but I also remember my first morning on campus. I was in a dorm room at Elton Hall with another Transition student from Long Island. I was sleeping soundly, but at 7 a.m. sharp, his clock radio, tuned to a Top 40 station, blasted the sound of Little Eva singing "Hello, baby, do the Locomotion with me." I didn't have a clock radio at home, and as I've said I didn't listen to much rock and roll. The clock radio gave me a wakeup in more ways than one.

Q: And choosing a college?

BISHOP: My father took me on the normal college trip – Georgetown, Amherst, Middlebury, Hobart, Colgate, Union, Trinity. He had worked at a New England college, and he'd gone to an upstate New York liberal arts college. I always knew that was the kind of school I was to attend. When I visited Trinity on that trip, they already knew me, they liked me, and that's where I matriculated. I was at Trinity from 1963 to 1967.

Q: What was it like when you got there in 1963?

BISHOP: It was a men's college with 1200 students. We still wore beanies during freshman week. I lucked out, and four of us had a good room on the Long Walk in Jarvis Hall.

During Freshman week, the college Dean of Students, Owen T. Lacey, gathered us for a talk. As was customary at the time, he had us shake hands with our classmates, the ones sitting to our left and right, and in front of and behind us. Then he admonished us that past graduation rates showed that one of our four new friends would not graduate. I seem to recall that he urged us to establish "regular" habits. Excuse my diplomatic search for a euphemism. He was using the word "regular" as it is used in laxative advertisements.

Two more of Dean Lacey's pieces of advice have stuck with me. He advised us not to subscribe to a newspaper because we would always be tempted to read the newspaper first thing in the morning. It was better, he told us, to spend the early hours before classes met reviewing the things we had learned in the most recent lessons. This seemed like good advice, but I had already lost the game because I had bought a subscription to *The Wall Street Journal* from a student salesman the night before. His other piece of advice was urging responsibility. "Soon or late," he said, "we must all sit down at the banquet of consequences."

My class went through what was still called "The New Curriculum." It had been "new" in 1961. It prescribed the traditional core sequence with the introductory liberal arts courses in many disciplines, including math and science. Trinity began to ease the requirements for the classes following ours.

In addition, Trinity required physical education every semester for two years, and we had to swim a quarter mile to graduate. The required PhysEd courses were pretty rigorous, actually, and that was good for me, because I had missed so much of Phys Ed in junior high and high school because of my asthma. Trinity's requirement helped me develop more fitness than I would have otherwise.

Trinity, Hobart, Sewanee, and Kenyon were considered the four historically Episcopalian colleges, even though Trinity had no official tie with the Church. Trinity still maintained the chapel credits system when I entered. As I recall, every student was required to attend a worship service of any kind nine times in one term. Attending services at the College chapel counted, of course. I checked the box when I walked to St. Lawrence O'Toole parish, not far from the campus, on Sundays.

All the attendance was, however, self-certified. There was a big campus debate over this requirement in 1963-1965 because students would just sign that they were going (later, in the Air Force, this was called "pencil whipping"), when they did not. The issue was drawn over integrity, and the chapel credits requirement was dropped in 1965. It shows, however, that it took one institution a long time to give up a marker of its religious heritage.

My father had not been in a fraternity at Union. He let me know that I was free to join a fraternity if I wanted to, but I sensed he felt that only jerks were members of fraternities, and what fraternities were for was to drink. I suppose his attitude had been partly formed when he was at Union as a scholarship student, having to work part time. It had been confirmed when he was the Public Relations Director at Trinity, having to deal with the media fallout of fraternity drinking. Many times I heard from my father about the time a rowdy Trinity student visiting New York City had punched Humphrey Bogart -- a college public relations director's nightmare, I gathered. In any case, I found I had no particular desire for fraternity social life.

Q: I went to Williams. Most people joined a fraternity mainly because that's where you had rooms.

BISHOP: The other draw, of course, was that you ate better than in the dining halls, or so it was said. Still, there was nothing there that attracted me, and my time in college did not include fraternity life.

College is broadening. As I've mentioned, I wasn't much exposed to Pop 40 music at home, but every day at Trinity I could listen to 1410 WPOP. That's when I got to know the music. Come on, baby, do the Locomotion! I wish they all could be California girls! She wore blue velvet! Wishin' and hopin'. The Beatles were on every station in early 1964, and with some alligator clips connected to the back of my radio, at one end, and my tape recorder, on the other, I had the songs on tape. An early violation of intellectual property rights! I used to point the speakers on my tape player out the dorm window of Jarvis Hall so that the music could be heard on the quad.

But this was also the time that "folk music" was popular. It was a curious kind of folk music, with smooth groups like the Brothers Four or the Kingston Trio singing songs of coal mines and the Dust Bowl, but hey, they were popular, and the new groups gave old songs more years. This is "my" music. The two groups I came to like the best were The Seekers and Ian and Sylvia. I think the historians call it "Urban Folk," and the whole movement was wonderfully parodied in the movie *A Mighty Wind*. Even now I sing these songs to myself. Now, though, I sieve through iTunes for the older recordings of those songs -- the versions sung in the 1920s and 1930s.

The summer before I went to Trinity I had worked on Wall Street, and I found business and economics to be interesting. I started out intending to be an economics major.

I took Economics 201 as a freshman. Our instructor was James Wightman. In his class, Keynes was not the path of economic wisdom. He was really a fundamentalist on markets and enterprise, and I'm happy to have had my first lessons from him. Of course, he was leading us to Hayek and Milton Friedman.

Speaking of Milton Friedman, he visited the campus to give a lecture while I was at Trinity. It was standing room only in the College's largest auditorium, and it was quite an event to hear him tussle with some of the College's more liberal professors. I was

interested enough to write him after the lecture, and I received a rather long reply quite promptly. It's my only letter from a Nobel laureate, although his winning the prize was some years in the future. I think our correspondence is telling. I wrote him to ask whether his advocacy of the free movement of goods and services meant he was also in favor of the free movement of people. Since passports, visas, migration, refugees and controls on movement are so much a part of Foreign Service work, I wonder if my question to Milton Friedman was telegraphing my career choice!

I took international trade with Lawrence Towle, who had written our textbook, *International Trade and Commercial Policy*, full of case studies drawn from the time when international trade had contracted because of the Depression era's tariff regimes and beggar-thy-neighbor policies. It was an important class for my future.

Professor Towle taught that economic choices were moral choices too, and with my upbringing this made an impression. Sometimes, if you set an economic policy which runs against people's ordinary sensibilities, all you do is set up law breaking. Currency controls and high tariffs are two ways to discourage imports, but the desire for imported goods may move people to break the laws. The corrosive social effects may outweigh the intended economic gain. That was a very helpful insight later in life.

A Chicago millionaire, Henry Crown, had just given the College \$10,000 as seed money for a student investing club, the Crown Investment League. I joined, and we invested the money, placing our buy and sell orders with a Trinity grad who was a broker downtown. We had \$10,000 and turned it into \$12,500 in two years, as I recall. That's not too bad, all things considered. One of our Club members, Lindsay Herkness of the Class of 1965, went on to a career on Wall Street. He was killed in the attack on the World Trade Center towers on 9/11.

Among the liberal arts colleges, Trinity was at that time conspicuous for sending so many graduates into business. Every student at Trinity who thought Wall Street might be in his future took Corporation Finance with Ward Curran.

As I look back on learning economics at Trinity, I realize that most of us conceived our futures as part of large organizations. This matched the structure of the American economy in mid-century, I suppose. We imagined our futures would be in corporations like Travelers or The Hartford, U.S. Steel, Ford, or firms like Merrill Lynch. Even if business was not your destination, the future would be inside a university, a government department, or one of the military services. I don't recall my classmates talking about being an individual entrepreneur, launching a startup, or running a restaurant. Those possibilities gained favor in the 1980s, but they weren't "on our scopes" in the 1960s.

So, I took a lot of economics, to my great benefit later. In the end, however, I majored in history. It just had more of a pull, perhaps gained from my family's driving through the south, visiting the battlefields and presidents' homes, or stopping to read the roadside historical markers.

I had exempted History 101, European History, with a “3” on the Advanced Placement exam in high school. I sat for Trinity's own examination to exempt History 202, American History. The single essay question on the test asked us to relate the issues involved in the impeachment of Andrew Johnson. I groaned. The only thing I had ever read about the impeachment was the chapter on Senator Edmund Ross in President Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage*. I wrote down as much as I remembered and added a few flourishes from *The Conscience of a Conservative*. Wonder of wonders, I passed.

When I switched from economics to history, I began to ramp up the history courses. I had some very good professors. The most memorable was George Brinton Cooper, who taught British history, so I learned the history of England from the Norman Conquest forward from one of the great teachers. Ten years ahead of me, the columnist George Will had been another of Cooper's students. It interests me to contemplate how George Cooper's course in English history, where we all read *The English Constitution* by Walter Bagehot and *Sybil* by Benjamin Disraeli, was so formative.

I took two semesters of ancient history from Professor Eugene Davis. His scottie followed him everywhere on campus, including our classroom. He was originally from Texas, and in the spring term he interrupted our lessons on Rome to give his annual “Texas history lecture,” taught using the latest classroom technology, a bulky transparency projector, the first I had ever seen. “The father of Texas was Stephen F. Austin. The mother of Texas was Jane Long. They were not married to one another. You may draw your own conclusions about Texas.”

My senior year honors history seminar with Professor Ted Sloan was focused on progressivism. I read somewhere that the noted business journalist John Chamberlain had been a progressive, but when he went to work as a reporter for *Fortune* he became a markets and enterprise man. He lived in Connecticut, so I called him up and invited him to the college. He led one of our seminar sessions. I saw him a number of times and read all of his books on the history of American business. I was leaving Trinity as quite a committed advocate of markets, enterprise, and capitalism.

I took a number of government courses, including local government under Professor Clyde McKee. He was a first class teacher. I had had little idea of what local and state governments were about. It was good to learn about the world right around you, and Professor McKee always had examples from Connecticut state and local government to draw on.

As a freshman, I watched as my classmates went into Philosophy 101, taught by Professor Howard DeLong, only to emerge with looks of shock, strain, and stress. This was the course that had made my mother nervous, and now I could see why. It was a notoriously hard course, reading difficult modern philosophers. And one goal of the course seemed to be to challenge any certainties, religious or moral, that my classmates had learned at home.

For scheduling reasons, I didn't take this course until my junior year, and I was dreading it. But on the first day of class, I discovered that the famously difficult Professor DeLong was on sabbatical. His replacement for the term was an older professor, William M. Walton, who taught at St. Joseph College for Women across town. He was unassuming, but he was a former president of the American Catholic Philosophical Association.

As was usual, we began with the Greeks. In a month or so we got as far as Thomas Aquinas, and we seemed to spend a third of the course there. We were closely reading Aquinas, Jacques Maritain, and Etienne Gilson. Finally continuing on, we were about two weeks away from the end of the term, and we were only on Descartes. There was quite a lot of philosophy between Descartes and Ayer and Wittgenstein -- we whisked through it in the few final weeks. Something as important as utilitarianism came and went in a flash, for instance. John Stuart Mill? Another blur. I've often thought that if I had taken Philosophy 101 as a freshman with my classmates, it might have jarred my Thomist mental structure, but Professor Walton helped strengthen it. And I did not imbibe the modern philosophies of doubt.

I joined the Young Republicans. Trinity's Young Republicans actually went out and pounded the streets of Hartford for local candidates. We were so young, and most of us were unfamiliar with Hartford issues, I don't know why anybody would listen to us, but we were getting introduced to politics at the grass roots.

Presidential campaigns have become more centralized and nationalized in the decades since I was at Trinity, but at the time the Young Republicans were important, and gaining YR local and state endorsements was part of campaigning. Thus the maneuvering for Young Republican support for the leading candidates for the 1964 nomination -- Nelson Rockefeller and Barry Goldwater and Bill Scranton and for that matter Harold Stassen -- was socializing us into national politics. My classmate Al Hicks drove a group of us in his Chevy clunker to gatherings all over New England.

I had read *The Conscience of a Conservative* when I was in high school, so in college I already thought of myself as a conservative. It was natural to be a Young Republican. Young Republicans at Trinity, though, included many of what I might call Hudson Valley or Long Island Republicans who supported Nelson Rockefeller. I moved into the more conservative subset of Young Republicans in the Goldwater camp.

I was a new freshman when Senator Goldwater came to Hartford to campaign, and many of our Young Republicans turned out to support him. There was a picture of me in the *Hartford Courant* from October of 1963, probably, holding a sign reading "JFK: We Will Barry You."

Before the rally, Priscilla Buckley met our group in Bushnell Park near Hartford's Civil War arch and taught us a song, to the tune of "Hello, Dolly." Let me sing it for you:

♪ *Well hello, Barry, well hello, Barry*
It's so right to have you here with us today.

*We voters, Barry, know you're right, Barry,
 So we'll send you to the White House on election day.
 ♪ The donkey brayed us into chaos
 From the Bay of Pigs to Laos,
 Said the Berlin Wall helped make the people free,
 With all the lights out, gee, Barry,
 How can the country see, Barry?
 Turn the rascals out and we'll have victory.♪*

“Hello, Dolly” was written by David Merrick, and he was not amused when he heard that his tune was being hummed by Goldwater supporters with new words. He went to court, and this political version was banned by injunction. In the interest of the historical record, however, ADST now has it. You may now have the only recording of it in existence.

Of course, President Kennedy was assassinated in November that year -- like every American, I remember exactly where I was that overcast day, on the Long Walk at Trinity. Although Senator Goldwater received the Republican nomination, he crashed and burned in the 1964 election against Lyndon Johnson.

Of course we had many assigned readings in our courses, but in our small circle of conservative students we all became members of the Conservative Book Club, reading Whittaker Chambers, James Burnham, William F. Buckley, Frank Meyer, and the other leading conservative lights of that time. I'm sure most of us were members of the Young Americans for Freedom, and we absorbed the thinking of the Sharon Statement.

I graduated six years before the Supreme Court case of *Roe v. Wade* hit American politics -- and the conservative movement -- like a sledgehammer. That Barry Goldwater supported Planned Parenthood and abortion was not on our scopes, except for Charlie Dinkler who was tuned in to the stresses dividing William F. Buckley from his brother-in-law Brent Bozell.

Another activity I joined doesn't exist anymore. All the colleges in Connecticut formed delegations to an annual Connecticut Intercollegiate Student Legislature, CISL. There were activities during the year, and in the spring the state legislature allowed the members of CISL to use the House and Senate chambers in the State Capitol for their final debates. This was an activity that I enjoyed. There was political horse trading, contests for CISL offices, and floor debates on bills sponsored by each college. With each campus sending delegations, it was a great place for Trinity men (we were all men, then) to meet girls from other colleges, too. Our group at Trinity often worked with Yale's Party of the Right to pass bills. From Yale, John Bolton was also active in CISL, though he was a freshman when I was a senior.

As for other extracurricular activities, I played the bagpipes in the Trinity Pipes and Drums! And I was on the rifle team.

America's participation in the war in Vietnam was growing as I went to Trinity. When I was in high school there was a television documentary series called *Air Power*. My father had been in the Army Air Forces, and my grandfather had been in the Air Service, so I watched every episode in the *Air Power* series, half hour programs on CBS narrated by Walter Cronkite -- everything from the Wright Brothers and a little bit on the First World War, but mainly Schweinfurt, Ploesti, and the B-29 attacks -- the great air battles of World War II. When that finished, it was followed by another television series called *The Twentieth Century*, produced by the same team. One of the programs in the series was a documentary on the French in Vietnam and their defeat at Dien Bien Phu. I've checked the dates, and it showed on CBS on April 15, 1962, when I was a high school junior.

You can buy these documentaries today and watch them on DVD. The best of them are still quite striking. As I remember the program on Dien Bien Phu, Cronkite concluded with something like "And in Vietnam, still, the United States is beginning to be involved in staying the advance of communism," or something like that.

I said to myself -- this will sound so old, so naive, and so boyish, but I think it is so American -- "Oh my gosh! There's a war on, and it might be over before I get there."

Q: To use the old Civil War expression, you wanted to "see the elephant."

BISHOP: I'm not ashamed of it. As a matter of fact, I'm proud of it. It was an honorable reaction.

My father had been an officer, and I was a college boy, so I ought to be an officer. I initially turned down the chance to be in Trinity's Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps (AFROTC) program, so I'd let that one pass by. I figured that what I would do was graduate and then go into the Army Officer Candidate School program for two years, maybe three, and then I'd be able to go to Wall Street.

In the summer of 1965, however, the Air Force needed more officers, so they organized a new, special, two-year AFROTC program. Making a long story short, I signed up. The day I walked into the AFROTC building and took the oath, joining just seven of us in the Class of 1967, I felt at home. I thought of my grandfather's service, my father's service, and I wanted to go to the war.

I liked my ROTC classes because they were so different from the history, government, and economics courses I was mostly taking. Lieutenant Colonel Gerald Marshall and Major John Grasser were our instructors. We learned speaking, writing, briefing with cutting edge flip chart technology, psychology, Air Force history, air power doctrine, and military law. We talked over practical management and leadership problems, not theories. It was preparation for the Air Force, yes, but it was also preparation for the practical life.

A World War II veteran and Air Force reservist who was a Connecticut schoolteacher, Major John Regan, was an augmentee at our detachment. One day he gave a class that drew on his experience with a fighter group in Europe during the war. He took us through

a list of everyday, run-of-the-mill leadership situations he thought we were likely to encounter as lieutenants. One was dealing with an airman who fell asleep on his guard post at night.

During his class, I recall thinking that *I* would be part of the Air Force that dealt with missiles, or computers, or signals intelligence. In other words, I wouldn't ever confront such a retrograde problem as airmen sleeping on post. Later, in Vietnam, I found that sleeping on post had not been eliminated as a leadership problem, and I thought I should have been paying more attention in his class.

From time to time we traveled to Air Force bases and we had a few familiarization flights. Our new Professor of Aerospace Studies, Major Robert Bokern, pulled some strings, and we flew in an EC-121 "Warning Star," the first generation AWACS that usually patrolled the Atlantic, to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. AWACS stands for Airborne Warning and Control System. Our tour of the base included the Air Force Institute of Technology and its research laboratories. I remember one briefing and demonstration at the "bionics lab" with a very primitive robot. It was the first time I'd heard the word "bionics," years before Lee Majors played the Six Million Dollar Man. It was heady stuff.

Q: Did you go to ROTC "summer camp"?

In the late 1960s, Air Force ROTC cadets converged by region on about half a dozen bases for summer training. One of them was Lockbourne Air Force Base, just south of Columbus, Ohio -- now it's Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base. Two hundred of us from campuses in the east trained there for six weeks. The base was home to the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing with C-130s, a KC-135 tanker detachment from the 376th Air Refueling Wing, and a few Air Defense Command fighters, so it had a balance of Air Force missions for us to see.

Interestingly, although the Air Force was a full year into the buildup in Vietnam, I don't recall much focus on the war. Not enough Vietnam veterans had cycled back to the stateside bases, I guess. We were seeing mostly the Air Force of the Cold War.

In our flight of 24 cadets, there were maybe half a dozen from colleges. Most came from the state universities, many of them engineers and business majors, and this was a valuable experience for me. Two cadets in our flight came from Puerto Rico.

Our field experience was a trek through the strip mined countryside near Nelsonville, Ohio. Our long hike became more difficult when our flight's man with the compass turned us too early. Instead of hiking easily along a grassy right of way, we plunged into hilly thick woods. It was up and down all the way, and none of us had had stairmaster training, yet to be invented.

Of course, most everyone finished their single canteen of water too early. At the end of the first day, a few cadets acted like they had trekked across the Libyan desert to an oasis,

only to find it dry. The cadets who still had some water in their canteens had others offering \$10 for a swallow. After that day of thirst, we spent the next day at a cold lake learning how to make a water landing in a parachute and how to get into an inflated raft. (It takes practice.) We had way more water than we wanted.

Even though I was in the AFROTC program, there was an obstacle ahead. Having asthma after the age of 12 was disqualifying for a commission, and my asthma had lasted well into my teens. My way around this obstacle – dare I admit it now? -- was to lie. Whenever the docs asked about my asthma, I mumbled that “well, I had an attack in the fifth grade,” meaning when I was eleven. This was a sin of omission, neglecting to mention that the asthma attacks had continued after that.

I managed to get by. The final, thorough physical was to be administered at Westover Air Force Base in Massachusetts, but Major Bokern scheduled me instead to go to the Selective Service examination center in New Haven. I lined up with the draftees, coughed and spread my cheeks on command, and no one read the forms closely enough to realize I was being examined for a commission. No one paid attention to my adolescent asthma. I breathed easy when the soldier stamped my form “passed.”

I loved AFROTC, and in a way it became my fraternity. It was perhaps the most important part of my college experience.

One book that came my way in the program was *The Armed Forces Officer*, written by S.L.A. Marshall. Powerfully written, it linked officership to American ideals. It's another book I reread every few years, whenever I need a jolt of inspiration in the public service.

And, anticipating the Foreign Service, I have one more sharp memory. The readings for Aerospace Studies 301 included an article by Bernard Brodie that introduced cadets to the elements of national power -- military power, economic power, commercial power, diplomatic power, and so on. There was one more element of power on Brodie's list that caught my attention. He described the “psycho-social” power of films, broadcasts, and education. Maybe Joseph Nye, when he defined “soft power,” was cribbing from Brodie! In any case, I remember pausing and saying to myself, “now that's something I'd like to work on.”

Q: This was the '60s. Was there opposition to the war at Trinity?

BISHOP: Backing up from the question for a minute, I was in the Class of 1967. I was in Trinity's last all-male class; coeducation was announced just as we were graduating. Professor Cooper, some years later, told me, “Sixty-seven, you're the last of the old classes. Sixty-eight, that was the first of the new classes.” In other words, I left college just a little ahead of the big outbreak of “The Sixties,” which to my mind really began in 1968.

Moreover, since most of us in the class of 1967 were the last “Victory Babies,” and members of 1968 were in the first year cohort of the Baby Boom, I've often thought that

the end of World War II and the beginning of what we call “the Sixties” were somehow linked. I’m waiting for a historian to examine this and explain how it happened that way.

I was a Young Republican and a conservative, but I was certainly aware that there were Young Democrats, there were liberals, and there were anti-war students at Trinity. Even in 1967, though, I don’t recall them having the presence on the campus that they did later. Trinity’s liberal students, moreover, were largely preoccupied with the civil rights movement, as I recall.

Q: Tell me more about the movement for civil rights.

In the year or two before I went to college, there were Trinity men among the Freedom Riders and the civil rights workers involved in voter registration in the South. One, Ralph Allen, was in jail in Georgia when I arrived on campus. The student organizations that supported civil rights wanted the Governor of Connecticut to weigh in with the Governor of Georgia to release him, and they organized a student march. New to the campus, I turned out too. I can remember the members of the Medusa, the student government organization, walking among us trying to discourage participation. This must have been in October, 1963.

In retrospect, a letter to the Governor would have been as effective (or, more accurately, just as ineffective), but marching was part of the spirit of the times. A few hundred of us left the campus and marched to the state Capitol, a little more than a mile away. The streets were largely empty of traffic, and men having a drink at local bars came out to watch us on the way. At some point our walk got faster until we ran the final distance to the Capitol and “sat in” on the lawn. As I think back on it, this was partly a protest and partly an expression of undergraduate enthusiasm clothed in the garb of civil rights.

We sang “We Shall Overcome” on the lawn while the march’s leaders asked for the Governor to come receive their letter. Various state functionaries and Capitol caretakers were becoming more worried, and more policemen were arriving, but we kept singing. At last someone with a title accepted the letter on behalf of the governor. The police then made a show of force by bringing in vehicles with police dogs inside. The police were restrained, not looking for trouble, but the presence of the dogs made us realize that we had made our point. We broke into small groups and returned to the campus, with the same tavern customers chuckling at the college boys as we walked back to the dorms.

Civil rights was a much-discussed issue on campus, and but I was not active in the college organizations that focused on civil rights. When the national civil rights organizations began to shift their focus toward a larger critique of American racism and how the economic system fostered inequality, and when they opposed the Vietnam war, well, I was on a different page, still Class of 1967, and an AFROTC cadet, rather than Class of 1968.

Q: Did you write a long paper or thesis?

BISHOP: Yes, I was in the history honors program, and we all had to write a bachelor's thesis. I did most of my research in the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress. As an Air Force ROTC cadet, I could have a bunk at Bolling Air Force Base for \$2 per night, which made my research trip affordable. This was before word processing or the internet, of course; I wrote out notes on 5x7 cards and organized them in a shoe box.

I chose to look at the American colonization movement in Connecticut in the period before the Civil War. This was the movement that sponsored the return of African Americans to Africa, to Liberia. The American Colonization Society was the national organization in Washington, but there were Connecticut chapters. For some years, money collected during the July 4 services in many Connecticut churches was given to the Society.

Some argued that the Society was racist in that it wanted to remove African Americans from our country, and that was a motive among some of its supporters, especially in the South. But as usual, there were nuances. In Connecticut, many who later became abolitionists had earlier been colonizationists, making the movement important as a “way station,” perhaps, toward abolitionism. Over the years I’ve also come to think that Americans, when confronting a fundamental issue, characteristically spend some time trying to avoid a conflict. The colonization movement was an early effort, an unsuccessful effort, then, to finesse the question of equality and a future of whites and their former slaves living side by side as equals in one nation. In any case, its influence began to wane in the 1830s.

The colonizationists were demonized by the abolitionists in the 1840s, and the fact that Abraham Lincoln flirted with colonization is sometimes taken as one piece of evidence that the Civil War was not about freeing the slaves. When I read through the documents, however, I sensed that the abolitionists made many unfair criticisms of the colonization movement. The abolitionist cause was righteous, but I noticed that they sometimes shaded the truth and sought to malign anyone who did not agree with them. My thesis, then, was helping me to better judge public appeals, to appreciate mixed motives, and to try to discern accuracy and truth. It goes without saying that in the twenty-first century America we still have a lot of partisan mischaracterizations of people opposed to this or that cause, or this or that candidate.

I turned in my final chapter a few hours before graduation, so I now wince at the hurried choice of words in the last chapter, but doing the research, setting down the facts found in documents, and writing out the narrative left a feeling of accomplishment.

In any case, I graduated on schedule in June of 1967. Senator Percy of Illinois was our graduation speaker. I can't remember any single point he made in his speech.

WALL STREET AND GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, 1963-1968

Q: You went to Ohio for Air Force training one summer. What did you do during the other summers that you were in college?

BISHOP: That requires a little telling. Between my high school graduation and entering Trinity, I worked as an office boy on Wall Street for Smith Barney and Co. Morgan Stanley Smith Barney is now a mega-firm, but at the time, Smith Barney and Co. was a small but highly respected firm, known more for investment banking and for underwriting new issues rather than for brokerage.

I spent two summers in the trading room. My beginning salary was \$50 per week. The trading room had teletypes to the 13 branch offices in other cities. In the center of the room was an F-shaped network of high speed conveyer belts that moved orders and messages back and forth between the teletypes, the news desk, the bank of pneumatic tubes that connected all the Smith Barney departments at 20 Broad Street, and the trading clerks.

One group of clerks, mostly older Irish-Americans, calmly telephoned orders to the floors of the “Big Board” (the New York Stock Exchange, NYSE) or “the Curb” (pronounced “coib,” the American Stock Exchange or AMEX).

Another cluster of employees in the trading room was a group of wild men who traded the unlisted, over-the-counter stocks, shouting orders into telephones directly connected to the trading rooms of other firms. Every one of the OTC traders seemed hopped up on cold coffee, and all of them seemed a few moments away from a nervous breakdown.

My post of duty was the pneumatic tubes. Snakes of metal tubes ran from floor to floor in the building, connecting all of Smith Barney's offices and departments at 20 Broad Street. Forced air moved canisters containing messages through the tubes. Most Americans my age can remember them in the old department stores, and one was memorably featured in a Marx Brothers movie.

I was a Master of the Tubes, shooting the orders and messages and news reports all over the firm. Next to us were the Dow-Jones ticker and the news desk. The news desk clerk ripped stories off the Dow-Jones ticker and banged out flashes on new dividends or quarterly earnings statements with his typewriter onto purple ditto masters. There was a constant clatter of the ditto printer running off copies, and the smell of the fluid. The news desk clerk passed the damp ditto copies of the news flashes to us “tubes boys.” We popped them into the canisters, and the forced air shot them throughout the building. Breathless customers' men on other floors called up their clients with buy or sell or hold recommendations.

Master of the Tubes today, Master of the Universe tomorrow!

Manning the news desk was the only African-American in the firm, Jim Haskins. Jim had been a college student at Alabama State University who was expelled for participating in a civil rights protest. He was the only Catholic in his group, so Georgetown stepped in and admitted him to continue his degree there. Jim's hopes to be hired on as a broker

were never achieved, but he went on to become Professor of English at the University of Florida and a famous author of books for young people.

The state of the art in reporting prices from the floors of the exchanges was the ticker tape. The ticker printed the trades and prices onto a strong, clear, transparent cellophane tape which was drawn across a very hot, high power light bulb and projected onto wall screens. You could tell who was a customers' man or a trading clerk when you talked to them. They had the disconcerting habit of jerking their eyes back and forth between you and the ticker screen even as they talked. It took a while to get used to this professional quirk.

The deep purple ticker ink was quite viscous and sticky. When trading on the Exchange floor ran fast, the printer would run so hot that the ink gummed up. The ticker came to a halt in a tight, hot, sticky, and messy tangle of ink and tape. The traders got loud and frantic because they couldn't know the prices on the floor. We tubes boys had to open the cabinet, pull out the tightly wound up cellophane tape covered with purple ink, clean everything up, and get the ticker working again. I left the office with purple stains on my hands many evenings.

I spent two summers on the tubes. I dressed the part. Every morning I could choose a tie to go with my white shirt. A bow tie? I favored the clip-on variety. Or one of the stylish thin ties made from one of the new modern plastic fibers? Curiously, these plastic ties were all labeled "silk" at the street cart or in the discount store.

I spent my first paycheck to buy a straw hat, a boater, from Brooks Brothers. These were de rigueur summer wear on Wall Street, whether you were a partner or an office boy. In our right hip pockets we carried copies of the Francis Emory Fitch booklet with a pale green cover that listed all the ticker symbols and the commission rates. (A for Anaconda, B for Brunswick, C for Chrysler, D for Douglas Aircraft, E for Erie-Lackawanna, F for Ford ...) This was still the era of fixed commissions. And we all read *Reminiscences of a Stock Operator* and *The Book of Daniel Drew*, tales of the wild times on Wall Street in the late nineteenth century, the days of the Robber Barons. The Dow Jones bookstore next to the Exchange always had those titles on the front table as you entered.

In my third summer, I worked in the Investment Advisory Division. This was management of rich people's accounts, and I spent a good deal of time over a manual calculator preparing reports on portfolio performance.

I was working on Wall Street during the times that the television show "Mad Men" portrays. "Mad Men" is about Madison Avenue and the advertising industry, while my experience was on Wall Street, but office culture was much the same. The clothes and furniture and cigarettes in the television series are on the money, but there are a number of anachronisms, and there's something false and smug in the portrayals. The program's scripts try too hard to congratulate us for our social progress, by showing about how awful and primitive and sexist and hypocritical things were in those bad old days of the 1950s and 1960s.

I spent one summer working in the International Division of Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company, also a block from the Stock Exchange at 44 Wall Street. This was largely clerical work, manually updating draws on letters of credit, but I drew some important lessons from the experience.

Six or eight of us worked on the letters of credit in a large, unfinished open floor that also housed other activities. Next to us were about a dozen women who spent all day punching the old 80-column IBM cards with account data. Buzzing around these women were two men who were fresh graduates of Fordham's business school. They were time and motion experts, constantly measuring the output and accuracy of each card typist. The women in the unit had been promised that pay and promotions depended only on their output, the number of accurate cards punched. This early emphasis on "metrics" favored the younger women in the group.

Overhearing these women's conversations over the weeks, I could tell that the women didn't like the attention and the pressure, and it was the older women who kept things on an even keel. Maturity gave them perspective on the world of work that the younger women lacked. It made them steady, and the unit worked together more efficiently with the older women in the mix. It was clear to me that the supervisor should be one of the older women. The MBA's didn't seem to see this. Their gaze was fixed on numbers. I mentally filed this under "management and leadership" as a negative example for the future.

I have a few other memories of my college summers. I went to the New York World's Fair of 1964 with the other members of my family a few times. My father had seen the Trylon and Perisphere in 1939, and the 1964 fair was also in Flushing Meadows. We were all keen on its wonders of new technology. A spirit of confidence floated over the whole fair. Little did we anticipate how America would soon be changed by events of "the Sixties."

And it was there that I went to what I believe is the only rock concert of my life -- seeing The Four Seasons perform. Of course rock concerts hadn't been invented yet. My memory of The Four Seasons live was that it was like a county fair.

Right after I graduated from Trinity, my high school friend Tom Kemp (Lehigh '66) and I treated ourselves by making a road trip to see the World's Fair in Montreal, Expo '67. Instead of merely taking the straight route up from New York, we traveled to Maine to follow the Arnold Trail -- retracing Benedict Arnold's approach up the Kennebec and down the Chaudiere to Quebec in 1775. I'd read too much Kenneth Roberts, I guess. I have some great memories of this, my first real trip to a "foreign country." The logs that had floated down the Kennebec backed up above the dam at Skowhegan. Crossing the border at Woburn. The French-Canadian farming country and the pastel-colored Catholic churches of south Quebec. Using my handy Berlitz phrase book to speak French. The Citadel and the Plains of Abraham. Staying at Laval Seminary. Driving up the St. Lawrence to Montreal. And the Expo.

After graduating and working for “Manny Han,” I went to Georgetown grad school for a term. But I returned to Smith, Barney to wait to be called to active duty. Mitch Graybard, the firm's personnel officer, put me on the rotational track for young executives, and I started work in the “back office,” transferring stock certificates. He called me into his office and asked how soon it would be before the Air Force called. I told him the Air Force had promised to give me three months advance notice. With that assurance, he raised my pay to \$110 per week and moved me to a second office.

A day or two later, the letter from the Air Force Personnel Center came in the mail. I was to report for active duty in three weeks, not three months.

I left Wall Street with a feeling of what a fine institution it was. We were playing important roles in the economy. The men I knew at Smith, Barney (they were all men, then) did not at all resemble Sherman McCoy in *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, not to mention Don Draper in “Mad Men.” Wall Street reinforced everything I had learned in my economics classes.

Q: Tell me about your term at Georgetown. Was it in the School of Foreign Service?

BISHOP: Yes, this was the fall term of 1967.

I hadn't expected to go on to graduate school. I was a little worn out with studying, and I was focused on entering the Air Force. Air Force lawyers, however, had gotten nervous about the new, rushed two-year AFROTC sequence. They worried that it didn't conform to every jot and tittle of the law. I was in the final semester of senior year at Trinity when I was told I could only be commissioned if I spent one more term in school. I applied for Georgetown just before the deadline, and I was accepted for the Master of Science in Foreign Service program. I was accepted to Columbia Business School as well, but I chose Georgetown.

I went to Washington at the end of the summer, rooming with my Trinity classmate Hal Cummings. We had an apartment in Rosslyn, and I walked across the Key Bridge to Georgetown each day. For those familiar with Rosslyn rentals now, in the summer of 1967 we rented a two-bedroom apartment for \$119 per month, splitting the cost between us. By the way, driving across the Key Bridge from Georgetown to Rosslyn, there was a two-story Marriott motel on the right, and there was a grassy traffic circle. District of Columbia buses crossed the Key Bridge and let off Virginia passengers on this grassy traffic circle, and then returned.

Georgetown wasn't quite what I expected it to be. I was used to a big undergraduate library at Trinity, a very generously stacked library, but the universities in Washington had come too much to rely on the federal resources. The Georgetown University Library was pathetic. Students would do the research for their term papers at the Library of Congress. It was absurd.

All my classes were at night, not a congenial schedule. The professor I remember best, though, was William V. O'Brien, who taught the morality and ethics of nuclear war.

The AFROTC detachment gave me a light schedule, and I was commissioned at the end of the term, which was all I wanted. I was, I think, just tired of school. That was why I decided to work on Wall Street while I waited to be called to active duty. I was commissioned on February 1, 1968, and I reported for active duty on March 15.

McGUIRE AIR FORCE BASE, NEW JERSEY, 1968-1969
Administrative Officer, 438th Aerial Port Squadron

Q: Okay, let's talk about your military service. What were you up to?

BISHOP: Well, most new lieutenants receive orders for a specialty training course. My orders just sent me eighty miles from home, to McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey, to be the Administrative Officer of the 438th Aerial Port Squadron. I was expected to learn on the job.

McGuire AFB is located in the sandy flats of southern New Jersey. The Army's Fort Dix adjoined the base, and Lakehurst Naval Air Station was not far away.

I traveled from my parents' home to McGuire AFB by train to Trenton and by bus to the base, not very "aerospace." To get around, I eventually bought my first car, a 1969 Volkswagen. I had to take a deep breath when I signed the loan at the base Credit Union. The car cost me \$2005! This was when the base pay of a second lieutenant was \$323 per month.

The 438th Military Airlift Wing, one of the east coast airlift wings in the 21st Air Force of the Military Airlift Command, MAC, had C-141s and C-130s, carrying passengers and cargo all over the world, even missions to Antarctica for Operation Deep Freeze. Soon after I arrived, the C-130s were transferred to the Tactical Air Command, and the wing's aircraft were all C-141s.

The "aerial port" at McGuire handled all the port functions for the wing -- the air terminal, passenger services, the cargo terminal, air freight, the forklifts, the railroad spur and our own locomotive, the Traffic Management Office, packing and crating, movement of household goods, commercial ticketing, and even the "honey buckets." The wing's combat controllers, who trained to jump by parachute into advanced airfields and set up the navigation aids, were also in our squadron, led by our squadron's one West Point graduate, Lieutenant Dan Coonan. They jumped regularly onto drop zones at Lakehurst.

The squadron commander, Colonel Sydney Maxwell, and our squadron's Sergeant Major, Chief Master Sergeant Roger Palmer, had both flown missions to bomb the German ball bearing plants at Schweinfurt, one a B-17 pilot, the other a gunner credited with two kills. After the war, Colonel Maxwell as a multi-engine pilot had been pulled into General William Tunner's MATS, the Military Air Transport Service, which later became MAC.

He had flown the airlift routes, and he was one of the Command's planners for the "Big Slam" (1960) and "Big Lift" (1963) operations that were so important to the development of postwar airlift. He had come to our squadron from commanding a C-130 unit in Taiwan that flew missions into Vietnam.

Sergeant Palmer had also served in MATS and MAC for many years, including some years as a flight steward on Air Force One. His personnel file bulged with letters of appreciation from President Eisenhower on down. These were good men to learn from, and from them I came to understand that the Air Force is an organization that passes from generation to generation, like the baton during a relay.

With their experience, Chief Master Sergeant Palmer and the unit's First Sergeant, Technical Sergeant Lincoln, tactfully began to show me the ropes of unit administration, but they did more. The armed forces have a unique system of advice and development for new lieutenants that combines the efforts of superior officers and experienced non-commissioned officers. In the 1960s, few senior NCOs had college degrees, and new lieutenants surely had more book learning. Yet NCOs became the mentors of new officers like myself, drawing on life experience and institutional knowledge rather than educational credentials. I quite appreciated their guidance, and I realized that young officers, if they were wise, sought the advice of their NCOs. Whenever I see Air Force senior NCOs on the metro or on a visit to a base, I pull them aside, shake their hands, and tell them sincerely how much I learned from their predecessors in the service.

The wing was moving passengers ("pax") and cargo both to Europe and to Asia. Our squadron loaded the Air Force, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve airlift birds, hundreds of contract airliners, and the logistics shuttle flights. The Air Force shuttle was LOGAIR, and the Navy's was QuickTrans.

All kinds of aircraft could be seen on the McGuire flightline. The most common USAF aircraft were the wing's C-130s and C-141s, but there were plenty of older airlift aircraft still flying -- the C-124, the C-131, and the C-119. All the then-current USAF, Navy, and Army aircraft -- fighters and trainers -- could be seen on the ramp, along with many foreign aircraft. I recall the visit of a Luftwaffe Breguet patrol plane, the British Short Belfast, and the Armstrong-Whitworth Argosy used for LOGAIR flights. I took a lot of photos.

At the end of 1968, we began preparing for the first Operation REFORGER ("REturn of FORces to GERmany"). Our wing was to lift the 24th Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas, to Europe -- practice for the rapid reinforcement of NATO with units from the U.S. if there were a Soviet attack.

The Air Force, which called its barracks "dormitories" and chow halls "dining halls," called its adjutants "Administrative Officers." I was responsible for the orderly room, unit property, the barracks, the paperwork, personnel, supply, the administration of military justice, awards and decorations, some of the training, and so on. I reported to the Commander, and the First Sergeant reported to me.

Our squadron's officers were mostly lieutenants. Among them were Keith Caulton, who loved to go to air shows, and on many weekends we traveled to see the experimental aircraft and the old warbirds at nearby airfields. Another was Dennis Yachechak. He was crazy about railroads, and an ideal weekend for him was traveling to the location of an obscure railroad line or spur and walking along it for some miles, looking at the stations and signals. Is it any surprise that he is now the chief of railroad safety at the Federal Railway Administration?

When I look back on my time at McGuire, mostly spent in our unit's orderly room, it's some of the odd jobs, the "additional duties," that come to mind. Odd jobs like "marriage counseling." Air Force regulations still required airmen to receive "marriage counseling" from their unit before tying the knot. I was a little startled to learn this would be one of my additional duties. I thought that not being married might limit the amount of "counseling" that I could provide, but the required counseling really meant a preview of the Air Force's limits on family benefits for first-term airmen.

Odd jobs like handling letters from parents who had not heard from their airmen sons, or jilted girl friends, or landlords who had not received payments.

Odd jobs like coaching an airman whose face had been badly scarred in a traffic accident at oh-dark-thirty on a Monday morning when he was rushing back to the base after a long weekend. Air Force safety experts had long known that most accidents took place within ten miles of the base because drivers mentally let down their guard on familiar roads. In every squadron there was an area map marked with this "Circle of Death." This airman's penance was to have to explain the principle, and his own accident, to the whole squadron at a Commander's Call. He cried in front of the squadron, and I don't doubt his terrible regret made some others think twice about safety.

Odd jobs like separating airmen under Air Force Regulation 39-12. Two rules of thumb covered most early discharges. The airman "would if he could but he can't" or "could if he would but he won't."

Odd jobs like keeping vigilance of the WRSK kits -- War Reserve Survival Kits -- that could be found in huge heavy duty cardboard boxes in each barracks. In the event of a nuclear attack, airmen might have to stay long periods in the barracks to be away from radiation contamination outdoors. Some might have been injured or exposed to radiation in the attack. The WRSK kits had what might be needed, including medical morphine. When the kits had been packed uniformly at the factory, the morphine's location was near one corner of the box. The kits had to be visually inspected to make sure no one had taken a knife to the box to get at the narcotic.

Odd jobs like administration of the unit's PRIDE awards (Personal Responsibility in Daily Effort). This was a motivation program developed by the Oklahoma Air Materiel Area for its civilian workforce that was somehow supposed to work in the different environment of a military unit. This odd duty gave me a preview of something that

endures in government -- the maladroitness of management fads. At the other end of my career, I wished that Al Gore, and Newt Gingrich, and Charlotte Beers had been lieutenants and realized that some great-sounding initiatives are just ... fads.

From time to time I was on overnight duty as the wing's Officer of the Day. That meant more odd jobs, like picking up airmen who were being held in local jails. Or waking up the Wing Commander if an airman died in a motorcycle accident. This was all good life experience, showing me sides of American society I had not seen growing up.

Colonel Maxwell convened a squadron staff meeting every week, and he attended regular wing staff meetings. The use of staff meetings in military units can be a little deceptive for lieutenants, giving the impression that anyone who has sat in the circle of chairs might, in conference, be able to make decisions. This notion shorted appreciation for the burdens of command, especially when events run at a pace that prevent meetings and communication with superiors.

It was at McGuire that I first began to understand the power of working in teams. As I noticed how "we all have to work together" and how even my team of clerks played a role in achieving the mission, I realized in retrospect that my liberal arts education had implicitly emphasized the individual. With a liberal arts education, I had thought, I would write a great book, conduct breakthrough research, have an entrepreneurial inspiration, or perhaps make decisions to buy or sell on the stock market. Empowered by my education, I would do this on my own, I had imagined. In the Air Force, I came to appreciate how things get done in groups, that team collaboration can produce more than individual inspiration, and an officer with some good ideas has more reach because he leads a team or unit.

After the Pueblo crisis, President Johnson called up a few Air Force Reserve units. Our aerial port squadron absorbed the recalled reservists from the 88th and 89th Aerial Port Squadrons which had occupied some nondescript old buildings at the edge of the base. Some of the reservists were later sent to Korea. The month before their recall, all of us "regulars" moaned, asking why we deserved the burden of breaking in the weekend warriors. A month after they arrived, we realized how much they brought to our squadron. They were well trained and just *good*.

Moreover, they sprinkled older married men into the barracks, which had a steadying effect. Before their arrival, a young airman who was bent out of shape by this or that would moan and groan about the Air Force, and his complaints could disaffect others. An older reservist could set him straight -- "hey, kid, it's not the Air Force, it's just life." That experience made me a strong supporter of the Reserve system.

In addition to absorbing the two Reserve aerial port squadrons, I also saw one of the first Active-Reserve affiliation arrangements. Crews from the Air Force Reserve's 914th Airlift Wing began to fly long missions in the C-141s of the 438th Military Airlift Wing. As the Air Force stretched itself to meet all the mission requirements of the war, use of Air Force reserve crews allowed the active duty wings to fly at a higher tempo.

Many of the recalled reserve officers were “geographic bachelors,” meaning that they had rooms on base, but their families remained back home where their civilian jobs had been. I became good friends with Major Robert Swoger, who was called up from Alcoa, and Captain Bill Birnbach, a cargo manager for Irish International Airlines.

In the course of my work, I had access to personnel files, and I noticed that some of the records jackets had a blue tab. This blue tab indicated that the airman was part of “Project 100,000.” Those who wanted to enlist, or those who were screened for the draft, were administered tests. Usually, a score in one of the top three quartiles was needed to enter the service, or, said the other way, a score in the bottom quartile disqualified. To show that the Department of Defense was “with the program” as President Johnson launched his many Great Society initiatives, however, Secretary McNamara ordered the services to accept 100,000 recruits from the bottom quartile. I understand that there were later tranches so that the total number exceeded 100,000. The blue tab on their records allowed easy identification for tracking purposes.

I was in no position to do any formal counting, so this is an “impression” rather than “data,” but I began to notice that airmen brought forward for disciplinary problems and for non-judicial punishment often were Project 100,000 airmen. No doubt the vast majority of the Project 100,000 airmen served well and honorably, but overall the project added additional burdens to administration, personnel, training, and military justice. We were dealing with Project 100,000 airmen as long as my Korea tour, later. In any case, I’m afraid it wasn’t a “best practice” to be emulated.

Being stationed close to home, I had a chance to see my parents frequently. I could take a Trailways bus from Fort Dix to the Port Authority Bus Terminal in New York, and then go to Westfield via the Suburban Bus Company. One evening I was in line at the Port Authority Bus Terminal waiting for the bus to return to base. The Trailways bus from Fort Dix arrived and unloaded its passengers. A poignant scene has stayed with me over the years. Last out of the bus was a soldier in wrinkled Army khakis, crew cut and sunburned. One look at him, and you knew he was one of those gangly, awkward soldiers who would be called “Kid” by everyone else in his unit. He had survived the infantry. He was coming home to New York directly from Vietnam. He had probably not changed his clothes since he boarded the flight at Tan Son Nhut.

Greeting him were two 40-50ish women and a teenage girl -- his mother, his aunt, and his kid sister perhaps. With me and the other airmen and soldiers looking on as the bus arrived, they unrolled some shelf paper, awkwardly lettered with “Welcome home, Jimmy” and they hugged him as he got off the bus. They were all so happy I thought they would break into tears at any moment. Soldiers affect a stoicism at heartfelt times like these, but those of us looking on knew we were seeing one of life’s special moments.

I also noticed is that while these four New Yorkers were lost in their own joys at a safe return, and those of us in our uniforms hoped we would one day have the same experience, the bustle of the Port Authority Terminal never stopped, some passengers

racing to other buses just wanted them to be out of the way, and no one seemed to appreciate what was going on.

My office overlooked the flight line, and I had an access pass for just about any place on the base. You could see quite a lot of the Air Force from that particular perch, although I didn't find the administrative work very exciting.

It turned out it had one advantage. The length of tour for an administrative officer was “uncontrolled,” meaning that you could be reassigned at any time. I wanted to go to Vietnam right away. I badgered the personnel officers at MAC headquarters at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. So after eleven months in New Jersey, I left for Vietnam.

PHU CAT AIR BASE, VIETNAM, 1969-1970 **Administrative and Training Officer, 37th Security Police Squadron**

The aerial port of embarkation was McChord Air Force Base, Washington. My parents drove me to Newark Airport to see me off for Seattle. In those days, friends and relatives could walk with passengers all the way to the jetway gate, and I gave my parents a farewell hug. As I entered the aircraft, I thought to myself, well, my mother took that better than I expected. I told her that after I returned a year later, and she and my father gave each other one of those looks only couples can give one another. My father said, “you should have been there when they closed the aircraft door. That’s when the crying began!”

The airline lost my bags, so I was delayed at McChord AFB for a few days until they were located. It was cold and rainy in the Seattle area, and although it was March I was dressed in a summer uniform with no other clothing. I spent most of the time indoors. It happened that the Perry Como song, “Seattle,” was reaching for the top of the charts, and it seemed that every Seattle radio station played it every fifteen minutes.

*♪ The bluest skies you've ever seen are in Seattle,
And the hills the greenest green in Seattle ... ♪*

From what I could see, there were no blue skies ever in Seattle!

Q: Where'd you go in Vietnam?

BISHOP: To Phu Cat Air Base, the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing, in the 37th Security Police Squadron. Lieutenant Colonel Frederick P. Geier was our squadron commander.

Colonel Leroy Manor was the commander of the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing. When I arrived, the wing's fighter squadrons were flying the F-100 Super Sabre. Most of the aircraft were single-seat F-100D's, but part of one squadron flew the two-seat “F” models. They were the famous MISTY FACs -- high speed forward air controllers. In this case, “Misty” was the unit's call sign, not an acronym. Later the wing received F-4D's.

Other units at the base flew the C-7 Caribou, EC-47 signals intelligence Gooney Birds, and AC-119 Spectre gunships.

Phu Cat, as it turns out, was an incubator of Air Force leaders. I could look across the room at the Officer's Club and see Major Merrill McPeak and Captain Ronald Fogleman, both future Chiefs of Staff. Lieutenant Colonel Bill Creech later became an Air Force legend when he headed the Tactical Air Command. He had gone by the time I arrived, but Lieutenant John Jumper, another future Chief of Staff, flew C-7 Caribous from Phu Cat.

Q: Where was Phu Cat located?

BISHOP: Phu Cat is north of the seacoast city of Qui Nhon in Binh Dinh province. The base was about fifteen miles in from the coast. We were not far from the intersection of Highway 1 and Highway 19. It was one of the eleven major air force bases in Vietnam. In the four "corps areas," we were in II Corps.

Each location in South Vietnam was within a TAOR, a "Tactical Area of Responsibility" of a military unit. The base and the surrounding real estate formed our squadron's TAOR. Parts of our southern perimeter touched on the TAORs of the 22nd ARVN Division and the U.S. Army's 41st Artillery Group, but otherwise the areas around the base belonged to the Korean "Capital Division," better known as the ROK Tiger Division for its insignia.

Our squadron, with seven officers, 450 airmen, and 61 dogs, was organized as infantry in static defense around the base. So, actually, for a glasses-wearing, non-flying air force officer, it was the best possible assignment to have had. I had lucked out! A dream assignment.

Q: You were there from when to when?

BISHOP: From March of 1969 to March of 1970. My first day in country was March 4, 1969. It was a relatively quiet year because the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese were still feeling their defeat in the Tet Offensive of 1968.

Q: I was consul general in Saigon, from February of 1969 to June of 1970.

BISHOP: We overlapped. You know that year.

Q: But it was basically a pretty quiet year.

BISHOP: And April, the month after I got there, was the high point of American military deployments in Vietnam: 524,000 of us were in country. The numbers are simply astonishing now.

I wrote an article about my year in Vietnam in *Air Force* magazine, talking about the security police mission and some leadership lessons. Yes, I'll add a copy of the article as

an attachment. It's one of those years where you sort of come in clueless and you leave knowing a lot more.

Q: Air Force, Security Police. I think they were called "Air Police" or "Sky Cops" when I was an airman. Would I guess that your unit was doing more than directing traffic?

BISHOP: Certainly. To summarize, there were two main threats to the base – infiltration by sappers, or standoff attacks from a distance.

From captured maps and the field interrogation of Viet Cong and soldiers of the North Vietnamese Army who were captured by U.S., Korean, or South Vietnamese units in our area, we knew the base was a prime target.

The sappers were Viet Cong or NVA (North Vietnamese Army) demolitions experts. They would take off almost all their clothes and smear themselves with petroleum jelly to foil our dogs' sense of smell. With backpacks of satchel charges, they would try to sneak onto the base. They were not successful. There were three attacks while I was there, and the sappers never got through the wire. These attacks were all at night. In the morning, there would be bodies or blood trails.

The NVA sappers had come all the way down the Ho Chi Minh Trail and walked through the mountains to get to Phu Cat from North Vietnam. The idea that they were going to come up against us, where every man in our squadron had a fully automatic rifle or a machine gun -- they had very, very low odds of success. So you had to credit them with extreme courage. They were very brave men, but they lost their lives in the attempts.

Who was responsible for their deaths? There were mourning mothers somewhere because their attacks had been foiled -- indeed they were foolhardy to begin with. The fault lies with the NVA and VC leadership who set up the operations and with the political officers who motivated or impelled those young men to attack. The young men may have been motivated by a form of nationalism, but they were set in motion by men who cruelly used their good, young, generous hearts in the service of what can only be described as Stalinism. The North Vietnamese used up their manpower just as cynically, just as cruelly, and just as mechanically as Stalin starved the Ukraine. I'm sorry to be this blunt, but we've had enough academic prettifying of all this. It was an awful thing to face.

All the agonized narratives about Vietnam, about nationalism denied and the true aspirations of the Vietnamese people, described some of the factors in the mix. No one should doubt, though, that assembling a village, sticking a pistol to the forehead of a Vietnamese schoolteacher, and shooting the teacher dead to intimidate the other villagers, was evil. Our conduct of the war did not help our own cause, but there was nothing wrong with our intervention.

The other threat to the base was standoff attacks, by 60mm or 82mm mortar, or by 107mm or 120 mm rockets. They were Soviet with "CCCP" markings on the tail fins.

Those Cyrillic letters stood for “USSR.” The first time I picked up a tail fin from near an impact point, it made the Cold War personal for me.

For the rockets, the Wing depended on the vigilance of our security policemen on the perimeter -- to see the rockets in mid-flight and to call in the news of “incoming” to Central Security Control, CSC. CSC would then hit a base-wide alarm, and everyone would sprint from barracks or hangars to the shelters until there was an “all clear.”

Whenever the base was hit, a team from the ROK 1st Infantry Regiment jumped into a jeep, came through the base gate at high speed, and went directly to the points of impact. Examining the craters, they could tell the general direction of the standoff attack. Both our mortar gunners and the ROK artillery had previously scoured the countryside around the base to determine likely launch or firing positions, and they had pre-plotted firing solutions to hit this or that point on the map. When the crater analysis team called in the likely azimuth of attack, our mortars and the ROK artillery began to pound the enemy’s likely firing positions.

As squadron administrative officer, I had not had the normal course of Security Police training including the combat course in Texas, so my post of duty was in the Alternate Central Security Control center. Our intelligence NCO and I monitored the net, the impact points, the crater analysis, and the ROK counterfire, allowing CSC to concentrate on moving sentries, dogs, and Quick Reaction Teams, and calling our mortar pits for high explosive (“HE”) or illumination fires, or in extremis linking the Spooky or Spectre gunships with the flight commander who would call in those fires.

We all worked seven days a week for the entire year. The days had a certain rhythm based on the shifts for different flights -- “A” from 04:00 to 12:00, “B” from 12:00 to 20:00, and “Cobra” from 20:00 to 04:00 the next morning. “Cobra” was the largest flight, with nearly 400 men on the night shift -- on the perimeter in bunkers and towers, K-9 handlers and their dogs moving through certain sectors, ambush teams beyond the wire, the mortar gunners, the Quick Reaction Teams, Central Security Control, and so on. The formal shift was eight hours, but with assembly; drawing weapons, ammunition, and C-rations; guardmount; and the movement of security policemen in trucks and jeeps to their posts, the duty time could run ten or more hours.

Facing the threat from infiltration, Phu Cat was the test location for the prototypes of the first generation of remote sensors that could detect intrusions -- TSSE, Tactical Security Support Equipment, and PDSS, Perimeter Detection and Surveillance System. One kind of sensor, for instance, BPS, the Balanced Pressure System, relied on hoses filled with liquid buried in the ground. The footfalls of a person who walked over or near the hoses set in motion some minute waves in the liquid, some pressure imbalances, setting off an alarm. Alas, so did animals. Another system, the Multi-purpose Concealed Intrusion Detector, MCID, relied on magnets.

I wasn't on the perimeter testing these systems, but there were TDY (temporary duty) civilian engineers coming in and out, and there were shipments to be handled. Making a

long story short, the tests at Phu Cat showed that the systems did not work as promised, and they were not adopted for use at other bases. We still needed men and dogs for the work.

Overlooking the base from the northwest boundary was Hill 151. It offered a great vantage point to see into the countryside beyond the base, and we had a small outpost on its crest, usually manned by four security policemen. Often it was the men on Hill 151 that first saw the red glare of the incoming rockets.

When the hill was taken by the ROK Tiger Division in 1965, they had mined its slopes, and there was no map of where the mines had been emplaced. The only way to reach our outpost atop Hill 151 was by helicopter. Once a week an HH-43 chopper braved the winds to pick up the four and to drop off four replacements with another week's worth of ammunition and C-rations. To get security policemen to volunteer to spend a week on Hill 151, Colonel Geier offered a special incentive: you could grow a beard during the week on the Hill, and no one would hound you to get it shaved for some days afterwards. The four men who returned from Hill 151 could swagger around the base with their beards, saying "I've just come off Hill 151" to every admirer among the airmen, or to every critic among the officers.

As I mentioned, Phu Cat was in the TAOR, the Tactical Area of Responsibility, of the ROK Capital Division or "Tiger Division" from their colorful green patch with a roaring tiger. The ROK 1st Infantry Regiment's camp was adjacent to the air base, across the railroad. Our squadron had the most frequent contact with the ROKs. They were the first Koreans I ever met. I ate my first kimchi from Korean C-rations. We all developed a taste for the canned kimchi, and we all came to respect and like the Koreans. We were also frequent visitors to the Regiment's 9th Company, just west of our perimeter, commanded by Captain Kuk Yong-Ju.

Our new commander, Lieutenant Colonel Robert L. Lee, in addition to flying the B-24 and the Mosquito during World War II, had been an F-80 pilot during the Korean War, credited with one kill. A crash in Korea had ended his flying career, and he moved to the security police career field. He still hobbled after long walks because his feet had been crushed in the crash. In any case, the ROK officers knew this part of his biography, and he was always treated with great respect.

I remember riding with him to the headquarters of the ROK 1st Regiment one day, and we were talking about tactical cooperation. "You know," he said, "the ROKs do things the American way because they go to our schools and translate our manuals. There's just one difference. It's that they follow them." In any case, I came to really like the Koreans.

Q: What was your part of this big picture?

BISHOP: Again I was tending the squadron's administration and training, its "adjutant" work. I replaced First Lieutenant Donald Wagoner. It happened that a new First Sergeant

reached our squadron a few days after my arrival -- Master Sergeant Frank Hollenbach. He taught me a lot.

Many of my "adjutant" duties at Phu Cat were the same as I had done at McGuire -- personnel, supply, the barracks, and so on -- but there were some new areas. Every day, for instance, security policemen gathered around our mail room to wait for letters and packages from home, or for items they had ordered from the Base Exchange catalog. One other duty that came my way was to be the squadron's historian, submitting the quarterly histories -- narratives along with maps, photos, rosters, and documents -- to the Air Force's archives at Maxwell Air Force Base.

Working for me were the unit's First Sergeant, administrative people in the orderly room and the mail room, some training people who worked at the armory, and a varying number of wayward airmen who were "on detail."

That said, in a squadron with only seven officers, all bunking together, I spent time on the perimeter, days and nights. The squadron was generously provided with ammunition, and I held my own as a marksman on the ranges. When the squadron received the first Light Anti-tank Weapons System, the LAWS rockets, Technical Sergeant Lohrman and I tested them and laid out the training and familiarization for our airmen.

By 1969, stateside standards and checklists were being applied to the wings in Vietnam and Thailand. Not only must aircraft be mission ready, vehicles maintained, and the chow halls nourishing the troops. Now bases had to have active Combined Federal Campaign, suggestion, and base beautification programs. This last item meant grass had to be mowed and vehicles washed. The older NCOs said Phu Cat was being "SACumcized."

Since our squadron commander and the other officers and senior NCOs had full slates manning the perimeter at night; exercising the Quick Reaction Teams, Central Security Control, and mortar fire centers; keeping up morale among the hundreds of security policemen on the night shift; jury rigging a system of lights along the perimeter; testing the intrusion systems; and assuring the health of the dogs, a lot of this "Mickey Mouse" fell on me. My hoochmates worried about the enemy; I fended off the checklist crazies and bean counters.

I was more involved in the administration of non-judicial punishment under the Uniform Code of Military Justice than I had been at McGuire, and Colonel Charles Edwards, the wing's Judge Advocate, gave me a lot of his time -- more time than was needed to simply process cases. He shared some of his thinking about the role of law and the need to enforce standards, social and military. By the way, recalling Major Regan's lesson in the AFROTC unit at Trinity, we had several cases of sleeping on post.

There were other cases that live on in Air Force legend -- oft-retold legends among the few of us that were there, at least -- that can only be related over some beers. If I can generalize about Vietnam war stories, they are naturally embroidered as years go by, and once in a while you'll hear something that seems highly improbable. Still, I never heard a

story that was totally implausible -- in a nine year war involving, over time, millions of young Americans, the damndest things could happen.

A few dozen Vietnamese men and women worked in our barracks during the day, making beds and shining shoes. Each airman contributed a few dollars a month to their payroll fund. There were occasional dramatic disputes with the houseboy and maids -- “papa-sans” and “mama-sans” in GI lingo -- that gave some variety to our routines, and we were running a small monthly payroll operation.

It was illegal for us to possess what we called “green dollars,” U.S. currency, greenbacks. We used Military Payment Certificates, MPC, instead, and when there was a “C-Day,” exchanging a new series of MPC for the old, to foil black marketing, I had a long day supervising the conversion.

The use of MPC was a measure designed to dampen the effect of huge amounts of GI pay on a small economy. Prohibiting the possession of green dollars was one part of the policy. Another was that MPC could only be converted to Vietnamese piastres at the official rate at our Phu Cat branch of the Chase Manhattan Bank. I seem to remember that the rate was about 118 “P” to one U.S. dollar, but outside the gate the black market rate was north of 400:1. That created a tremendous incentive for illegal conversions of MPC.

At Phu Cat, we all were pretty much locked in the base, so illegal currency transactions weren't much of a problem. I remember, however, that two Army majors -- by their looks, broken down and dissipated majors who would never make lieutenant colonel -- came to our orderly room every month offering to save us a trip to the bank by exchanging MPC. We needed piastres every month to pay the Vietnamese helpers, and there were always long lines at the bank. I wasn't on to their game at first. After a while I realized they were gathering piastres from the local economy, receiving the black market rate, and then they exchanged them, going from squadron to squadron, for MPC at the official rate. They stopped coming before I could report them.

Phu Cat was the home of the 7th Air Force Mortar School, which trained security policemen from all the squadrons in Vietnam on mortar gunnery. There was an extra load of administration that came with the school, and we were hosting dozens and dozens of airmen from other security police squadrons for the courses.

An airman in Vietnam who was sentenced to confinement by a court martial served his time at “LBJ,” Long Binh Jail, run by the Army. Under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, airmen could also receive a milder form of punishment, “correctional custody.” This option was unavailable to Air Force commanders in Vietnam before our squadron opened a correctional custody facility at Phu Cat. The facility itself was a hooch located next to the runway. One of our security police NCOs had the necessary training and the right suffix to his Air Force Specialty Code that allowed him to supervise the facility. The airmen in correctional custody spent a week or two on work details.

The word “supply” doesn't quite convey everything about getting what you need in a war zone. Official supply channels often didn't deliver. Our armorers despaired of getting replacement firing pins for our Remington shotguns, needed by the security policemen in towers and bunkers near a village, so that rifle rounds would not cause other casualties. They ordered the firing pins by mail, paying for them on their own.

“Supply” had a shirttail cousin named “scrounging,” and one of our NCOs had the gift for scrounging. It could be small things -- trading some spare aviators' sunglasses that had fallen off the back of a truck to the Army for steaks or dehydrated shrimp, for instance. Or it could be large things.

Air Force security policemen did not use the Army's M1911A1 .45 caliber automatic pistol, but rather the Smith & Wesson .38 caliber Combat Masterpiece revolver, and there were soldiers who eyed our pistols with envy. Before I came, one of the squadron's officers had traded two of our pistols for two jeeps which were sorely needed on the perimeter. So that no one would notice that we had more jeeps than issued, the two extra jeeps were painted with markings that indicated they belonged to the Military Police unit in Qui Nhon -- we had two security police liaison officers there, so the cover story was plausible.

By 1969, however, the Air Force was getting its accounts in Vietnam in order -- cleaning up things after an earlier “wild west” period of expansion -- and the exchange was discovered. The captain's career was ruined a few days before his departure. The lesson -- I often remembered it in Afghanistan -- is that cutting corners to get things done during a buildup wins laurels, but when a war turns sour, the investigators accept no excuses.

Q: Were you aware, at Phu Cat, of what the Embassy in Saigon was doing? Ambassador Komer and CORDS?

BISHOP: Even at Phu Cat I knew the main outline of the CORDS organization and how it fit in the Embassy, but this didn't affect me at Phu Cat Air Base. CORDS -- the acronym was for Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support.

As I've thought about counterinsurgency over the years, I've thought that the organization of CORDS -- Ambassador Robert Komer became the czar of every civilian agency's development activities, and General Westmoreland made him a Deputy Commander of the Military Assistance Command-Vietnam (MACV) -- worked better than our structure in Afghanistan. On one hand, it unified the efforts of all the military commands and the civilian agencies, and there was one chain of command whether it was a civilian or a military officer in the chain. Second, the structure allowed military money to be used for development purposes.

One of my “additional duties” was to be our squadron's civic actions officer, and from time to time I took some vehicles outside the base to deliver relief supplies to local villagers. My team and I went out fully armed. We wore our flak jackets, body armor, when we drove off the base. From time to time we were greeted at the village by an

American USAID or CORDS officer dressed in khakis and a short-sleeve shirt. The lessons I drew were these. These American civilians dressed casually because they were familiar with the area and the culture, and judged the threat low. We were loaded for bear because we lacked that knowledge. Why those of us in the armed forces didn't know much about Vietnam and its society -- that's a large question that I've thought about ever since.

Yes, the FSOs seemed a little more relaxed than we were. It gave me a glimpse of the Foreign Service, a first look at development and diplomacy. They weren't much older than I was then.

Another memory that relates to our cultural blinders: One day, eating a burger at the Phu Cat Officer's Club, I saw that the Vietnamese waitresses were wearing new cheongsams - - Chinese dresses with high collars and no sleeves that showed off their figures. The dresses had long slits on the sides, from the bottom of the skirt almost to the hip, to show their legs.

This aggravated me. I had noticed that, even in Vietnam, Americans called Asian women "mama-sans," GI lingo used in Japan after the war. We were so insensitive to different cultures as to migrate "mama-san" from one country to another. Now we were putting Vietnamese women into slinky Chinese dresses, when they already looked lovely in their modest *ao dais*, the dresses that were their own.

I wrote out a letter of protest to the Board of the O-Club that afternoon, and the Chinese dresses disappeared a week or so later. Some years later I fell into conversation with another Phu Cat veteran. When he heard my name, he asked, "are you the Bishop who wrote that letter about the dresses?"

The Defense Library Service had put quite a satisfactory library at Phu Cat. I began to read more American military literature, books like *Once an Eagle* and *The Red Badge of Courage*. I revisited Kipling's poems.

On the themes we've been discussing -- our lack of understanding of Vietnamese society and our failure to shape our operations to the counterinsurgency environment -- I read retired Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel William Corson's book on the Marine Corps' Combined Action Platoons in I Corps, *The Betrayal*, in the Phu Cat library.

Senior Marine leaders, especially Victor Krulak and Lew Walt, thought about the war and counterinsurgency differently than General Westmoreland. The Marine generals would place Marines in the countryside, link them with Vietnamese military units, and engage in parallel civic actions. Lieutenant Colonel Corson's book described the program in action, before General Westmoreland killed it.

I found the book highly persuasive, arguing that the fires-intensive big unit war that General Westmoreland pursued was inappropriate for a counterinsurgency. As I read the book, I thought about one village I had visited on a Civic Actions run, Hung My 4, just

after it had been turned to ashes by the VC and NVA. Walking through the village, seeing the villagers squatting mute and overwhelmed beside their burned dwellings, I had wondered to myself how we could understand and identify with the villagers before we sought to mobilize them. And I recall seeing how the ROK Tiger Division was doing a lot of work with the Popular Force units in their area; they sensed the need for measures focused on people, too.

The Betrayal made me begin to think about re-conceiving the war. The Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan talk about a “presence strategy” or “people-centric” strategy. I don't recall him using either of those phrases, but this was Corson's concept, for sure.

The Betrayal led me to find a copy of a Marine Corps manual, the *Unit Leader's Personal Response Handbook*, which prepared Marines for that closer contact with the Vietnamese. I still have my copy, and I took it with me to Afghanistan. It was organized around 30 everyday vignettes -- interactions and conversations that Marines might have with ordinary Vietnamese. I began to draw on it when we provided our squadron briefings to newly arrived security policemen.

It's an important book, showing how the Marine Corps could draw on its “small wars” heritage, and how Marines are innovative thinkers. Forty years later, when I was the Foreign Policy Advisor to the Commandant, I understood that the same frame of mind moved 21st century Marines to establish the Center for Advanced Operational Cultural Learning at Quantico, and the “Iraqi villages” and “Afghan villages,” using local immigrants to role play the villagers, during the MOJAVE VIPER training at Twenty-Nine Palms, California. Interestingly, the Handbook was largely written by Navy chaplains serving with the Marines. Chaplain Lieutenant Commander Richard McGonigal was a mover and shaker. Chaplains can do more than pray, give invocations, and counsel.

Q: Did you do any flying at all?

BISHOP: I was anxious to fly some missions so I could sit on the park bench with my father, and I was always looking for opportunities. Every day our squadron commander flew a “dawn patrol” or “rocket run” mission in the HH-38 Pedro or O-1 Bird Dog, making an early morning circuit of the base to see if there was enemy activity. When he was not available, our operations officer made the flight, and if he were unavailable it would be the Weapons System Security officer or our intelligence NCO. For a short time, none could make the missions, and they volunteered me. I had been telling them of my desire to fly some missions in a modest way ... NOT.

My six missions were in the back seat of an O-1F or O-1G Bird Dog from the 21st Tactical Air Support Squadron, the “Tum FACs.” Four were the ordinary morning weather checks and looksees of the perimeter and the valley. On another mission, we flew over the nearby mountains to scope out the NVA units that were reported to be there. We could see nothing but rocks and trees.

The next day we again headed for the mountains, and again we saw nothing. I was in the seat behind Lieutenant James Cross. As we flew back, however, we heard on the radio net that the Tiger Division was in contact in the Suoi Ca Valley, a few miles away, and needed air support. There were F-100 fighters from Phan Rang with proper bomb loads in the air, but there was no forward air controller, no FAC, to mark the targets and guide in the fighters. I guess we can say Lieutenant Cross flew to the sound of the guns.

We flew over the area of contact to get the lay of the land and the disposition of the troops. With a FAC overhead, the ROK's "popped smoke" -- purple and pink and green -- to mark their locations, and the smoke rose up through the trees. This is how we knew where the friendlies were. The FAC on the ground indicated the general direction of the enemy, and Lieutenant Cross put our O-1 into a dive and put a white phosphorus marker rocket as close to the enemy as possible. There was no gunsight in an O-1, but there was a small tube in front of the windshield, and the pilots learned to roughly aim the rockets by squinting over the tube at a certain angle. It was the TLAR system -- "that looks about right."

Right on schedule, the F-100s, flying a cloverleaf pattern, came in with their bombs, dropping this or that distance to the left or the right of the white smoke as indicated by the ground FAC who could see the NVA. We repeated the procedure until all four of our rockets had been fired. It was hot and we were perspiring, and I remember that as we pulled out of each dive my glasses slid down my nose on the sweat. In any case, we returned to base. In one mission I had seen and learned a great deal. Lieutenant Cross credited himself with a strike mission, not a mere observation mission. Strike missions counted more for Air Medal credit.

At the National Museum of the Air Force in Dayton, the collection includes a number of oil paintings by an Air Force Reserve officer who was called up in 1969 and flew O-1s in Binh Dinh province, supporting the ROKs. One or two of the paintings by Lieutenant Colonel Wilson Hurley portrayed a similar scene. Hurley was well known for his dramatic paintings of the scenery of the American southwest.

Q: Where did you go on "R&R"?

BISHOP: Ah, R&R, rest and recuperation. Our week off from Vietnam. Actually, I managed to go twice.

The first trip was to Hong Kong. I took a hop up to Da Nang, overnighted on the Marine Corps side of the air base, and we flew out from there on a contract civilian airliner. As the plane's wheels left the ground, all 180 of us let out a cheer!

One other memory. As the stewardesses (they weren't called "flight attendants" back then) began to serve the meals, beginning at the front of the aircraft, we all could hear audible gasps and sighs as GIs began eating meals. I couldn't figure out why. When my meal came, I opened up the cardboard pint of milk. When I took my first swallow, I also sighed and gasped. Fresh milk!

The milk on the airliner came from dairy farms in Hong Kong or the Philippines. We had been drinking what the Army called “filled milk” in Vietnam. The Army shipped dehydrated skim milk to Vietnam. At the Army's big in-country milk plant, they used coconut oil when they reconstituted the milk. We drank it, but it tasted funny. The milk on the aircraft, though, was the fresh real McCoy.

As the flight approached Kai Tak, we were given tourist maps and a list of hotels. I remember the map said that Wan Chai was where American sailors spent their time in Hong Kong. I said to myself, “I'm in the Air Force, not the Navy, I can probably skip Wan Chai.” Dense me, I didn't realize that was the Tourist Association's way of saying that Wan Chai was where the booze and the gals were.

When I got to the hotel, I walked down Cameron Road to begin shopping. I bought a 35mm SLR camera. I got measured for some suits, including one made of the latest and most fashionable double-knit synthetic fiber. I had it cut in a Wall Street pattern. I went to the China Fleet Club and dropped \$2000 in half an hour, then an enormous sum of money. My buddies in the squadron had all given me their want lists and their cash. I spent half an hour spending the money, and two hours in line at the Fleet Post Office to mail the packages to Phu Cat.

I signed up for USO bus tours. On the bus tours, we stopped at Tiger Balm Gardens and Stanley market, but I also learned that William Holden was a Hong Kong heartthrob. The tour guide girls were always saying “Oh, William Holden and Nancy Kwan walked down these steps” or “Oh, this is the house where William Holden met Jennifer Jones.” You could hear the swoon in their voices.

I recalled that I had read many articles about Hong Kong in the copies of *Maryknoll* magazine, published by the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America, received by my mother. I looked up “Maryknoll” in the telephone book and called their House. They said “come on over”! It was Monday, and the priests were all gathered on their day off, playing poker as I discovered when I got there. Father Tom Danaher offered to give me a tour of his parish in Kwun Tong, an industrial area in the Kowloon peninsula. For a GI, this was way off the beaten path. Many were enjoying the wine, women, and song in Wan Chai, and I was on the Kwun Tong ferry with a missionary, and then eating noodles with his parishioners in a downscale local eatery.

Father Tom then asked casually, “would you like to take a look at the Kowloon Walled City?” The Walled City was a small area of Hong Kong where laws were not enforced because of its ambiguous legal status -- that's a whole interesting story in itself. It was full of unlicensed doctors and dentists, illegal workers in sweat shops, drug addicts and drug dealers, and pimps and prostitutes. Chinese criminal gangs, the Triads, were the law, not the Royal Hong Kong Police.

We walked along “streets” no wider than my outstretched arms. Looking up, the small slice of sky between the buildings was obscured by a thicket of illegal electric wires

tapping the current. I could make out one lonely star. Walking along the “street,” I saw mostly old men barbecuing smoky pork kabobs to supply to restaurants at a cut rate price. No doubt Triad lookouts were whispering our presence, and had we turned into any alley, or climbed the stairs, we would have seen the dark and ugly sides of the Kowloon Walled City.

Later, I found that my brief trip into the Kowloon Walled City with Father Tom gave me real street cred among the China hands. Even great academic scholars of China had never actually entered, though they all knew its history. But the standing of the Maryknoll missionaries was so high among Hong Kong's dispossessed that Father Tom could take me right in.

On the same trip to Hong Kong I had another experience that stayed with me. I took the New Territories bus tour -- the highlight being to go to Lok Ma Chau to look from a hill over the barbed wire and the patrol dogs to see into “Red China.” It was a hazy day, so we could barely make out the small farm village, Shenzhen, on the other side.

On the way, though, our bus stopped in Kowloon so that we could see one of the Mark I housing estates that had been built by the British after 1949 to house refugees from China. We were buying popsicles from a vendor next to a grassless soccer field between the apartment buildings. The field was crowded. There were six soccer goal posts, and there were at least three soccer games being played simultaneously on the same field. Those playing the length of the field simply played through the teams that were playing crosswise. Not to mention that the field was dotted with people batting shuttlecocks back and forth with their badminton racquets. No nets of course.

I looked at all this activity and said to myself, “I'd go insane.” None of the people on the field, or looking down on the field from the apartment blocks, seemed insane, however. It occurred to me that (1) people were adapting, successfully, to crowded conditions, and (2) living among so many others, a culture of cultivating good relations with others, Confucianism, maybe, would work best. In short, I could see that culture and manners reflected, or evolved out of, social circumstances. It was my first real glimmer of intercultural insight about China and Asia.

Soon after my trip to Hong Kong I was on a flight that hopped from base to base, and we had a brief layover at Cu Chi. I walked over to the USO near the flight line. This was a rather bare USO – plywood interior, a broken down sofa or two, a ping pong table, a coffee urn, and some carrels to read a book or write a letter home. Just inside the door there was a shelf of paperback books you could pick up and take with you. Most were westerns or steamy novels, but on the bottom shelf I found a paperback copy of *The Good Earth* by Pearl Buck. I read it on the next leg of the flight, and it gave me more clues about Chinese society and culture. I still have the copy, sent out to Vietnam by the Ladies Auxiliary of a VFW in Brooklyn, and consider it one of the important books in my life.

Since I ran the orderly room and issued the orders, I was able to manage another R&R, this time to Australia. I was there for the turn of the New Year in 1970. I spent much of my time on the bus tours, and with a host family. I discovered that the Aussies had an enormous capacity for beer. The family invited me to join them on New Year's Eve at the RSL (Returned Servicemen's League, like the American Legion) Club of North Ryde. It was the first time I heard the words from Lawrence Binyon's "To the Fallen" -- "at the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we shall remember them."

I'll always remember that first trip to Australia -- gorgeous sunshine, beaches, enormous steaks with cottage cheese as a side, baked beans and grilled tomatoes for breakfast, lots of Foster's, the kangaroos and joeys at Ku-ring-gai Chase, the Art Gallery of New South Wales. I much admired Sir Arthur Streeton's large painting of the St. Quentin Canal Tunnel at Bellicourt, in Flanders, marking the breaking of the Hindenburg Line in 1918. I generously allowed that the Australians were co-victors at Bellicourt, though I knew from my grandfather that it was really the Tennesseans that had won the laurels. And I bought a print of the Tom Roberts painting, "Bailed Up," which still hangs in my office at home.

I still remember my first look at the ANZAC Memorial in Sydney, looking down at the prone statue of Christ, soon after his death, still on the cross, showing total exhaustion and total sacrifice from the crucifixion. It's very powerful.

Q: This was a rather rich year for you.

BISHOP: Yes, Vietnam had very important effect on me. Yes, it sharpened my sense of duty, honor, and country. It led me to an interest in insurgency and culture. It was more, though. I call it a very important democratic experience for me.

I just had my retirement ceremony, sort of a farewell, in Kabul, and I mentioned Vietnam when it came time to me to talk. My "federal career" began during one war, Vietnam, and ended in Afghanistan, so I got wars at both ends. I said that I left Vietnam with an impression of the generosity of American young people.

I'd grown up in a suburb, I'd gone to a liberal arts college where most of my classmates were well-to-do, and I had worked on Wall Street. In Vietnam, however, I was among kids who were at the bottom of their classes, who were from remote towns and corners of America. They spoke in ways that made their English teachers wince, no doubt -- speaking of VEE-hicles and CEE-ment. Yet I came to enjoy their company more than being with people similarly situated to me. Their enlistment was an expression of a fine American dignity. They were *better men* than their classmates who had dodged the draft or gone into the National Guard.

The airmen who were on the perimeter usually didn't have the advantages I had had, but whether it was from their parents or teachers or pastors or coaches or scoutmasters, they knew a couple of things. One is that America is a force for good in the world. Another is that from time to time evil gets loose in the world. And the only thing that these young people asked is that they be led well. Suddenly you realize, even as a 23-year-old, that

that means you. You have to be good at what you do. That's the beginning of public responsibility.

And it gave me a great appreciation for the solid wonder of our democracy. I found that NCOs and airmen had their own wisdom, garnered from their different lives in scattered American places. They were not vulnerable to the doubts that gripped so many of their more advantaged classmates who went to college. Every green lieutenant hopes for respect. I found something different -- that it was I who gained respect for them.

This made me a different person. I listen to the intellectuals of our chattering classes, but I am not impressed by talking heads with big degrees. Too often their big ideas are not leavened with experience. I'm not saying they are all pointy-headed intellectuals or eggheads, but I'd rather be among good-hearted ordinary Americans than sitting in a faculty lounge talking about ideas.

Q: We paralleled a bit. I graduated from Williams in 1950, enlisted in the Air Force with the idea of becoming an officer, but they lost my application. I went to the Army Language School, they taught me Russian and I ended up in Korea, in the Korean War, on an island off North Korea for a while. But the point was I spent four years in the barracks and I came away with the same feeling as you: a fine bunch of guys and I was particularly impressed by the sergeants, they ran the whole business, anyway.

BISHOP: And I believe that as Foreign Service Officer I had a higher regard for the armed forces than many, particularly the young officers who never had that military experience. It's made a difference in my life.

Q: I was a consular officer, which meant I was dealing with Americans of all strata. And I found having served in the military was very useful. And I had a lot more respect for average Americans I think than had I gone through Williams and then on to be a pointy-headed stockbroker or ad man or something like that.

BISHOP: Well spoken. It has occurred to me that when I walked in to ROTC to sign up, I didn't realize at the time it set me on a certain path, and one path leads to another.

Q: You left Vietnam, then, in 1970?

BISHOP: March 15, 1970.

First Lieutenant Dennis Yoshimura was my replacement. I stayed a few weeks longer than a year so that I could see the World's Fair in Osaka after it opened. I took military hops to Japan, enjoyed the Expo, ate a lot of Japanese food by pointing to the plastic models in the windows of the small eateries, took photos with my new Nikkormat, and took more hops across the Pacific to get home. I remember a refueling stop at Wake Island, hot and sunbaked. I thought I'd go crazy if I had to spend more than a week there.

Q: When you returned, did anyone call you a “baby killer” or something like that? Many Vietnam veterans tell those stories.

BISHOP: No, no one ever confronted me like that. What I noticed most was indifference. I'd had quite an experience that I wanted to talk about, but no one wanted to hear about my Vietnam for more than a minute or two, with one exception.

When I got back from Vietnam, my high school social studies teacher, Mr. Armerding, asked me to come in and talk to his class about what I had been doing. Mostly I talked about the base and our squadron. I showed a few slides. At the end of my talk, though, Mr. Armerding asked me about how we were helping the Vietnamese -- what were we doing for them? I ad-libbed some generalities about development, better nutrition, improved livestock, and agriculture -- the CORDS stuff. This was straying out of my lane, of course.

After the class ended, Mr. Armerding asked me, “is that all we are offering to the Vietnamese, a better material life? Aren't we doing anything more?” Mr. Armerding was a strong Christian, so I knew his question had a missionary side to it, whether our legacy might be religious or simply democratic. His question, however, has stuck with me my whole life. Is that all we offer anyone? There must be something else, more than material progress, that counts -- that on our part justifies the loss of young American lives, and on their part would justify the awful risks of taking sides in an insurgency.

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA, 1970-1972
Research Historian, Aerospace Studies Institute
Student, Squadron Officers School
Chief of Public Information, Headquarters Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps

The Air Force owed me after Vietnam. I'd been corresponding with the personnel detailers. Making a long story short, I told them, “I think being a public affairs officer looks like a pretty good gig. Or maybe an Air Force historian.”

Q: How did that work out? Where did they send you?

I was a history major, and Air Force history was part of public affairs. So I got both wishes. They sent me to the Defense Information School at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, to learn how to be a public affairs officer, and my new assignment was to the Air Force Historical Research Center at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

My eight weeks at DINFOS were valuable and enjoyable. They crammed everything I might have learned if I had studied journalism -- eight weeks of news writing, photography, film making, and broadcasting -- into eight weeks.

It's funny what you remember. In one exercise, we were to plan the visit of a Congressman to our post, base, camp, or ship. I wrote out a sensational, packed program

that introduced the visitor to everything he needed to know about an air base and a wing. The instructor complemented me on its substance, but said I failed because of one fatal omission. I hadn't included time for the Congressman and his party to have drinks at 5 p.m. Long Air Force experience with visitors put having drinks on the checklist for every visit! A useful lesson!

Even though Vietnam had been keeping armed forces public affairs officers very busy for several years, we learned a lot of "old" lessons at DINFOS. How the opening of the first commissaries in occupied Germany had introduced the supermarket there. How base public affairs responded to deaths among the Okinawans, driven by poverty, who evaded every security measure to search the dumps and the ranges for scrap metal. Tragically, some met grisly deaths when they found unexploded ordnance. A corner of the DINFOS Library contained three-ring binders full of Silver Anvil nominations – case studies. I spent some quality time there, absorbing these old "lessons learned."

Q: Then you went on to Alabama?

BISHOP: Yes. It must have been June, 1970, when I reported in.

When I told my parents of my assignment to Maxwell Air Force Base, they recalled their time at the base during World War II when my father had been an Aviation Cadet. They had been married in Base Chapel 2. They used to stroll through the housing area where the Colonels lived. It turned out that while I was at Maxwell I worked for a time in the building that had been the Cadet Dining Hall during the war.

The Air Force Historical Research Center, which included the Air Force's own large archive of histories and studies, was part of the Aerospace Studies Institute. The Center occupied a large prewar hangar. The ASI commander was Brigadier General Robert N. Ginsburgh, who had been President Johnson's military aide when the President was controlling the air campaign from the White House. Some called it over controlling. He was West Point '44.

The Center's director was a giant of Air Force history, Albert Simpson, ably assisted by another leading historian, Maurer Maurer. There were several civil service historians in the research unit -- William Greenhalgh, Gerard Hasselwander, Robert Mueller, Donald Little, and Charles Ravenstein. I was the only active duty officer.

My job was to "answer the mail," to respond to letters from the public asking for information. I had the run of the archives which occupied most of an old hangar in rows and rows of filing cabinets. I could tell stories about individual research projects, but that would be "hangar flying." In 1970-71, as today, World War II crash sites were still being discovered, and our records could help identify lost crew members for proper burial. These were the most poignant projects.

As I gained experience, I was put on larger products that required more research and writing. With Dr. Simpson as my usual editor, I finally began to get expository writing

right. Since, in my experience, good writing derives from good thinking, I was becoming a better historian.

I could access any document in the Archives, except for a few filing cabinets that had the records of Operation Blue Book, the investigation of UFOs, which because of the project's notoriety and the tall tales that had grown up around it, could only be accessed by Dr. Maurer.

A great many Air Force notables visited Maxwell, and even lieutenants could meet them. I remember meeting Generals Spaatz and Eaker, the senior General Gillem, and Medal of Honor winners Joe Jackson and Jim Fleming. I spent the better part of an hour in the Club with Colonel Bob Dilger, who explained the technology of the first generation of jet fighters to me.

Q: I see from your career summary that you attended the Squadron Officer School.

BISHOP: Yes, I was selected to attend the Squadron Officer School while I was at Maxwell. It was the first level school in the Air Force's professional education system for officers. The school was located on the Academic Circle at Maxwell, a few hundred yards from my BOQ at Boado Hall. We had a large class of several hundred lieutenants and captains. My classmates were living in spartan VOQs on the other side of the circle, but I walked over from my own quarters.

The School at the time was 14 weeks long. Usually classes were held in the morning, mostly in a large auditorium called "the Blue Bedroom" because it was so common to doze off during the lectures. In the afternoons, we were on the athletic fields playing volleyball, soccer, and flickerball.

The course was particularly well designed. For instance, as we registered the first day we were asked for the number of athletic letters we had earned in high school and college. That afternoon a computer crunched the data and assigned us to sections of 13 or 14 that were balanced by athletic experience, each having a fair share of "jocks" and "grapes." This made the SOS athletic competition quite close and even. The "jocks" in every section, who naturally took on leadership roles during the weeks of athletic competition, were playing games few of them had played. Indeed, flickerball was an invented game played only at SOS. Their experience as, say, football and basketball players didn't count for much. With the computer sorting, there were too few natural athletes in each section, moreover, to allow any section to pull ahead on general athletic talent.

The jocks soon realized that the best use of practice time was to work on building up the skill of the numerous "grapes." (I was one.) This turned the school's athletic program into a leadership exercise, training those without skill, motivating the brainy supply or computer or weather officers to learn to play better. The SOS system should be a model for athletic programs in American high schools and small colleges, especially now when our country is growing less and less fit.

The second thing to say about SOS was that the management films in the Saul Gellerman series were the backbone of teaching about leadership and management. The reliance on the Gellerman films at SOS told a larger story -- that Air Force leadership drew on "corporate" rather than "warrior" models. Still, they were quite good, and indeed I've often thought that I owed much of my success as a Foreign Service manager to SOS and Saul Gellerman. This is because, of course, the Foreign Service trains in languages but so little else. I never had a day of management training in the Foreign Service until I had the five-day course at the Foreign Affairs Leadership Seminar (FALS), 18 or 20 years into the career.

Squadron Officer School, gathering young officers from all over the Air Force, also provided a window on some of the intellectual stresses affecting the service as the Vietnam War was beginning to wind down.

Each class heard a presentation by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod theologian, Martin Scharlemann, a Brigadier General in the Air Force Reserve. I cannot now recall all the propositions he advanced to judge the Vietnam war a "just war." My memory is that they sounded rather legalistic to me -- insufficiently persuasive, not really "in tune" with the questions officers had, and not informed by firsthand experience. The students were deferential to his rank and standing as a member of the older generation, but the talk about his presentation was generally negative.

Through our many sessions in the Blue Bedroom, one captain had the habit of challenging the speakers in a sharp way that indicated his opposition to the war and to various forms of military authority, aka "Mickey Mouse." Parenthetically, although all officers were volunteers, there was a sprinkling who in fact had volunteered to avoid the draft. I'd say he was one. Sometimes he made us nod our heads, and sometimes he made us nervous when he asked a question in a way that pushed against the military proprieties.

When the time came for the School speech contest, I wrote out what I still think was a blue ribbon convictional speech, challenging the Air Force's commitment to equality. Having read Ulysses Lee's great volume in the Army historical series on World War II, *The Employment of Negro Troops*, I had noticed that an officer who had strongly criticized the combat record of the Tuskegee Airmen was Lieutenant Colonel William Momyer. Eventually promoted to General, Momyer had commanded the Seventh Air Force in Vietnam, and when I was at SOS he was the Commander of the Tactical Air Command. The crescendo of my speech was to ask whether the senior leadership of the Air Force still had World War II attitudes.

This was too hot for the other members of my section, and a section mate was chosen to go on farther in the speech contest. His topic was "The Benefits of Smoking." Later, our section's faculty leader let me know that mine was clearly the best speech, but perhaps it was for the best that I was not chosen, just in case I found myself assigned to the Tactical Air Command.

Now, fast forward to the speech contest finals. My section mate gave his talk on “The Benefits of Smoking,” appreciated for its humor by the several hundred students. And then the next speaker was that pushy liberal captain who challenged every speaker. Here’s how I remember his talk:

“I think you all know that I am a radical,” he said, “even a revolutionary. You have been patient when I challenged our speakers. These are important times, and I owe it to you to fully explain my beliefs. Indeed, I have written them out in a manifesto.” He pulled a roll of paper out of his pocket. “Let me read it to you.” There was complete silence in the Blue Bedroom.

“In history there have been many times to overthrow unjust governments, when they take too much power, when they punish citizens who will not conform. But it’s the people who have the right to decide what’s right and wrong, not the regime. People often endure injustice a long time, and they can wait too long because they have a natural reluctance to change. But when the abuses go on a long time, it’s our right to *change the system*. To start all over, to design something new, as we see fit.”

I was fixed in my seat in amazement at the daring approach of his speech – restating in contemporary language the opening words of the Declaration of Independence as his “manifesto.”

“I look out over this audience, and I see conformists, I see sheep, who will not stand up for their values. If you agree with my manifesto, *stand up and be counted!*”

Perhaps six officers in the audience stood up. I was so thunderstruck at what he was doing that I did not, missing the moment.

And his crescendo – “what I’ve just read to you is our founding document, The Declaration of Independence, rewritten a little, the way we’d say it now. Aren’t you ashamed you don’t agree with it!”

Whew!

Finally, I recall that the course built up to a war game, an exercise called “Operation Balboa,” fought by each section. Our section became a “headquarters” responding to an insurgency in Venezuela. That’s what the package of exercise study materials said. It was in fact, a simple deployment exercise -- moving some Air Force assets to airfields in Venezuela and setting up an air defense net.

Looking back, I can see that the entire exercise had nothing to do with insurgency. There weren’t any special operations forces, air commando units, psyops broadcasts, signals intelligence, or civic actions. But when the SOS staff wrote out this plain vanilla deployment scenario, they wrote that the Air Force was responding to an insurgency. That meant they could count the dozens of contact hours in the course devoted to the exercise as “counter insurgency” instruction. It was a not-so-petty form of deceit. As I

said, if you don't know how to fight a revolutionary war, fight the conventional war you do know how to fight.

Q: Were you thinking of the Air Force as a career?

BISHOP: General Ginsburgh commanded a large and diverse outfit at ASI. Most of his "troops" were civilians, and there was a large crowd of Colonels working at CORONA HARVEST, the project to save records from the Vietnam war and to write studies and "lessons learned." But General Ginsburgh had very few junior officers in his outfit, five, I believe. He decided he would give individual career counseling to each of us.

When I entered his office to discuss my future, he saw a bookish new captain with an unusual variety of experience but with no clear path ahead. He let me know that ambitious officers aimed to work in one of two places early in their careers -- on the Air Staff or on the faculty of the Air Force Academy, he said. The value of an early assignment in one of these two places was to judge yourself against the other fast runners among your contemporaries. His counsel was that I start lobbying for the Pentagon or the Academy.

One morning soon afterwards I went to the O-Club for breakfast before driving to the Center. That morning, there was only one other person in the dining room, a Colonel who I did not know but had seen doing some research at the Archives. I asked if he needed a ride, and he took me up on the offer. During the drive to the Center in my Volkswagen, I told him that I was back from Vietnam, and I thought that we had failed to adapt our conduct of the war, our operations, to the insurgency environment. We needed a much more people-centric strategy. I didn't know this Colonel from Adam, and it's brash for a captain to be outguessing the Pentagon and the White House, but why not say what I thought?

As I parked the car, he introduced himself -- Colonel Al Hurley, head of the history department at the Air Force Academy. Please think about applying to come teach on the faculty, he told me. I checked out the application procedures that afternoon, and I discovered that officers were not eligible to apply until they had five years of service. I barely had three. So I figured I had to wait before I could respond to Colonel Hurley's request.

Q: I also see that you ended up working on the Air Force's ROTC program ...

BISHOP: Yes, in the personnel division of the Air University, a colonel noticed that there was a qualified public affairs officer, me, in a history job. And the command was short a public affairs officer over at the Air Force ROTC headquarters across the base. They proposed to move me to work on public affairs for the Air Force ROTC program, and as much as I was enjoying my time at the archives, I realized that I was in a one-off position in a little appreciated field, so I didn't squawk about moving. I was only in the new job about seven months, but it was a valuable and interesting time.

You know the Air Force ROTC program at universities and colleges, producing new lieutenants. The headquarters was at Maxwell. Brigadier General Jack Watkins was our commander.

As “Chief of Public Information” at the Headquarters, my job mostly was to work up radio and television spots advertising the opportunities for college students in Air Force ROTC. This was before the armed forces paid for broadcast time. So I pulled out my broadcast writing text from DINFOS and wrote the spots, prepared them in the right format for announcers, included glass slides for television, and mailed them to stations around the country.

I was gratified when a few of the local station managers wrote back to say the materials were well done and easy to use -- allowing me to claim the organization of an advertising campaign on future resumes! A few managers let me know what the cost of the air time would have been if we had been billed.

Of course the “metrics” or “evidence of effectiveness” were awful. Air Force ROTC enrollments continued to decline. I’m confident that my efforts influenced some students to join the program, but my spots were running against a strong tide in the final years of the Vietnam war, especially as land grant universities ceased to require freshmen and sophomore men to take ROTC.

The declining enrollments placed a lot of pressure on the Detachment commanders at different schools, especially on the six colonels who each tended the detachments in different regions of the country. These World War II- and Korean War-generation officers faced social change, anti-war feeling, and campus racial tensions too.

I sat in on a meeting with the six colonels, and one told a story. At one university, the black student organization had denounced the war and AFROTC. Peer pressure was keeping African American students from signing up. The Detachment commander at the university felt helpless. When the regional colonel arrived, he decided bold action was necessary to challenge what was being said about AFROTC. At noon one day, uniformed and beribboned, he knocked on the door of one of the African American fraternities and forcefully talked his way into the dining room for lunch. He took on every question and every challenge. To use a then-contemporary expression, he was ready to rap. He extracted a promise that the fraternity would invite ROTC officers from different services for the same kind of meal. This was not your usual nuanced way of doing things on campus. I admired his gumption.

Q: Can you tell us a little about living in Montgomery?

BISHOP: At the base, the permanent party bachelor officers, men and women, were billeted in a high rise BOQ apartment building, Boado Hall. It was between the Catholic Chapel, the golf course, and the Officers Club. I have to say that life at Maxwell, dating the nurses and other women officers, swims and barbecues, plenty of exercise, and great southern cooking downtown, was just ... wonderful. A beer joint just off base had raw

oysters up from the Gulf on Friday afternoons -- \$1.25 per dozen. I could usually afford two dozen.

The Catholic Chapel program at Maxwell AFB was first class. The senior chaplain was Father Bill Mattimore, and a new Catholic chaplain was also assigned to the base, Father Bill Dendinger. I was a member of the Parish Council. Chaplain Captain Bill Dendinger eventually became Chaplain Major General Bill Dendinger, the Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and after his retirement he became Bishop of Grand Island.

You'll recall that Montgomery had been the first capital of the Confederacy, so of course I visited the various historical sites. I was a little startled to see the state's collection of KKK uniforms on display at the Alabama State Museum. The hallways of the Capitol building were hung with portraits of the governors, including George and Lurleen Wallace. In the rotunda, however, the largest portrait was of football coach Bear Bryant.

There was a political scandal while I was in Montgomery. Governor Albert Brewer hoped to receive the state Democratic Party's nomination for another term as Governor, but George Wallace also stood for the office. The Adjutant General of Alabama put the squeeze on federal Air Reserve Technicians who were on duty with the Alabama Air National Guard to make contributions to *both* campaigns. When Major General Doster was indicted, he had to resign. This case showed me how the National Guard can become entangled in state politics.

On many weekends, I drove from Montgomery to Tennessee to see my grandmother and other members of my mother's family. If I left Montgomery at 5 p.m., I could be in Nashville or Oak Ridge by 10 or 11 at night. Naturally, I listened to the radio to keep awake on unlit I-65. There's not much variety on Alabama radio at night, and I listened to many Bible stations. Garner Ted Armstrong was a compelling evangelist with a radio voice, and the radio signal was strong, so I often listened to his program. It was good practice. I might be nodding my head as he described the wonders of creation, and then -- bam! -- he leaped into a long tirade against Darwin. There wasn't much logic in his homiletic pivots, so I had some good practice listening for his non sequiturs. This was keeping sharp my Catholic skills in apologetics.

Q: What did the Air Force have in store for you after this sojourn in the American south?

BISHOP: The Air Force personnel system always wanted to know an officer's assignment preferences. When I had gotten back to the U.S. from Vietnam, I filled out what was called the "dream sheet." I listed Korea as my first choice because of the great impression I had of the Korean units in Vietnam, and because Korea was only an eighteen month tour. I still wasn't sure I wanted to make the Air Force a career, so I didn't need a three-year assignment to Japan or Germany.

Unknown to me, I was the only public affairs officer in the Air Force to volunteer for the Land of the Morning Calm. An assignments officer from the Military Personnel Center called to offer me the job as Base Information Officer, meaning Public Affairs Officer, at

Kwang Ju Air Base. I thought it over and agreed. OK, send me. I wanted to see Korea, and I figured that after the Korea assignment, I'd have close to five years of service and could volunteer to teach at the Academy.

On my way out to Korea, I stopped in Colorado Springs for the formal interviews with the Academy's Department of History. It happened that my flight arrived in the evening. As Lieutenant Colonel Phil Caine picked me up at the airport and drove me to the VOQ, I couldn't see much of the city or the Academy reservation. It snowed during the night. When I woke up in the morning, I looked out the window toward the campus. The spires of the Chapel rose above the snow-covered pines. I was wowed, and I said to myself, "I'm coming here, no matter what!" It charged me up for the interviews.

KWANG JU AIR BASE, KOREA, 1972-1973 **Base Chief of Information**

Q: And you then went directly to Korea?

BISHOP: I went to Kwang Ju Air Base in Cholla Namdo province, to the 6171st Combat Support Squadron. I replaced Captain David Harris as the Base Information Officer, its PAO.

At that time the Commander of the 6171st reported directly to the one-star Air Force commander of the 314th Air Division at Osan Air Base, Brigadier General Robert Maloy. His boss was the commander of the 5th Air Force in Japan, Lieutenant General Robert Pursley.

I remember my arrival at Kwang Ju quite clearly. February 1, 1972, was quite an overcast day. We deplaned off the shuttle flight from Osan. I noticed that there were two ROKAF airmen standing at the side of the runway, holding hands. To American eyes, this was a sign they were gay, but obviously these two young men in uniform were not sending out that signal. I figured that there were some cultural conventions no one had briefed me on, and I soon knew that Korean men hold hands to indicate friendship.

I boarded the blue base bus. While we were driving from the flight line to billeting, an NCO asked the Korean driver to drop him off between two stops. The driver told the NCO that he had been instructed only to let people on and off at the bus stops. Hearing this, the NCO came out of his seat and began to pummel the driver to let him off. He cursed the driver, calling him names, some racially charged. I was amazed by this. I had been at the base less than half an hour, and I had already learned that many airmen didn't want to be there, and they surely didn't understand much about Korea.

Arriving at billeting, I got my room key and noticed a poster at the Base Education Office next door. By happy coincidence, the course in beginning conversational Korean began that evening, so I signed up.

After I stowed my stuff, reported in, and met my new commander, Colonel William White, I was at lunch at the O-Club with my new base comrades. They conferred on who would take me on what was called “the greenbean tour,” the first outing to bars in “the ville,” the camp town outside the gate. I told them I would be in language class, so I missed out on this debut.

It happened that the next day, the Judge Advocate and I had to walk through “the ville” to visit the local police station in the real town, Songjong-ni, nearest the base. I got to see “the ville” in the broad daylight, without any of its neon glitter. It was muddy, and the streets were filled with trash and beer bottles. With the JAG, I looked in a few of the local haunts, and saw nothing to write home about. What were euphemistically called the “business women” were not up this early. The whole scene was so unattractive, physically and morally, that I figured I should avoid “the ville.”

Q: What was the base's mission?

BISHOP: Along the great arc of American power on the Pacific littoral perimeter in 1972, Kwang Ju Air Base was a small outpost -- a ROKAF base, home of their 1st Fighter Wing flying F-5s and F-86s, with just 400 American airmen and twenty officers on a corner of the base. We lived in BOQs and barracks made of a spun fiberglass material which could be disassembled and transported anywhere, at least in theory. There were no American aircraft permanently based there. The idea was that the fighter wing from Mountain Home Air Force Base could, on a moment's notice, take off from Idaho and land at Kwang Ju, ready to receive them because we were tending the prepared facilities.

There were some messy details in this war plan. If the Mountain Home F-4s had to fly missions over the North, there was a problem. The bomb dump and missile stores at Kwang Ju were almost empty. The bombs had been sent to Vietnam, but under something called the Pacific resupply concept, if there were bombs anywhere in the theater, they could be sent to Kwang Ju. I doubted that the munitions could possibly arrive ahead of the F-4s from Idaho.

When I first arrived in Kwang Ju, the base commander was Colonel William White. A navigator, he had flown in B-29s from China and the Marianas during World War II, and he had continued in the Air Force. He had flown in the supersonic B-58s of the Strategic Air Command, so he must have been quite an ace as a navigator. He was a devout Catholic. I'm not sure, however, that he was ready for the intense leadership challenges of a base in Korea during a turbulent social period. Many of the World War II officers, I thought, were disoriented by leading airmen in the 1960s and 1970s.

My sense is that in Korea at the time, the operational challenges were outweighed by the leadership challenges. On one hand, there was the traditional challenge posed by the consumption of too much alcohol at a remote base. One lieutenant drank himself into a stupor many nights. When we woke up in the morning, we could see him collapsed in the hallway of our BOQ, his body twisted in odd positions. After several hours of drinking,

he was able to stagger back to the Q, but opening his door proved too much of a challenge, he passed out, and he slept off the liquor in the hallway. Then there were the newer challenges of race relations which we'll discuss shortly.

Colonel White "passed the brick" on to a new arrival, Lieutenant Colonel Charles H. Davis, IV, a few months after I arrived. He was one of the great men in my life, passing on important lessons to me in character and leadership. Korea was, moreover, a place where I had to think about personal values pretty deeply, because a common way of coping with loneliness in Korea at the time was to spend your time "outside the gate." I came to certain conclusions about morality there. Compressing a lot of meditation into a few words, I came to agree with George Washington (and many others) that it is religion that undergirds morality, and that what we might call secular goodness is too often weak and feeble.

The squadron's duty days were filled up with maintaining facilities and buildings for the day that the Mountain Home wing would arrive. There were disaster response exercises -- for aircraft crashes, typhoons, and so on. Separately from preparing for the wartime mission, the squadron was also engaged in all the routine activities that absorb any unit -- testing fuel for purity, maintaining the vehicles, inventorying supplies, ordering spares, inspecting and repairing the visiting EC-121s, preparing meals, moving people in and out of barracks, tracking the weather, running the communications center and base operations, and so on. We rode out a few typhoons.

You'll recall that in 1969, one of the incidents that raised tension on the Korean peninsula was the downing of a Navy EC-121 by North Korean fighters over the Sea of Japan. In 1972, Air Force EC-121 "Warning Stars" from the 552nd Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing at McClellan Air Force Base were still rotating in and out of Korea, and when they were on the peninsula they flew their patrol missions in the Korea Air Defense Identification Zone out of Kwang Ju, sometimes over the Sea of Japan, sometimes over the Yellow Sea. This was Detachment 2 of the College Eye Task Force. The EC-121 was a military version of the beautiful Lockheed Super Constellation airliner. For most of the time I was in Korea, Det 2 was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Elliott Powers, legendary for his thousands of flying hours in the Super Connies.

The Wing in California was also deploying other Warning Stars to Thailand to control American aircraft over North Vietnam. When the North Vietnamese Migs took to the air, the Warning Stars could sound the alert and then vector U.S. fighters to engage. The 552nd had maintenance facilities in place in Kwang Ju, so EC-121s in Thailand used Kwang Ju, Korea, as their rear maintenance base. Don't ask me why this was logical, just take my word that this is how things were organized.

So, the 6171st Combat Support Squadron was in place, waiting for the planes and waiting for the bombs if the balloon went up, so to say. This is also known as having not much to do, and I was to be there for a year and a half.

Q: Were the North Koreans probing the South while you were there?

BISHOP: We all remembered that in 1968 the North Koreans had captured the USS Pueblo, and they had sent a commando team across the DMZ and into Seoul to try and assassinate President Park.

When you went over to the Korean Army training center at Sangmudae, there was a paper mache statue of a nine-foot tall ROK soldier bayoneting a North Korean infiltrator. It was quite graphic. A North Korean infiltration into Cholla Namdo province had happened a little before my time. I'd say, though, that the years I was there were relatively quiet.

When you went along the shores of Korea, there were small radars on the hilltops overlooking the ocean, watching for any infiltrating landing craft. The entire shore of South Korea was raked every night, so that in the morning, as dawn broke, soldiers could see whether there were any footprints in from the ocean -- indicating that a landing craft or mini-submarine had landed someone.

South Korea was in a very high state of readiness all the time. Anywhere in the country you could dial 113 and report a spy. So it was a time of strong control, high levels of military readiness, and strong anticommunist sentiment.

Q: You were the base PAO. I seem to recall that in those days officers doing your job were called PIOs, Public Information Officers.

BISHOP: Yes, my part of all this, as the Base Information Officer, was running the public affairs office. Our work largely revolved around publishing our small 8½x11 base newspaper, the *A-Frame*, and sending base stories to Osan for *The Korea Defender* and to Tokyo for the *Pacific Stars and Stripes*. I also supervised the base graphics shop and the photo lab. I'm proud to say that our little newspaper was the Pacific Air Forces nominee for the Thomas Jefferson Award of the Public Relations Society of America.

Yes, "Information Officer" meant Public Affairs. This was long before "IT" took over the word "information." The only confusion in those days was that to reach the telephone operator who handled what we now call directory assistance, you "called information." Every information office in the Air Force got frequent calls for directory assistance.

At DINFOS I'd learned that public affairs work in the armed forces included three functions. "Public information" was dealing with the media. "Internal information" or "command information" was communicating with Air Force people -- this meant the base newspaper and some broadcasting on the American Forces Network. "Community relations" was dealing with the communities around an installation. I think the usual division of labor at a base in the U.S. was 20 percent public information, 70 percent internal information, and 10 percent community relations. I resolved to increase the focus on "community relations" so that I could get to know Korea. Sixty or 70 percent of my time devoted to the community relations part of the portfolio would have been just fine.

Q: "Public information" sounds like public affairs. Add "community relations" and it sounds more like public diplomacy. What did you find when you went off base?

BISHOP: Kwang Ju Air Base was out in the rice fields, a good ten miles away from downtown Kwang Ju city. On my first weekend, the language instructor from the Base Education Office took me downtown, and I discovered a lovely city. There was the downtown area around the Province capital building and the Kwang Ju Tourist Hotel. A short distance away was Sajik Park, full of families enjoying the greenery. Running parallel to the city's main road was Walking Street, given over to pedestrians. It had shops and tea rooms and small eateries, including one tiny food stand, always jammed with students, that sold the tastiest fried dumplings I've ever eaten. In those days, people met for conversation in tea rooms, or perhaps in a bakery.

There were curious things for an American to notice. To stretch out Korea's rice supply, ten percent of your bowl of rice had to be barley, just like today in the U.S. when ten percent of your fuel at the pump has to be ethanol. Actually, I still like rice mixed with barley, but Koreans longed for the day when the mixing of rice with barley would end. Another measure bearing on the rice supply was that restaurants could not serve any rice products one day a week. On those *bunsik* days, for instance, your meal came with steamed buns made from wheat flour.

The bakeries sold bread, buns, cakes, and soft ice cream, and unlike the tea rooms there was usually some classical music playing. None of them were very sweet. Not much sugar was used in Korean recipes in order to suppress the loss of foreign exchange to import sugar.

At night, many food carts appeared on the street. The Korean name for these carts translates as "pavement chariots." A well situated cart had a light tarp to keep out wind and rain and a bare light bulb hanging from a wire. You could buy the hearty Korean street food, or hot soups red with pepper, or tasty fried eels. You could also drink *soju*, the Korean white lightning, but I came to like Korean rice beer, *mokkoli*, with slices of raw onion dipped in black bean paste on the side.

Korean students all struggled with English, and Korean men hoped to learn more English to help with their businesses. If you rode a bus downtown, you could see students trying to catch your eye so that they might be able to practice their English. Of course I extravagantly praised their attempts to converse. With the better speakers among them, I joked that their teachers had learned English from the British when they really needed to pronounce things the American way. Girl students were always a special case. A high school girl who had the courage to speak to an American often became tongue tied from the social daring of what she had done, placing her hand over her mouth, turning red in the face, and giggling. It was so innocent and earnest that it was charming.

At the city's cultural hall, vocal concerts by school choirs or by touring professors of voice from Korean universities were common entertainments, and I was deeply taken with Korean musicality and singing. In those days, the up-to-date popular songs tended to

remind an American of the “urban folk” that was “my” music, and I enjoyed them, but I was deeply affected by what were called in English “art songs,” the songs written by Koreans in the 1920s and 1930s, which I learned were full of symbols and metaphors to express the Korean people's yearning for independence from the Japanese. I also learned that Koreans loved the music of Stephen Foster.

At 5 p.m. each day, the city's loudspeaker system came on, and everyone paused for the lowering of flags and Korea's haunting national anthem. The same recording was used everywhere, and I cannot hear that arrangement without feeling those times.

I heard that the U.S. Information Service had an information center in Kwang Ju, and I called on the Branch Public Affairs Officer, the BPAO, Ken Yates. I startled him by saying that my understanding of the relationship between Embassy and military PAOs was -- I took his guidance in peace, and he took mine in war. I could tell he thought I was pretty brash.

Ken rebounded from this opening, and he saw I could help him out. USIS at the time was heavily involved with English conversational groups. Would I like to take over meeting his leading group of city leaders who gathered at USIS once a week to practice their English? I agreed, and I met them every Wednesday evening for the remainder of my tour -- the dean of Cholla Namdo National University, a local textile magnate, a prominent medical doctor, the editor of a daily newspaper, the *Chonnam Ilbo*, and so on. I was meeting these very interesting men who could speak English and enjoyed reading *Time* magazine and talking about the articles. I was receiving a fine introduction to Korean society.

Later Ken persuaded me to lead another group each Saturday -- a group made up of boys from Kwang Ju First High School and girls from Cholla Namdo Girls High School, “Round Table.” I learned that a group of boys and girls together was considered a little bold, and perhaps the boys and girls enjoyed spending some time with one another as much as the English. It was all very chaste and proper, though, with the boys sitting on one side of the table and the girls on the other side.

Usually classes would begin with a discussion topic, and they were always uplifting and idealistic. It was from these students that I learned of the Kwang Ju student movement against the Japanese in 1929, which had involved students from both schools. They took me to visit the Memorial Hall that commemorated the movement, just off Walking Street. When they spoke of the 1929 movement and the students' role, I could tell that they were unhappy with Korea's authoritarian political system, and they felt that students should play a role in resisting it.

Occasionally a Kwang Ju First High School graduate, Choi Nam-hyun, would attend the meetings. He had not passed the college entrance examination in his graduation year, and like many others he was spending a post-grad year in intense review. Whatever his other grades may have been, he spoke wizard English, and he had been a member of “Round

Table.” Choi became a friend and one of my most important informants on Korean society.

He took me out of town to meet his family in a farming village, for instance, giving me a look at rural Korea. We took a local bus and were dropped off on the main road. As we walked to the village in the dark, I remember quite distinctly noticing that we had passed beyond the reach of electricity. Only about 70 percent of Korea was electrified at that time. This was the first time in my life I had set foot in the unelectrified world.

I'm happy to report that Choi Nam-hyun passed the examination for Cholla Namdo National University the next year, was hired by *The Korea Herald* in Seoul after he graduated, and is now Editor-in-Chief.

When I was downtown, I often admired the large, hand-painted movie billboards on the wall of every theatre. They were repainted as each new film was booked. The billboard painters -- I suppose this is a lost profession now -- were good at showing through exaggerated facial expressions which actors and actresses were heroes or villains or Korean damsels waiting to be rescued.

Looking at one of the billboards, I thought the Korean actor looked a lot like Yul Brynner. As I puzzled out the Korean name of the movie, I realized it was in Chinese characters, and one of the characters stood for “ten.” The theatre was showing “The Ten Commandments.”

You remember that until the invention of the video cassette player -- Betamax in 1975, VHS in 1977 -- you could only see movies on the big screen or on TV. The studios only released their unremarkable movies for television. These were the films I had watched on “Million Dollar Movie” on New York's WOR Channel 9, with its great theme song, when I was in high school. The big films were only occasionally re-released. After its initial showings, for instance, *Gone with the Wind* was re-released only in 1947, 1954, 1961, and 1967.

Regardless of the official Hollywood re-releases, I realized that there were quite a number of scratchy bootleg copies of four American movies rotating through Korean theatres -- *The Ten Commandments*, *Ben-Hur*, *Giant*, and *Gone with the Wind*. I had seen only one, *The Ten Commandments*, on the big screen in the U.S. So over several weekends I bought my tickets to watch the four movies -- English dialog with Korean subtitles running up and down the right side of the screen.

Watching these films overseas made me appreciate them more. In *Giant*, when “Sarge” socked Rock Hudson in the jaw and he fell back covered with salad, and Elizabeth Taylor told him this was his finest moment, defending his Mexican-American daughter-in-law, I said to myself, “what a great scene for Koreans to see.” The scene of Ben-Hur offering Christ a gourd of water as he carried the cross to Calvary -- I was paralyzed in my seat from emotion, my ears buzzing.

As *Gone with the Wind* opened, I wondered why they were playing the Million Dollar Movie theme song. In a moment, I realized the joke was on me. Million Dollar Movie had borrowed the *Gone with the Wind* theme song, but I didn't know so because I had never seen the film.

Of course, I also noted that when I laughed at some scenes, all the Koreans in the audience looked at me, wondering what was funny. And I was surprised that they laughed at unfunny moments. I was learning about cultural differences in sense of humor.

I also decided that I would make it my project to meet every American in South Cholla province. There were two main groups, Peace Corps volunteers and missionaries.

There were two kinds of Peace Corps volunteers. The English teachers were mostly in Kwang Ju, teaching at middle schools and high schools. As faculty members, they dressed and behaved like Korean schoolteachers did. She was in Korea with the Peace Corps a few years later, but future Ambassador to Korea Kathy Stephens was one of the English teachers.

The other group of volunteers worked in local health centers in the countryside. Some of them dressed like hippies, apparently considering themselves the personal representatives of the counterculture to Korea, it seemed to me. I'm only guessing, but many seemed to be in the Peace Corps as a way to avoid the draft and "going to Vietnam." I'm afraid my regard for the Peace Corps was impaired by the volunteers wearing cutoff jeans who complained about uptight Korean morality. They were a marked contrast to the clean-cut and presentable Mormon missionaries who could also be found in Kwang Ju.

Meeting the missionaries in Cholla Namdo province was very rewarding. Among the Protestants, the leading missionaries were American Southern Presbyterians who lived in a compound downtown. Some were pastors; others were medical missionaries at Kwang Ju Christian Hospital. John and Jean Underwood became close friends. John was one of the three famous Underwood brothers (Horace, Richard, John) who were the third generation of their family to live and work in Korea.

The other missionaries were Catholics and Protestants of many denominations, and I learned much about the many Catholic orders. There was a small group of American Jesuits at the Daegun Brennan Catholic Seminary located on the outskirts of Kwang Ju. Across the road from the seminary were the American Passionists who were laying the foundations to make formal retreats a major part of Catholic life in Korea. The St. John of God Brothers from Ireland had a clinic in an industrial center of the City. The pastors of many parishes in Kwang Ju and Cholla Namdo were Irish or American priests from the Columban Fathers. The Seton Hill sisters from Pennsylvania had founded a high school for girls in Kangjin. Down along the shore was a missionary district given to the Guadalupe Fathers from Mexico.

Perhaps the most memorable of these Catholic missionaries was Father Frank Woods of the Columbans, pastor of a parish in Yong'am. He came from Ireland. Young Frank had

been a runner during the Rising of 1916. Father Woods had come out to Korea as a young priest in the 1930s, and he spent the better part of World War II interned by the Japanese. In the tumult that followed the opening of the Korean War, he attached himself as a volunteer chaplain to a U.S. Army regiment, and he had been awarded the old Medal of Merit for his role in persuading a North Korean unit to surrender.

Father Woods was an outdoor man of action, even in his 70s. He climbed mountains and hunted pheasant. He was pleased to invite airmen from the base to his rectory, and even today my mouth waters remembering eating pheasant at his place. Whew, he had a great cook! Usually airmen thanked him by bringing along some spirits, and by letting him win hands at poker after dinner. He liked bourbon and scotch well enough, but for him Irish whisky was a taste of heaven. I can still remember him caressing a bottle and exclaiming, "Tullamore Dew"!

My evening Korean classes gave me enough confidence to travel on my own, so I hit the buses and traveled around to meet the missionaries. I stayed at mission stations, including the leper colony on Sorok-do off the coast. Before I left for Sorok-do I read the encyclopedia articles on Hansen's disease and learned it was hardly communicable. I was ready for the common disfigurement of noses and fingers. When I passed the wall that divided the leper villages from the rest of the island, I found the residents, the patients, a little distant, until I gave one a gentle touch as I tried out my elementary Korean. That gesture, that touch, was seen and noticed, and they then gave me a lively welcome. There are moments that touch the soul, and this was one.

Two Austrian Catholic nurses were working on Sorok-do, Marianne Stöger and Margaret Pissarek. I was so moved by their life of service and sacrifice that I wrote a letter to the President of Austria saying he should give them an important state award. I mailed the letter to Vienna but heard nothing until long after I had left Korea. The President awarded "these two social workers" Austria's Gold Medallion.

Anyway, I had a fine year and a half. This was doing what I really would have liked to have done in Vietnam, except that at Phu Cat we were on the base and there was a war. And I could just see the old Korea disappearing and the new Korea rising, I was perfectly situated.

When I arrived in Korea, the work week of the 314th Air Division ran through Saturday noon. This had the happy side effect of dampening Friday night carousing, good for discipline and the VD rates. During my tour, however, the Air Division went to a five-day work week. Colonel Davis was concerned with the adverse effects of an additional night "outside the gate." He asked me to think of ways to keep airmen on base over the weekend. One way I came up with was to draw the old World War II documentary films out of the film libraries and show them on Saturday mornings. We succeeded in getting about one-third of all the airmen into the theatre on Saturday morning to watch the same films I had seen on television. We flew the air mail and made the bomb runs into Ploesti and Schweinfurt.

As the officer on the base who knew Kwang Ju and Korea best, I also set up Saturday tours of the city for airmen, working with my counterparts in the TI&E section of the ROKAF 1st Fighter Wing. These were quite successful. For some airmen, these were their only ventures into the larger city and society. We were also increasing the income of the Kodak Corporation.

I have mentioned the ROK Army's Infantry-Artillery-Armor training center in Kwang Ju at Sangmudae. When the "every soldier should have a religion" movement -- General Han Shin emphasized it -- was implemented by the ROK Army, they built a Protestant Church, a Catholic Church, and a Buddhist temple just inside the Sangmudae gate, along with large statues of Buddha, Christ, and Mary. New soldiers would be taken to this religion training center for lectures to help them choose one of the faiths for themselves. I thought Thomas Jefferson would be appalled, but since I personally believed that faith, on the whole, makes a better soldier and a better man, I was an interested observer.

In any case, I usually included this area on the tours for the airmen. It was an easy way to visit a Buddhist temple. It happened that the statue of Mary looked down over the wall of the ROK Army compound into a small adjacent civilian neighborhood. The Blessed Mother's arms were outstretched with a look of mercy on her face.

It happened that this small neighborhood was, in GI lingo, still called "KMAG," because the American advisors to the ROK Army schools at Sangmudae had once lived there. So did the bar owners and the "business women" who wanted their Yankee dollars. And even though the Army advisors had left, there was still a small camp town. Mary was gazing down on these sinners. I still wonder if the ROK Army civil engineers and chaplains, when they placed the statue, were sending a signal to wayward Americans.

While I was in Kwang Ju, Bob Hope visited Korea for a show at Osan AB. This must have been just before Christmas of 1972. Big name USO shows like Bob Hope's didn't get down to remote places like Kwang Ju, but the USO had not forgotten us. One day we received word that the USO was sending a show to "the Kwang."

The star was ... George Jessel! Age 74. The vaudevillian. His entourage was two more people, a fiftyish woman singer and a sixtyish piano player. Doc Osborne received a long telegram about Jessel's various medical conditions, scary enough to prompt the Doc to pray that nothing would happen to Jessel during his two days on base.

I had seen Jessel interviewed on television, usually as a guest who talked about "the old days" of Vaudeville, Broadway and Hollywood. Most of the airmen had never heard of him, and as the date of the show approached, there were plenty of jokes about him, and about old fogies at the USO who thought airmen of the sophisticated 1970s would find him entertaining. Still, the base theatre was standing room only for Jessel's show.

He wore an Air Force uniform festooned with badges, like the three stars that had been given him by General Patton, and a Purple Heart. Despite the lilt in his step, he was old

and wrinkled. He took the bare mike in the center of the stage, let everyone in the theatre take him in, and opened by saying in a loud voice -- "Fuck the Russians!"

That unexpected opening won everyone over, and during his show he Yankee Doodle Dandied and told jokes and Grand Old Flagged to everyone's delight. The faded starlet who accompanied him was a hit, too. When he sang, as he always did, "My Mother's Eyes," the whole audience was homesick.

George Jessel. He left Kwang Ju on a helicopter for one of the mountaintop radar stations.

He didn't play the Palace any more, but he was a class act.

Q: In the Air Force, did you feel the same racial tensions on base that could be seen on the Army posts in Korea?

BISHOP: Absolutely. In a way, dealing with racial tension in the 314th Air Division occupied more of our time than operational issues. I know General Maloy made his real contributions in this area. It would take quite a while to relate all of this in detail.

One particular way it affected me was that General Maloy asked the Air Training Command to send out a train-the-trainers team for "Human Relations Officers." Colonel White chose me for the training because, I suppose, I was the base liberal. The Defense Race Relations Institute had just been established, and we went through some of their training. We learned to dap. We watched a television documentary, "Black History: Lost, Stolen, or Strayed." It was a very useful two weeks, helping to clarify for me some of the things about racial prejudice that I had been feeling since I made those trips south as a boy.

At the same time, I think some of their methods were a little rough, not on me but on other participants. The training team used "T-Group" sessions, and to this day I'm uncomfortable remembering some of the sessions of us all sitting in a circle; they now remind me of struggle sessions during the Cultural Revolution in China. I'll never forget one officer bursting into tears during one of the sessions.

The course made us "human relations trainers," but the Air Force didn't follow up with providing us the materials we needed to conduct large-scale training at the bases, so while the training had a good influence on me for the future, I'm not sure it was a critical factor in ameliorating racial tension on the bases. Other programs had more impact.

General Maloy encouraged the formation of organizations to cross racial lines. There were the "salt and pepper" security police patrols, and there was "The Brotherhood."

And all the commands took more notice of tension in off-base establishments in "the ville." In the bars you had a volatile brew of ingredients, starting with the liquor and the women. There were other, intangible factors in the brew -- the mix of ranks and of course

“the color line.” Even things like the choice of music played in the bars could result in an incident.

I was one of the American members of the local Civil Affairs Council, meeting with the Korean police, the local public health people, and the representatives of the bar owners and the “business women.” I learned more about the control of prostitution and what we then called “VD,” venereal disease, than I wanted to.

I hope some scholar gives this period of our military history a good study. I recall attending the 1972 U.S. Forces-Korea Civil Affairs Conference at Yongsan Garrison. After a short session on properties being returned to the Koreans, the whole conference focused on VD and prostitution control. The Second Infantry Division had an elaborate system of pink cards recording weekly medical examinations of the “business women.” If a GI was feeling amorous over drinks, he was supposed to ask the waitress to see her pink card.

But what I remember most from the conference was one Army lieutenant colonel making a plea to the Koreans -- we don't want these girls, we don't want these bars, we want to train our soldiers to defend this country. I quite admired his conviction, even as I knew that his values made him a lonely person, and they probably damaged his chances for promotion.

Q: Did you get any feel for the South Koreans and their attitude towards the conflict in Vietnam? Obviously we had –

BISHOP: Well, of course, I'd been in the Korean Army's area in Vietnam, and as I mentioned they made a very positive impression on me. That was the main reason why I wrote down Korea on my “dream sheet.” I hadn't really had much opportunity to get to know the Vietnamese in the circumstances of Phu Cat Air Base, so when I got to Korea I was quite anxious to make up for lost time. This was a country at peace, an ally, so I'd have plenty of opportunity to get to know local society. And on the whole it was a great, wonderful experience.

Later, the talk was that South Korean troops in Vietnam were mercenaries. The talk was they had come at LBJ's bidding, and the extra pay and allowances they received -- and I suppose perhaps the extra assistance that we gave to South Korea as a result -- was our payoff under LBJ's “more flags” policy. That was the line of thinking.

But I don't think this radical critique was a common feeling. No doubt, there were radical professors up in Seoul who thought so, but I think most South Koreans were persuaded that they had seen the face of communist aggression in their own war, and here was another country that was facing the same threat. They agreed that Korea should play its part, play its role, now that their country had begun to develop and had become a militarily respectable power. So I didn't see much opposition to Korea's participation in Vietnam.

Q: In Korea, were you feeling any other repercussions from our drawdown in Vietnam?

BISHOP: In 1973, the Paris Peace Talks set limits on the movement of arms into South Vietnam, both by the allies and by the North. There was a brief time window before the limits took effect. The ROKAF 1st Fighter Wing at Kwang Ju had F-86's and new F-5A's. One day I was roused out about four in the morning because the Korean Air Force F-5s were going to be transferred to South Vietnam. I remember thinking that there must have been some real diplomatic arm-twisting to get the ROKAF to give up its first line fighter.

This was Operation ENHANCE PLUS. The problem with transferring the aircraft to South Vietnam was that none of the Korean pilots had ever flown over water any distance. The F-5s were single-seat, and they were short-legged. The planned routing was to hop to Taiwan, then hop to the Philippines, and then make a final flight to Vietnam. The solution was to have experienced U.S. Air Force pilots fly F-4s from Taegu to Kwang Ju. They put a Korean navigator in the back seat, and then as each American F-4 took off, four Korean F-5s would follow, flying in formation to Taiwan. They delivered the aircraft that way.

Q: At that time, how was the government of Park Chung-hee seen?

BISHOP: Park Chung-hee, like many authoritarians before and since, made the mistake of thinking only he was able to handle the challenges that Korea faced -- military, economic, political -- so he was seeking to continue his rule. The worst of his rule did not happen until later, but we can safely say that Korea in 1972 and 1973 was a strictly governed place, not so friendly to liberal thinking.

Young men in Kwang Ju all had crew cuts, because if they didn't, the police had their own sets of shears, and they would make sure, in a very public way, that young men conformed. It was the time when at five o'clock on Korean street, in every village and town in the country, the national loudspeaker system came on and played the national anthem. Everyone stood in respectful silence on the streets. It was a kind of national retreat ceremony.

It was a tense anticommunist atmosphere. Surely it was authoritarian, although the Koreans probably didn't feel that as much as we outsiders did, because they'd had a lot of authoritarianism.

One day I woke up to hear that tanks from the Korean Army training center at Sangmudae had entered every campus, including the Catholic seminary. President Park was enacting a new constitution on his own. Korean historians call it the "Yushin" constitution. "Yushin" means "reform," a good example of the use of a mild word to hide a darker reality, for this was another step down his path of authoritarian control. All the officers of the ROKAF 1st Fighter Wing had to go and swear new oaths. I asked whether I could watch the Korean officers do so. As friendly as I was with my Korean Air Force counterparts, they could not allow me to witness that.

Of course, the worst of Park Chung-hee's authoritarian government still lay in the future. In the late 70s, after I'd left Korea, the students became restless. Many were arrested and tortured and kept in jail for long periods of time. The ugliness of that future was not, though, so evident to us in 1972 and 1973.

Q: Did you get the feel Korea was on its way to its future? Korea was regarded as the Ireland of Asia.

BISHOP: Ireland of Asia! The Columban missionaries told me that Korea was the “Ireland of the Orient,” but it was in a different context. Like Ireland, they told me, Korea was divided north and south. Like the Irish, the Koreans sang soulful songs. And like the Irish, the Koreans turned to strong drink to ease their sorrows!

Yes, it was evident that Korea was on the move economically, though the economic growth was regionally uneven because President Park was from North Kyongsang province and had grown up with that region's prejudices against the Cholla provinces. Kwang Ju Air Base was in Cholla Namdo, Cholla South.

In the political realm, political scientists always talked about the preconditions of democracy: literacy, economic development, a history of voting. Koreans had high literacy, the economic development had begun, and there were regular elections even if they were stacked in favor of the ruling party, so everyone was confident of Korea's eventual liberalization. The question was “how long”? I'm sure that Park Chung-hee thought in terms of many decades, not a few years.

Q: Park Chung-hee is portrayed as a dictator, but economically he made decisions that benefited his people. He supported and protected agriculture because he knew that the farmers had to feed the cities' populations.

BISHOP: Yes, the economic takeoff surely began during his rule. The New Community Movement (*Saemaul Undong*) helped a lot with that, and it laid important groundwork in participatory village governance. So it's not wrong to say that he made very important contributions to Korea's future. His is a mixed legacy.

When I was in Korea later in the Foreign Service, I came to think it was the Korean War that set in motion the forces that in time made Park and the other generals, Chun Du-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, President. The U.S. didn't train the Korean Army only to fight, but also to maintain an army, its equipment, its supplies and its logistics. The Korean Army learned from us how to lay out bases and build roads. In the period after the war, much of Korea's physical and social infrastructure was built through the Army.

A businessman who founded a small bus company, or a small car repair garage, had perhaps been a captain in the Korean Army driving and fixing deuce-and-a-halves. He hired men who had been NCOs. They drew on military ways of doing things as their society began to build itself up. The earlier Japanese influence – older Koreans had been

educated in the Japanese colonial schools when Japanese education was militarized -- was there as well.

Q: You mentioned that you'd gotten married. Did you get married while you were in the Air Force?

BISHOP: Yes. I met my wife in Korea, setting in motion all the changes that marriage works on life.

Q: You want to tell us a little bit about the background of your wife?

BISHOP: Yes. My wife's Korean name is Chong Won-Ja. Korean Catholics take the name of a saint when baptized, so it was "Gemma" that I met, named after Saint Gemma Galgani. Getting ahead of our story, she changed the spelling to "Jemma" when she was naturalized because most Americans mispronounced her name.

She was born in 1944 on one of the offshore fishing islands, Shinji-do, in Wando County. Her father, Chong Chong-t'ae, was one of the Koreans who had gotten an education during the Japanese colonial period. He went to what I suppose we would now call a vocational high school for fisheries and maritime industries, graduating in 1939 when he was 20, and after the war he went into business, exporting seaweed to Japan. Another young man about the docks and harbors of Cholla Namdo was from Mokp'o, Kim Dae-jung. My wife's father called him by his first name from their time of ambition and hope together. Later my wife's father became head of local fisheries cooperatives in Cholla Namdo province, which produced fish and seaweed and the various seafood products, for domestic consumption and for export.

Q: Seaweed's a very important product, as a wrapper and as ...

BISHOP: Yes, and Koreans use it more robustly than the Japanese do. There are plenty of seaweed soups, and all kinds of seaweed salads and other recipes in the Korean diet. Whenever I go to the island, and I'm there among my wife's relatives, I eat a lot of seaweed. It's cultivated. You just don't go out and get the seaweed that grows naturally on the ocean bottom.

Part of my father-in-law's fisheries education was to learn how to run a small rope through a thick handful of seaweed during the season when it gives off spores. The lines, with the spores embedded in the fibers of the rope, would then be placed in the ocean some yards offshore. In a month or two the new seaweed plants would grow off the lines, to be harvested a few months later and processed in a form for sale.

Q: But when we're talking about the island, are we talking about the Yellow Sea or the Sea of Japan?

BISHOP: Sea of Japan? You mean the Sea of Korea, or the "East Sea," of course! Shinji-do is off the southwest coast, in Cholla Namdo province. It faces Cheju-do (or "Quelpart")

on the old European maps). So it is not quite Yellow Sea (“West Sea” on Korean maps), it’s not quite East Sea. It’s there along that southern string of islands. Trace your finger on a map, tracing south and east from the port of Mokp’o and you’ll find it.

Q: Well how did you meet her?

BISHOP: Her family moved to Kwang Ju a few years after she was born. She was six years old when the war broke out. Her father sensed that he should move the family out of Kwang Ju so they could lie low in a house in a village west of the city. He and Jemma’s mother remained in the city, however. He was tending his business, and Jemma’s mother was organizing *chaesa* ceremonies for ancestors – ceremonies so important in Korean society that no invasion could delay them.

In the village, though, local North Korean sympathizers – they revealed themselves well ahead of the North Korean Army’s arrival -- invaded the home where Jemma, her brothers and sisters, and other members of the extended family were staying. These local Communists denounced the family as wealthy capitalists and oppressors sucking the blood from the people. They stole the family’s money and possessions. My wife heard the shots after they dragged away her mother’s younger brother and her niece.

The family was traumatized. Jemma and her twin sister An-ji walked the several miles back to Kwang Ju to tell her parents what had happened. My father-in-law went to the police station to report the events, but he was detained. For several weeks he was interrogated and beaten. Jemma’s mother spent every moment at the station demanding his release. When he was let go, roughed up quite badly, the North Korean Army had entered the province, and he knew the family must flee. He sent them back to the fishing island where my wife had been born, Shinji-do, part way clinging to a truck, the final distance by boat. He went to Pusan – the Korean government had fled there – to keep the family livelihood going.

Some time after the UN Command had driven the North Koreans out for the second time, the family returned to Kwang Ju, and she went to school there. She was the student body president at Cholla Namdo Girl’s High School. In 1962 she was one of the two women in the province that passed the national entrance examination for Seoul National University. She went to the Agriculture College of Seoul National University in Suwon, majoring in agricultural home economics with a concentration in nutrition.

She graduated just after the Jesuits of the Wisconsin Province had established a new Catholic seminary in Kwang Ju. They needed somebody to set up and run a modern food service operation. They went to Seoul National University professor Mo Su-mi and asked her to recommend someone. She strongly urged them to hire Jemma. So my wife was given the opportunity to go set up and manage the food service operation at this new college. At the time it was called Daegun Brennan Catholic Seminary, but now it’s called Kwang Ju Catholic College. Later, the Jesuits pulled her up to Seoul to manage the student cafeteria at the main Jesuit university, now one of the top four in Korea, Sogang

University. The personal example of the Jesuits, moreover, led her to become a Catholic herself.

She had a bout with tuberculosis and had to be at home for a year for rest and nutrition therapy. Afterwards she went to work for the U.S. Air Force at the air base in Kwang Ju, first as the chapel secretary and then working for the base commander. That's how we met. When I began to get really interested in Korea, I asked her to help me learn Korean. Perhaps we could say our courtship was over the language textbooks in a room at the Base Chapel. I proposed in March of 1973, and we married a week before the end of my tour, at the Passionist Retreat Center. My parents came out for the wedding. There were five priests at our wedding; the famous American missionary, Archbishop Harold Henry of the Columbans, was the principal concelebrant at the mass.

I remember Archbishop Henry looking me in the eye during the reception after the ceremony. "When I tie the knot, it sticks," he said, "and don't you forget it."

I add that when I married Jemma, I also gained a son. She had been widowed. I suppose Jerome, then four years old, is a "stepson," but I resolved never to use the word "stepson," so that he would not ever feel, or imagine, that he was not 100 percent my son, that he did not have 100 percent of my love, because he had a different biological father.

Q: You finished your tour in Korea when?

BISHOP: A week after the wedding. My last day in country was July 31, 1973.

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, COLUMBUS, OHIO, 1973-1974 **Graduate Student, Department of History**

While I was in Korea, I was accepted for the Air Force Academy faculty, but I was surprised by the details. The Department of History decided I should be the officer who would teach Middle East history. They offered to sponsor me for a master's degree, all expenses paid by Uncle Sam. They wanted me to be prepared to teach about the Middle East, but they didn't want to give me the time to learn any of the languages (Arabic, Turkish, or Farsi) which would be required for a proper degree in Middle East history. Ohio State University had a good strong program in Middle East history, but it was also well known for its Military History program, and a master's degree in Military History didn't require any language. I was told, then, to earn a master's degree in Military History while taking every course offered in Middle East History.

I arrived in Columbus to begin the 1973 fall term at Ohio State. It took a few months for my wife to get her visa after we married, and she immigrated to Columbus later in 1973. Jerome came a little later. We moved into a rented townhouse at 114 Beaufort Lane in the northern part of the city, and I took the bus to class every day. Jemma took some courses too, and Jerome began kindergarten at Homedale Elementary School.

I thought that it would be difficult to teach Middle East history without having ever been to the Middle East, not that the USAF hadn't done anything weird like this before. So I applied to and was accepted for SUNY-Binghamton's summer program that would give me a chance to go to Jordan, Israel, and Egypt during the summer term of 1974. As soon as I told the Air Force this plan, they said I wasn't allowed to go to Israel without permission under the Foreign Clearance Guide, which they would not give so soon after the Yom Kippur War.

I studied at OSU for a year and a half. I never did visit the Middle East. I suppose the USAF wanted me to be able to talk about the Arab-Israeli wars and post-World War II history of the region. The courses at OSU, though, focused on the birth of Islam and the Arab, Persian, and Ottoman empires. The great teachers were Marilyn Waldman and Carter Findley. I had more on the warm ups to the 20th century than I did on the 20th century itself. I thought the introduction I gave to Islam was pretty thorough because in my course, History 372, I focused on the caliphates and the early empires, and it proved very valuable in my Foreign Service career.

Both Waldman and Findley had been influenced by the William McNeill school of thinking about world history, and Marilyn Waldman had studied under Marshall Hodgson. This was good preparation for teaching "world history" in a new way at the Academy

Q: Did you run across strong Israel groups while studying?

BISHOP: I don't recall running into any professors who were actively pro-Israel. It wasn't that they were anti-Israel, they were just Arab and Ottoman and Persian specialists. They were focused on their historic specialties. And I don't recall having heard a comment really one way or the other in class.

Q: Your military history classes, what were they about?

BISHOP: The Air Force was preparing me to teach its second year core course in military history in addition to the upper division course in Middle East History. I had a whole run of great professors, especially Allan Millett, Harry Coles, and Carl Boyd. Coles was my advisor, and Millett became my thesis mentor. I already knew a great deal about the military history of the United States, so much of it was filling up and fleshing out the knowledge I already had. Remember, too, I had a pretty good grasp of air power history from my time at the Air Force archives at Maxwell.

Military history as a subdiscipline was, at the time, focused on how different societies developed and supported militaries in ways that reflected their own history, values, and morals. Armed forces reflect the norms of their different societies, and they also feel the ripple effects of domestic political tussles. So we learned less about the movement of units at Gettysburg, and more about the reforms set in motion by Elihu Root, for instance.

My thesis mentor, Allan Millett, has in time supervised more doctoral dissertations than any other military historian, so he has had a lasting effect on military history and military thinking in the United States. Teaching military history, he had the advantage of drawing on his own experience in the Marine Corps. In addition to his time on active duty, at one time he commanded an infantry battalion in the Marine Corps Reserve. He had the extra insight that comes from not just walking the battlefields, but thinking about terrain and fields of fire and temperature and the weight of combat loads as he did so. Vietnam had given me some of that perspective too.

A large lecture hall was needed for his classes on American military history. I sat halfway back, but directly in front of him were two rows of attentive students. One group was the Navy ROTC midshipmen who intended to take commissions in the Marine Corps. Another was members of the OSU football team and other PhysEd majors. They took Professor Millett's class to supplement what they learned from Coach Woody Hayes.

Professor Harry Coles ran superb graduate seminars. We students would gather with him around a table and take on a book he assigned. He liked to have us read old, classic historians and tease out the new lessons. We went through David Ramsay's book on the American Revolution, published in 1789, quite thoroughly, for instance.

In the same seminar one of my fellow students was quite a committed Evangelical Christian, and Professor Coles asked him to lead a class on the historical accuracy of the gospel accounts of Christ's trial and execution. As I went to the class, I expected that someone would attack my classmate in the same way that Darrow attacked Bryan, but with Professor Coles' moderating, everyone came away satisfied they had gained something.

In another course with Coles, I was writing a long paper on the War of 1812, and I can now admit I was taking in lots of "trees" without a view of the "forest." No doubt he had dealt with rookies many times before, and he gently pointed out all my major confusions, and pointed to the right books to read.

One term I studied the American Revolution with Professor Bradley Chapin. It was a fine course, punctuated with some of Professor Chapin's opinions, stated colorfully. For instance: "Go down the highways of Indiana, a state I loathe, and you pull off the interstate to take a leak at these places named for nobodies like James Whitcomb Riley or other rightly forgotten Hoosier poets! Who's the greatest man ever to come out of Indiana? Eugene V. Debs! And they won't even name a highway rest stop for him!"

I didn't know that I would be a Public Diplomacy officer, but as we reviewed how those favoring independence influenced Americans' opinions in the late 1760s and early 1770s, I thought through John Adams' estimate that on the eve of the war, 1/3 of Americans were for independence, 1/3 were loyal to the crown, and 1/3 wanted to be left alone. How had that strong position been established in the minds of Americans? I was thinking about the "shaping" of opinion.

I'd spent some time in the counterinsurgency environment in Vietnam, so I wrote a paper on the Philippine insurrection. At that time the earlier experience in the Philippines was just being rediscovered by military thinkers. There was the role of the "Krag," the Krag-Jorgenson rifle, meaning military force, and there was the role of the "schoolbooks," meaning the extension of American administration and education through the Philippine Islands.

And I had to get my experience with controlling VD and prostitution out of my system, so I did a long paper on how the American Expeditionary Forces in France in 1917-18 dealt with the parallel problems.

When it came time to write my master's thesis, Allan Millett was my advisor. I really wanted to write a thesis in Korean history, but I hadn't taken any Asian history at OSU because I was focused on the Middle East. My degree was to be in Military History anyway. So I wrote on the military relations between the United States and Korea in the nineteenth century. The topic embraced the U.S. Navy's punitive expedition of 1871, Admiral Robert Shufeldt's "opening" of Korea, the first Korean Mission to the United States, the role of the first naval attaché, Ensign George Clayton Foulk, and the group of American military advisors led by retired Brevet Brigadier General William McEntyre Dye. I visited the New York Public Library, the National Archives, Berkeley, Ann Arbor, and Cornell to gather materials. With the usual additional work and rewriting after I got to the Academy, I published the whole thesis as a series of journal articles. It's my modest contribution to historical scholarship.

Q: I suppose the most common field of study for Foreign Service Officers is international relations. A degree in military history is unusual for an FSO.

BISHOP: It gets ahead of our story, but this has occurred to me in recent years, especially after 9/11. I had studied war and the institutions that conduct (or deter, or prepare for) war. Let me editorialize a little.

It's simplistic to think that there's "good" peace and "bad" war. It's simplistic to think that peace is the normal condition of mankind except when some kind of irrational madness overcomes nations and they resort to war. War has been an enduring and prominent dimension of human history, so studying it formally is entirely appropriate, and not only for soldiers.

If you go back to the idea of a continuum of tension or conflict between nations, war occupies one end. Diplomacy bears most significantly on the middle ground, but it's part of the whole continuum. And we have messy relationships that splash over different parts of this continuum. China and the U.S. have normal, peaceful diplomatic, business, economic, trade, and educational relationships. But it's not much of a stretch to say that in the cyber realm, there's something that's getting close to the "war" part of the continuum.

War has, moreover, its own laws, its own principles, and its own internal dynamics. It obligates governments and nations to assure that the sacrifice in lives and treasure achieve good ends. It mandates priorities, and accustomed ways of doing things and ordinary life plans must be set aside. A concern for economy is misplaced, for a surge of expenditures to achieve a decisive result, now, is better than frugality that prolongs the agony. War places extraordinary stresses, physical and moral, on warriors. There has never been a war without ugly violence and death, for soldiers and civilians both, some indiscriminate. Success or failure in war is greatly influenced by the question of command -- the execution of a strategy by one mind.

Diplomacy in wartime -- think the Gulf, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan -- will be ineffective without understanding these dynamics, these forces that drive and grip nations at war. Sorry for a short editorial.

Q: In these "dynamics," as you say, where do "cause" and "ideals" fit in?

BISHOP: A social scientist who defines the purpose of war as "interests" is looking at conflict through one lens, and an important one, but it is not the only lens. For Americans, moreover, the lens of "interest" is tinted in economic hues from our having absorbed too much economic determinism. Thucydides spoke of fear, honor, and interest, though Americans seem reluctant to acknowledge the first two. Concepts of God, faith, and the sense of right and wrong that derive from absorbed religious and moral thinking bear on war, too. Honor, and perhaps interests, are bound up with ideals, especially in democratic states, and especially in our own country, founded and unified by ideals rather than the blood and soil of the Old World. Leaders who call for the defense of ideals, writers and poets and singers who give them fresh expression, and those that extend their reach and appeal are not all propagandists cynically appealing to ignorant chumps and hillbillies.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as better technology allowed the communication of war goals to large populations, governments have, I suppose, deployed art, literature, and for that matter song to serve their ends, and this has led some retrospective studies that find a moral equivalence between, say, Fascist art and New Deal art, or between the Voice of America and Radio Moscow. I saw one offensive -- no, it was disgusting -- display that put a Norman Rockwell Boy Scout painting next to a photograph of Vladimir Putin, again suggesting some kind of moral equivalence. It's a short distance from there to viewing every policy as the assertion of some venal interest by the powerful over the weak.

I suppose I'm suggesting here that ideals are also part of the structure of war, which again brings us back not to "interests" but to morals, the humanities, philosophy, and political philosophy -- the judgments we make about society and human nature. It's not the superficial similarities between Fascist art and New Deal art that are important. One must judge the underlying sets of ideals and values. Not all ideals are equal, or relative, and I won't give in to the notion that the sacrifices represented by the crosses at the Punch Bowl or at the Meuse-Argonne were meaningless. Nor give in to the notion that thinking

about war, preparing for war, and fighting wars are not important callings -- for diplomats too.

Q: Was there a residue of anti-military, anti-Vietnam, 1960s sentiments at Ohio State while you were there?

BISHOP: It was there on campus. The particular professors I had were not of that sway, they respected the military students. We were more serious students than the undergraduates just out of high school. We were older, and we were going through Master's degree or doctoral programs.

Besides, we were in the last period in Vietnam. The U.S. ended its active involvement in 1972, and the peace agreements had just been signed. The last draft calls were in 1972, taking the wind out of any anti-war protests. We were aware that being military students made us different on campus, but I didn't feel it personally. Even so, there was an ambient anti-war atmosphere on campus.

There were probably a hundred Air Force students on campus studying various subjects. It was generally the practice that USAF-sponsored students would wear Class A uniforms on Fridays, the same day as the ROTC cadets. Soon after I arrived, we were called together and told that because anti-war feelings on campus were so strong, we should not wear uniforms to draw attention to ourselves. Neither would the ROTC cadets.

The OSU newspaper frequently editorialized that ROTC was militarizing the campus, violating the liberal tradition of American higher education. One day, I was walking by the football stadium while the OSU band was practicing. The stadium parking lot had been painted with a football field's lines so that the band could practice. Looking up to the top of the stadium, I could see the band coach with a bull horn shouting down orders and directions. As I watched, the band stepped off with a fight tune. Then I heard the director yelling "Stop! Stop! Trumpet number 3, you are off the beat and out of step! Give me ten!" The trumpeter fell to the ground and did ten push-ups right away. I smiled and said to myself, "Ah, OK. We are against militarism when it's for the nation, but we're OK with it when it's for the OSU band."

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY, COLORADO, 1974-1979 **Instructor and Assistant Professor of History**

Q: So, after your time at Ohio State you went to the Academy?

BISHOP: I got my degree just before Christmas of 1974, and my wife and Jerome and I packed up and drove to Colorado in time for me to start teaching in the spring term. In the Department of History, I replaced John Guilmartin.

The Professor and Head was Colonel Alfred F. Hurley, known among us in the Department as "the Big H." (Academy departments had only one full Professor, the head of the Department.) With 31 officers, it was quite a large department. Even now, I marvel

at the personalities. The Big H had a real talent for gathering fine officers and fine minds, with a sprinkling of memorable personalities.

Alan Gropman and Alan Osur “wrote the book” on the slow and halting process of racial integration in the Air Force. Army Major David Price had cadets in the palm of his hand with stories of helicopter flying in Vietnam. Lieutenant Colonel Jon Reynolds had spent seven years in North Vietnam as a POW. Major Phil Tate had bombed North Vietnam in the F-105. Cadet Don Baucom had played in the Cotton Bowl, but Major Don Baucom's field was the history of science. Our Royal Air Force exchange officers -- Wing Commander John Brett and then Squadron Leader Malcolm Shaw while I was there -- were the pick of the RAF's Education Branch, and it was always good to hear their British take on things. Major Tom Keaney, a graduate of Boston Latin, had flown low and slow over the enemy in Vietnam as a Forward Air Controller, and now he was back at his alma mater, teaching. Captain Juanita Walton had been a specialist in administration in the most demanding environment, the Strategic Air Command. As a second lieutenant, Captain Art Durand had been an intelligence officer in Thailand, and later he would be in charge of targeting under the Strategic Integrated Operations Plan, but his dissertation was on American POWs in Germany during World War II. Before coming to the Academy, Captain Joe Dixon's crew had won the Strategic Air Command's missile competition, a very big deal indeed. Captain Reed Hansen had a juke box in his living room at home, and he could draw a line between any lesson in history and Elvis or the Big Bopper. Former F-4 pilot Captain Chuck Specht became a Catholic deacon while I was at the Academy, and cadets from all majors oversubscribed his course on the History of Christianity. That I joined this crowd still amazes me.

And a footnote: In one Department of 31 officers, three were grads of Trinity College -- David MacIsaac, Jon Reynolds, and me. Not a bad record for a small liberal arts college.

Q: Did you live at the Academy, or downtown?

BISHOP: Our base housing was in Pine Valley, and we lived in the last housing cluster before the Ramparts Range of the Rocky Mountains began. Jemma, Jerome, and I were in a most modest duplex with a true million dollar view. The deer and coyotes roamed through our yard. And of course, it was only a short drive from the Academy to Garden of the Gods, or Pikes Peak National Forest, or the Royal Gorge of the Arkansas River, or Cripple Creek and Victor, and we got to see the wonders of Colorado.

I marveled at the West. Back in New England, driving down a road, you would come to a crossroads with one or two white churches in the spare Congregational style, and the stone walls next to the roads, dividing the fields, were 300 years old. If you stopped to look at the graveyard, there would be stones dating from the 1600s. New England, then, was a rooted place. Even though New England people were no longer all from the old stock, Yankees, so to speak, they lived in a rooted society. Even the children of immigrants knew they lived in a stable place, comfortable with its traditions.

In the West, by contrast, the oldest buildings and the oldest gravestones dated only from the end of the nineteenth century. It was not densely populated. Driving down the roads, waking up in the morning, you could always feel a sense of possibility. People weren't rooted. Rather they could re-invent themselves or change directions any time. I'm from the east, and comfortable there, but I found the West to be energizing.

Q: What were you teaching, and how long were you there?

BISHOP: I taught nine terms, so four and a half years. I taught History 101, Europe and the World Since 1500 ("World History"), History 202, Modern Warfare and Society ("Military History"), and History 372, History of the Middle East.

Eventually I was given the honors sections of World History, History 101H. And when the Department failed to find a replacement for my colleague Captain Clyde Kornegay, who taught African History, they folded his course into mine. In 1978, History 372 was "History of the Middle East and Africa."

Because my graduate schooling focused on the caliphate, the Arab empires, the Persians, and the Ottomans, I spent a lot of time teaching these areas to cadets, and I was interested in using the course as a way to introduce them to the world of Islam. I probably shorted the cadets in the course who wanted more about the Arab-Israeli conflict and wars. As for the form of militant Islam that we face today, it had not really reared its head. This was sort of a quiet time in that regard.

Officers who were teaching courses on the different regions of the world could be found in the History, Political Science and Philosophy, and Economics and Geography departments. Because of academic stovepiping, the Asia specialists, say, didn't talk much to one another. I put together a faculty Middle East Studies Group that created some feeling of common effort.

Q: You were teaching a particular kind of undergraduates, Air Force cadets. What can you tell us about them?

BISHOP: Academy cadets, by any measure, were (and are) way above average. Now they are among the top 5 or 7 percent of American students. Usually, cadet SAT scores were higher in math than in verbal, but there were many exceptions. Every student I encountered was smart, and the system forced them to be studious.

Their interests were all over the map. Some wanted to be fighter pilots, others astronauts, others engineers, others working on missile defense or lasers. Yet there were others whose passion was history, international relations, and English. So I had quite an interesting mix of cadets in the basic courses.

In the late 70s when I was at the Academy, probably 60 percent of the grads were going to fly. Most would become pilots, but about a fourth of that group would become navigators. The main thing that qualified a cadet to fly or not to fly was eyesight.

At that time, cadets qualified to fly could major in anything and still go on to flight school. If a cadet wanted to become an astronaut, he or she should probably major in astro or aero. But if cadets just wanted to be line air force bomber pilots, fighter pilots, airlift pilots, they were free to follow their interests in choosing a major.

Those not qualified to become aviators became “non-rated officers.” I was a non-rated officer. The 40 percent of cadets who knew that they were not going to fly were usually focused on their future specialties – missiles, satellites, technology, aeronautical engineering -- whatever. Of course the courses in the basic science and engineering departments were intended to win cadets into thinking “Oh! Wow! Operations research! This is something I can really get into! This is where I can make a contribution!”

Even so, the two largest majors were international relations (the Academy's equivalent of a political science major) and history. Cadets voted with their feet. The classes at the time graduated about 1,200 new lieutenants a year. The political science and history departments both got about 100 majors each. That's a pretty fair share of cadets choosing these areas we don't think of as flyboy subjects.

Q: Could you explain the difference between political science and history at the Academy at the time?

BISHOP: There were the conventional distinctions. My impression is that our colleagues in Political Science tended not to emphasize the traditional issues of political philosophy, but rather they were focused on government structure, policy issues, polls and voting, etc. The two majors overlapped, but each fostered its own distinctive view of society and the world. International relations majors had to take history courses, and history majors had to take international relations courses, so we were collegial in that way.

We used to say that the Academy graduated two classes each June. The first class was the cadets. The second was faculty members returning to the rest of the Air Force after their teaching assignments. In that regard, the aspiration of officers leaving the Political Science department was to go to the Air Staff, to International Security Affairs (ISA) at the Pentagon, or to one of the regional combatant commands and work policy. Their exemplar was Brent Scowcroft, who had taught at the Academy as a junior officer.

In the History Department there was a different ethos -- to return to operational units and bring the insights of history to the problems of command and operations. Our exemplar was to be Ron Fogleman -- the same Ron Fogleman I had known at Phu Cat. After his teaching assignment, he eventually became Chief of Staff.

For those members of the Department who would leave the Academy and return to the Air Force after their assignments, there was Lieutenant Colonel David MacIsaac's admonition. He attributed the thought to Winston Churchill. Once or twice in a career, he said, an officer will be in a place and a position where only one person, himself, has the particular combination of knowledge, perspective, experience, imagination, and daring to

solve a problem of grave importance. A failure in a crisis -- a failure of preparation, a failure of resolve, or a failure of execution -- will haunt a man for the rest of his life, he said. That was the value of the Academy years -- to give an officer time, amid the teaching, to think. To think about where to make a mark, to think about principles and doctrine, and to be ready for such a moment.

Q: How about air power?

BISHOP: Well, anybody teaching history at the Academy wearing a blue uniform was expected to be a sworn advocate of air power. We flew formation with Billy Mitchell, Giulio Douhet, and others, and we taught them throughout the courses. They were the great airpower theoreticians of the pre-war period. The U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey that was conducted after World War II -- demonstrating that if air power had not by itself won the war, it was "the" or "a" decisive factor -- was also holy writ.

Q: Didn't that study conclude that it didn't work nearly as well as we thought?

BISHOP: I don't know what naysaying book you may have read, but we didn't draw that conclusion at all!

You're right that even the Strategic Bombing Survey gave evidence that there had been mistakes and travails in the use of air power during World War II, and serious students of air power made more modest claims than "air power won the war." This is a very large topic!

The head of the Department, Colonel Alfred H. Hurley, was Mitchell's biographer. The head of our military history program was Lieutenant Colonel David MacIsaac, who "wrote the book" on the Strategic Bombing Survey. I would say that in the introductory military history courses we all were advocates of air power and took the Air Force view on the issues. Some of the bolder assertions made by the advocates of air power were being questioned even then, which was good, they should be, and they were discussed in the upper-division History of Air Power course, but for cadets in the core courses, we naturally leaned positive on the effects of air power.

Yours is a fair question, though, worth its own longer discussion. Let's say simply that Air Force studies and histories, over the years, have tended to validate the beliefs of those at the highest level of the Air Force. Both the Strategic Bombing Survey and the seven-volume official history of the Army Air Forces in World War II ("Craven and Cate") confirmed, shall we say, the air power vision that had animated Hap Arnold and Tooey Spaatz and Ira Eaker and the other air power pioneers. They were the visionaries of the 1920s and 1930s, and they had conceived and led the bombing campaigns during the war. They wanted an independent Air Force, with bombers as the crucial weapons system. Postwar air power studies, history, and doctrine reflected their views. The Director of the Historical Research Division at Maxwell, Dr. Simpson, had worked on the Craven and Cate volumes, so no doubt I had absorbed many of those views while I worked under him. At Maxwell, it was in the water, so to speak.

Just a little more on this: Like the Army, the Air Force went to Vietnam with its own doctrines, emphasizing bombardment, and with an organization shaped in the post-war years by the “air power won the Second World War” vision. The men who were generals in Vietnam were either bomber generals who had flown B-17s and B-24s in Europe or B-29s in the Pacific, or fighter generals who had come out of the same campaigns. You might compare them to the Army officers who had led the campaigns from Normandy to the Elbe River, who dominated the post-war Army leadership.

Missing from the Air Force’s senior leadership were any of the men who had flown in the Burma campaign in one of the war’s great air power success stories – the Air Commando units, the forebears of today’s Special Operations Forces. That campaign reflected the effective usage of many forms of air power, especially applicable in a counterinsurgency in a tropical climate, but none of the studies, histories, and doctrine integrated their experience. Later, in Vietnam, it all had to be reinvented.

Q: You began teaching in the spring term of 1975. Something happened in April, as I recall. This had to be dramatic; I meant to basically lose a war.

BISHOP: Yes! I was fresh at the Academy, teaching History 202, Military History, in my first term, and wow, the helicopters were leaving the roof of the American Embassy in Saigon. Coincidentally, some of the helicopters were flown by recent faculty alumni of the History department. We went into shock, intellectual shock.

For the months afterwards, we were walking around dazed because everyone was asking us questions, and we didn't have answers. I would say for two years, whenever we had meetings -- we had regular “block conferences” to look ahead at a block of instruction in the core courses, whether Military History or World History -- we were arguing about Vietnam. Blocks might be about the American Revolution, or the Civil War, or Asia in world history -- we were talking about Vietnam. In our department of 31, 29 of us had been to Vietnam. We had seen the war from many different angles, and we argued and argued. For instance, “we won every battle, but we lost the war. How did that happen?”

We didn't have anyone saying we were stabbed in the back by Washington -- that would have sounded too much like the Weimar Republic. But some would say “we had one hand tied behind our back” -- we weren’t able to use our full power because of the various restrictions and curbs on military operations. Or, there were those influenced by Francis Fitzgerald's *Fire in the Lake*. Others had been influenced by Bernard Fall.

Q: Street Without Joy?

BISHOP: That’s right. Perhaps revolutionary warfare was the trend of the future, inevitable, especially against highly technical Western-style armed forces, especially against colonial powers and their supporters, meaning us.

In this debate that was roiling our Department, what was I saying? One, I thought that we had gone to Vietnam without knowing a damn thing about the Vietnamese. When we entered the war, Vietnamese, the language, was not taught at any university in the United States. How could we win in a conflict that was about the hearts, the minds, the allegiance of the Vietnamese, when hardly any American spoke the language? Hardly anyone understood much about Vietnam, and what little we might have known came to us through French-speaking cosmopolitan people living in Saigon. How could we possibly think that we would be able to get inside the revolutionary mind? How were we going to compete with the “revolutionary” ideals backed up by guns, pistols at the head, and cold-blooded assassinations of teachers and government officials? How were we going to do that when we didn’t know much about Vietnam?

So I had a strong emphasis on our lack of cultural understanding. By that I don’t mean that we should not have been in Vietnam, but that when we determined that it was a national priority, we failed to focus on the knowledge we needed. It wasn’t, moreover, just that we needed cultural knowledge, a list of do’s and don’ts. It was that lacking an understanding of Vietnamese manners, culture, and society, the way units met the Vietnamese in daily life often destroyed the chance for rapport. Any account of our defeat in Vietnam, I said, had to factor in this ignorance and our failure to remedy it.

Another opinion I voiced is that we, the U.S. armed forces, had come to Vietnam with a certain organization shaped a certain way. Careers were shaped a certain way. Boiling it down, a colonel that had served in Germany, preparing for conventional war in the Fulda Gap, suddenly arrived in Vietnam and said, “damn, this is a real different kind of war. I don’t know what to do.” His response was, “well, let’s do what we know how to do.” We’ll use our armor this way, we will deploy our infantry this way, and we will use our artillery in certain ways.

The problem was that the American way of war, which is firepower- and capital-intensive in order to conserve American lives, had inevitable side effects in villages – loss of lives, loss of homes, other kinds of destruction -- that undermined the war effort.

I thought the best expression of this second insight is in Andrew Krepinevich's book, *The Army and Vietnam*. I had the glimmer of an insight; he fully examined it. He described the various organizational demons that possessed the Army and crippled us in our response to that revolutionary war. It's interesting to me that Krepinevich has now become a new isolationist. I read and admired his book, but I haven't traveled the same road. But I never fail to read every column he writes because I had such respect for that book.

I didn’t see it all in full then, but I had the insight that institutional inertia and the “institutional repertoire” of the armed services were a large element in our defeat. From Ambassador Komer's report, “Bureaucracy Does Its Thing,” the same inertia was at work among the civilian agencies.

For both the “mil” and “civ” side of Vietnam, the one-year rotation policy was another important factor which John Paul Vann captured when he said “we weren’t in Vietnam for twelve years. Rather we were there for one year, twelve times.”

I had the chance to spend some quality time with another individual who challenged the conventional wisdom on Vietnam. Every two years the Department of History organized a Military History Symposium. For one of the “sympos,” Edward Lansdale was invited to speak. I volunteered to be his escort officer, and I spent the better part of three days with him and with his wife, Pat. I had read and admired his book, *In the Midst of Wars*, and was interested in how he had a different view of Vietnam.

He was modest, and he definitely thought “outside the box.” We talked for some time about his career before World War II, when he had been an advertising executive in San Francisco with the Savarin coffee account, and I thought that this would not be a bad way to begin a career in psychological operations, because the metric of “the bottom line” would foster a focus on “moving the needle.”

I gathered that while he had had a pivotal role in ending the Huk rebellion in the Philippines as an advisor to President Magsaysay, he was too unorthodox for the Embassy and for MACV once the big American formations entered the Vietnam war. His idea of holding war crimes trials, in absentia, for North Vietnam’s leadership was scorned by Curtis LeMay, another attendee at the Symposium.

Q: Well did you get anything from your Cadets saying “Well you know this is very nice but that is a ground war problem. We’re going to be up there, we don’t know their culture. Just tell us what to bomb and we’ll bomb it.”?

BISHOP: If a cadet said that in class, I think our whole thrust would have been to say “that’s really wrong.” Yes, you will learn how to take the B-52 off from Guam and fly to Vietnam and drop the bombs in a combat box. But you must understand the war in its larger context, and that’s not just its geopolitical context but its historical and cultural context as well. I would say we were square against the sort of notion that “just give me the coordinates and I’ll fly the mission.” Yes, if you’re an aircraft commander, you fly the mission in accordance with the frag. But if you’re a planner, your duty is to integrate historical and cultural knowledge when you shape Air Force operations and missions

Q: You’re coming out of the 1960s period where you don’t trust anyone over 30. Did the system allow...

BISHOP: Let me put this on the record. That sixties phrase, “never trust anyone over 30,” was one of the dumbest formulations I ever heard. Prima facie stupid. I knew it then, I know it now.

That the notion gained any traction in American thinking isn’t so much a comment on sixties youth. Rather it demonstrates how little generational confidence their teachers had in American society. So they let student demonstrators roll over them, occupy buildings,

and speak volumes of nonsense. And speak their own professorial nonsense at “teach-ins.” Nonsense like “peace will come to Vietnam when the Americans leave.” The actual results of our leaving were boat people risking their lives on the waves, rapes of women and girls by pirates, re-education camps, and more bullets in the head. I’m still baffled by the supine nature of the 60s and 70s professoriate and the academic administrators.

That said, the challenge to authority and the pushing of boundaries that characterized “the sixties” did reach into the armed forces, over things like haircuts. I’d seen some of it in Korea. But at the Academy, every cadet wanted the bars and wings, so they worked extra hard to maintain themselves and their standing, and they listened to adults.

Q: When one thinks of the Air Force, particularly the cream of the crop of the young Top Gun type people, you assume they’re jumping to get into the top bin. I would think they’re a special breed – aggressive and all, but not very thoughtful, at least one doesn’t think of them that way.

BISHOP: Yes, fighter pilots can be cocky. Professor Samuel Hymes at Princeton had been a Navy pilot during World War II. He divided his contemporaries into “sanes” and “crazies.” Pappy Boyington represented the “crazies.” Joe Foss exemplified the “sanes.” My father was a “sane.” I’d say the direction of both Air Force professional education and flying training is to foster the “sane” mentality. There are surely “crazies” among aviators, but they no longer rise to high command.

On the Academy faculty, we aimed to give cadets a full liberal arts education, so that their cockiness would go in sound directions. When with Colonel Hurley I wrote a 25-year review of the Department of History, I went to the Academy’s archives to understand the thinking on the curriculum when the Academy was founded. The first Superintendent, Lieutenant General Millard “Doodle” Harmon, was a graduate of West Point, but he had seen the value of the liberal arts education when he worked with British staff officers. He shaped the Academy curriculum that way from the beginning. Brigadier General Robert McDermott, a graduate of Boston Latin and then West Point, the first dean, implemented that vision.

And I don’t agree that modern officers are “not very thoughtful.” Sure, there are plenty of company and field grade officers who do not think about large issues. But – here I speak as a former POLAD – there aren’t any generals who are not well-read and thoughtful.

Q: What were the academic issues at the Academy, then?

BISHOP: The curriculum was not set up to allow cadets to follow their passions. Rather it was to produce professionally qualified Air Force officers. Even with that one settled goal, there were many questions. How much of the Academy experience is “education”? How much is “training”? How much is “leadership”? What’s the role of the athletic program?

Those of us on the faculty, under the Dean, were focused on “education.” We worked in Fairchild hall on the east side of the terrazzo, the quadrangle. The officers focused on leadership worked under the Commandant and had offices in the dormitories. This was the “terrazzo gap.” Individual officers may have leaned to one side or the other, but in Colonel Hurley’s History Department, we were all “bridgers” – committed to bridging the gap, the terrazzo gap.

On the faculty side, everything came down to the 160 hour curriculum. How many credits for this, how many for that, how many hours here, how many hours there? How many courses should cadets take? What should they be? What is vital and what is not? How many electives will we allow? The arguments came down to the shape of the core curriculum, divided roughly equally between Basic Science and Mathematics, Engineering, Social Science, and Humanities. Changes in the curriculum were a zero-sum game. A new core course in one discipline meant a course in another discipline had to be dropped, and Departments zealously guarded their courses in the core.

There were cross winds working on the faculty and on the curriculum. From one direction came breezes from society and academia. The crosswinds were from military thinking, including discipline and order. As the winds blew across the Academy from these different directions, the question became -- do we need to change the curriculum?

With educational, social and military trends all shaping the institution and the curriculum, this made the Academy a very exciting place to teach. You could feel all of this going on around you. Intellectually, it was very interesting and very challenging.

Let me mention some examples that show how trends in military thinking affected us.

After World War II, for instance, there was a great debate in the armed forces over discipline. The GIs had come home, and many felt strongly that “my colonel was a tyrant” or “I hated the way the officers lorded it over us when they didn't put their pants on any differently than we did.” It was the sense that officers put on big airs and had big privileges.

Q: That is absolutely true! I am speaking as an Air Force enlisted man for four years!

BISHOP: Yes, and I respect that. It’s a hardy perennial.

After World War II, one result of this unhappiness about rank and discipline was the Doolittle report. That report did indeed change things in the armed forces, but as usual things happened slowly. After Vietnam -- indeed, while I was at the Academy -- there was the Peers report, named for Army Lieutenant General William Peers, not a West Point graduate as I recall. He was asked to do a long study of discipline and military training in the aftermath of the Vietnam War.

Q: Wasn't he involved in an investigation on ...

BISHOP: My Lai. That's right. He had a reputation for great integrity.

The Academy always takes major reports seriously. When General Peers' report on discipline and training was issued, people on the Commandant's side and the Dean's side all read and digested it, trying to figure out how to work its insights into what we taught or how we trained.

Preparing his report, General Peers surveyed generals and commanders, asking them for their views of recent military academy graduates, ROTC graduates, and graduates of Officer Candidate School. My memory these years later is that commanders told Peers that with West Point graduates, it's "yes, sir," "no, sir," "I'll take the hill, sir," or "tell me what to do and we'll get it done." They were very dutiful. But they didn't know much about soldiers because at West Point it had been cadets giving orders to cadets, other highly motivated individuals. When a new West Point graduate met a different kind of subordinate, an enlisted man or woman lacking the Military Academy's gung ho spirit, that officer needed a different approach, a different style of leadership, adapted to the ordinary American high school graduate. The commanders reported to General Peers that the ROTC graduate was better in that regard. So these are things that were all being talked about and worked on at the Academy.

Here's another example of military winds blowing over the Academy. A close friend at the Academy was Captain Ray Leopold, teaching in the Department of Electrical Engineering. We became friends because we were both active at the Catholic Community Center Chapel. He had come to the Academy from the Pentagon where he worked for Colonel John Boyd, now known as "the fighter pilot who changed the art of war." Boyd was by this time retired from active duty, but he still worked at the Pentagon, and he was expanding and perfecting his famous "Patterns of Conflict" briefing. He called each update of his briefing a "warp," and as I recall we were seeing warps in the 2.xx series.

Boyd had derived his Energy-Maneuverability Theory that revolutionized fighter tactics from physics and aeronautics. Now he was focused on something larger, a generalized theory of the attack that emphasized quick decision. Type "OODA loop" into your search engine to learn more. OODA stands for Observe, Orient, Decide, Act. It emphasized how making decisions faster than the enemy ("getting inside his OODA loop") could give our side a decisive advantage. Even as I say this, I'm shuddering a little at this brevity.

Boyd visited the Academy several times at Ray Leopold's invitation. When Ray passed the word around that John Boyd was coming to the Academy, Major Barry Watts, a fighter pilot teaching in the Department of Philosophy, was quite excited, and he brought Captain Steve Eszenyi from our Department in on some of his conversations with Boyd.

Boyd liked to try out his ideas on others, and Ray and Steve set up a brown bag lunch for Boyd to meet members of the History Department. In our Department, Major Bruce Grossetta, Major Phil Tate, and Lieutenant Colonel Jon Reynolds had all flown fighters in Vietnam, and other members of the Department knew centuries of military and aviation history. I was pretty good on air power during World War II and World War I,

so I joined the brown bags and the briefings of Boyd's drafts of "Patterns of Conflict." From these briefings he got good professional feedback to use when he prepared the next warp.

I mention those meetings with John Boyd, and my chance to absorb the main points of his thinking, because -- looking ahead to Afghanistan and the State Department's role in the civ-mil fight -- nothing could be done quickly. Every habit of mind, and thousands of strings on money, piled on delay after delay. Any notion that those of us in Afghanistan on the State side could "get inside" the Taliban's OODA loop was strangled in the crib.

Q: You mentioned crosswinds. Military winds from one direction. The other was ...

BISHOP: Yes, I've been speaking of the winds blowing over the Academy from new *military* thinking. One example of a wind, a crosswind, blowing across the Academy from the *academic* community would be the report of the President's Commission on Foreign Languages and Area Studies appointed by President Carter. I worked on the faculty response, which helped us with our thinking on those cadets who were in an area/regional track in the history major. There was always pressure on the curriculum to reduce time for languages, and the report of the President's Commission helped fend it off. Again, it was a very exciting time intellectually while I was there.

Here's another example of an academic wind. Because the first history course taken by cadets was World History -- formally, "Europe and the World Since 1500" -- our department was tuned in to academic debates on introductory history courses. The most popular introductory undergraduate textbook at colleges and universities in the U.S. was *Civilization Past and Present* by Wallbank and Taylor, first published in 1942. Subsequent editions were handsome indeed. However, the book was basically a series of chapters that went from area to area, discrete summaries of the history of different world regions. It had no overarching conceptual or thematic structure.

Our world history survey used *The World Since 1500: A Global History* by Leften Stavrianos. Stavrianos and William McNeill were the leading minds in the "world history" school of history -- emphasizing the interaction of regions -- and many members of our Department were early members of the new World History Association. It was a very teachable book. Later there was a new "global history" approach.

Stavrianos emphasized that the Seven Years War was really the first "world war" in that it was fought in Europe, North America, Central America, West Africa, South Asia, and the Philippines. This was because the civilizations of the world, isolated from each other before the age of exploration, had begun to interact. There was "interaction" and "response." Stavrianos said that in 1763 there was an "incipient global ecumene." Mention those three words to any former member of the Department of History, and laughter erupts! Some cadets only recognized one of those three words.

Members of the Academy faculty could be involved in lots of things. One of my friends from the Community Center Chapel was Captain Eric Jumper, teaching in the

Department of Aeronautics. He was a member of an international team investigating the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin.

In the Department, we had the chance to meet top scholars in military history who came for the annual Harmon lectures or for the military history symposia our Department organized. Each year we had a civilian Distinguished Visiting Professor. And of course we had many noted visitors to the Academy, and many sat around the table with us in our Department conference room. I note in passing that the smartest man I ever met was Josiah Bunting – VMI graduate, Rhodes Scholar, and later the superintendent of the Virginia Military Institute.

Q: Professors at American universities all debate “publish or perish.” What about at the Academy?

BISHOP: The first thing to say is that the Academy was a zealous teaching institution, with less emphasis on publishing.

Colonel Hurley strongly emphasized that we were hired both as historians and as role models for cadets. There was some very zealous, even dramatic, teaching, especially in the “lectinar” classrooms. Captain Ron Boston and Captain Tom Menza rented Chinese and Japanese costumes for their lessons on Asia in the World History survey. Captain Bruce Grossetta restaged an Aztec sacrifice at the front of a lectinar. No cadet will ever forget the moment when he yanked the heart out of the victim! Major Fred Shiner shot plastic airplanes across the lectinar to make points and keep cadets awake.

Our highly decorated Army officer, Major David Price, kept cadets in awe. The substance of History 202, Modern Warfare and Society, began with the American Revolution, but it fell to Major Price to cover warfare from the ancient Greeks through Frederick the Great in one opening lesson. Sprinting through two millennia in fifty minutes, major milestones in military history got about a minute each. When he reviewed the transition from pike to bayonet, though, he paused. “Shoot a man with a rifle, your heart thumps. Shoot a man with a pistol, you shiver and you shake. But ... cold steel!!!” He left the rest to cadets' overactive imaginations.

Even with the great emphasis on teaching, we were expected to do much more. All of us were advisors. All of us hosted cadets in our homes on weekends. The rated officers in the Department were also flying instructors in the light plane program at the airfield. Many members of the Department were assistant coaches or faculty mentors for the different athletic teams. One was “the father of Air Force Academy rugby.” Others were Associate Air Officers Commanding in the cadet squadrons. I picked up the normal load - - Associate AOC in a summer squadron, faculty member who joined cadets during navigation training, a member of the team that prepped the best cadets for the Rhodes Scholar competition, a member of the Middle East Studies Group. I identified all the Korean-American cadets in the Wing, and my wife and I hosted them at our home, giving them some Korean “comfort food” when they needed it.

Also, there weren't "office hours" posted on our doors. We were to be available to cadets at all times for EI, "extra instruction."

All that said, there's a point two. With so many members of the History Department fresh out of graduate school, with recently written theses and dissertations, most wanted to publish, even if it was to have publications on a c.v. for after retirement. I broke up my master's thesis on U.S.-Korea military relations in the nineteenth century. It became four articles in historical journals.

Three, members of the Academy faculty came from all the career fields of the Air Force, and they often used their time at the Academy to write on professional problems for the military journals. I wrote several: "Changing Discipline and the Non-Commissioned Officer" in *Sergeants*, "Reflections on a Year in Vietnam: Leadership, Followership, and Unit Spirit" in *Air Force*, "The Press and the Tet Offensive: A Flawed Institution Under Stress," in the *Air University Review*, and "American Forces in Foreign Cultures" in the *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*. I cannot help but mention that my leadership article was used at the Air War College for more than 20 years. And Colonel Hurley and I co-authored the 25-year history of the Department. So, we were a teaching department, but there was plenty of publishing going on, though in a different pattern than in a history department at a college or university.

Q: The Cold War was underway, the armed forces were, in a way, beginning their recovering from Vietnam, and it was a time of "detente." Did you feel this at the Academy?

BISHOP: Your mention of detente reminds me of an interesting few days. If part of detente was that the U.S. armed forces and the Soviet armed forces should get to know each other better, to ease distrust, what better focus for an early engagement than military history? Three leading Soviet military historians, Lieutenant General Pavel Zhilin, Major General A. I. Babin, and Stalingrad veteran Colonel Plotnikov, accompanied by an interpreter, came to the U.S. to meet counterparts. The Air Force Academy Department of History was one of their stops.

It fell to our Russian speaker, Major Carl Reddel, to give the Soviets a briefing on the Department of History. We wanted to put on a good show, of course, and Carl had a long briefing with the great-granddaddy of PowerPoint, viewgraph transparencies. After Carl's review of our three teaching areas, American History, Military History, and World History, General Zhilin asked "now, which course includes the Great Patriotic War and the victory of the Soviet Union over Fascism?" It was an excellent question, and I realized as I listened that we covered the war on the Eastern Front in one lesson in one course only -- not the answer General Zhilin hoped to hear. Carl answered the question straight, and I could see the two Russian generals were completely astonished, almost gasping for breath.

Part of the visit was for General Zhilin to give a lecture on the Great Patriotic War in one of the Academy's "lectinar" classrooms that held about 80 cadets. He must have had a

few double espressos, or maybe some morning vodka, because he was in a forceful and energetic mood as he compressed five bloody years into about 40 minutes of class. The interpreter was being given a workout, but he expertly fired off the translations without missing a note. General Zhilin's pointer was banging the map as the Soviet armies moved westward into Germany -- the great artillery barrages, the tanks, the infantry! -- and it finally smacked into Berlin. He let out a deep breath, and asked the cadets for questions.

Of course, the cadet who raised his hand was Cadet Clueless, who asked, "did the Normandy landings help ease some of the pressure on the Red Army as they fought in Stalingrad?" Those of us on the faculty who were looking on -- our hearts were in our throats.

General Zhilin fixed his gaze on the cadet and asked, sternly, "what was the date of the Normandy landings?" The cadet said, "June of 1944." And the General asked, "and what was the date of the victory at Stalingrad?" Cadet Clueless looked ... clueless, and one of his classmates whispered to him, "January of 1943." "So there you have your answer," the General said, once again amazed at American ignorance. He was in good form, I thought, not a Lieutenant General for nothing.

Q: What did you do during the summer terms?

BISHOP: A good question. All of us on the faculty could take some personal leave, a few weeks, perhaps, but we had to be involved in summer experiences.

The long suspense about whether women would be admitted to the Academy came to an end soon after I arrived, and it was announced that women would join the Class of 1980, entering in the summer of 1976. In the spring term of 1976 there were a number of large faculty gatherings, helping us get focused on the issue. Adding women to our classes didn't pose large problems for the faculty. We just had to set our minds right and assure we showed an accepting attitude. Our colleagues on the Commandant's side -- the cadet squadrons, the dorms, the military training program -- had to work their way through more issues. The same was true of the athletic programs.

By now there's an extensive literature on the admission of women at USAFA and the other academies. Things worked out differently at West Point, Annapolis, and USAFA as women entered not only the male culture of the schools, but also the different service cultures. Each school had some "best practices" and some not-so-best.

The women cadets in the Class of 1980 went through the six weeks of summer training, three on the aluminum campus followed by three weeks in the field at Jack's Valley. In both settings they were members of summer cadet squadrons. I volunteered to be an Associate Air Officer Commanding so that I could see the great historical experiment at first hand. I drew D-for-Demons Squadron in Jack's Valley, and I spent three weeks in tents with the incoming cadets, the cadre of upperclassmen, and other officers. There was military training, field skills, physical toughening in the high altitude, and runs and

marches. Going through the obstacle course with the M-1 rifle and bayonet was a culminating exercise.

P.s. The squadron's cadet commander was Edward Rice of the Class of 1977. He was highly poised and disciplined. We all knew, even when he was a cadet, that he would reach the highest levels of the service. When I was the Air Force Chief of Staff's POLAD, I met him again, wearing three stars on his shoulder as Commander of U.S. Forces-Japan. He's now the four-star commander of the Air Education and Training Command.

How many hours can you give me to discuss this?

By percentage in each squadron, more women than men reported to sick call each day, but that was because the men had been socialized in high school sports to ignore pain and mild injuries. The doctors agreed that the women were doing the right thing in having pains looked at. After all, pain is an indicator of something awry.

You could see in their faces that the military regimen was a shock to some of the women, but there were plenty of men showing the same stress and symptoms.

Collapsing an intense few weeks into a few sentences, I concluded that the Academy's system of military training could inculcate the military virtues into women just as well as it did for men.

In the summer of 1977 I volunteered to be a faculty chaperone for Aviation 463, the navigation short course for cadets. I took all the classes, joined them on their flights in the T-43, and kept an eye on them during the trip to Mather Air Force Base in California, where navigators trained. It was quite fascinating, giving me another window into the flying training that was so formational for the rated side of the Air Force. It also introduced me to the system of navigational aids that blankets the United States. Some of the course was quite difficult for me. Even today I'm foggy on how conic sections lay down on the spherical earth (I had not taken solid geometry or trig in high school). And shooting the sun from an aircraft in turbulent winds is quite difficult. Why too many of the X's on my map were a few miles off remains a mystery to me, but I can say I thoroughly enjoyed navigation.

Q: Didn't you also fit in some time at the Pentagon?

BISHOP: In the summer of 1978 I had two important experiences. I wanted to gain more knowledge about intercultural training. The professional organization in that area is the Society for Intercultural Education, Training, and Research (SIETAR), and I attended a two week course for intercultural trainers that SIETAR organized at Georgetown University. It was a good complement to the course for race relations trainers that I had attended at Osan Air Base at General Maloy's behest.

Then I went to the Pentagon for six weeks. I worked in "ISA," International Security Affairs. Michael Armacost was the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, and Air Force Brigadier General Thomas Pinckney was our direct boss. They needed an extra hand in the summer, a Korea hand, to work up the enormous briefing books for the annual ROK-U.S. Security Consultative Meeting, held in San Diego that year.

The ROKs asked us to give them virtually every weapon in our inventory, and the Pentagon staffs had to develop position papers on what we might agree to transfer. This required some fine judgments by specialists who understood how a particular weapon might fit into the defense of Korea, and whether the ROKs would be able to absorb the technology and the training. Getting positions and papers cleared took me all around the building, which crackled with energy as action officers strode down the hallways carrying "flimsies," color-coded carbon copies of papers that were used for clearances and edits.

A related issue that occupied everyone's time was preparing for the troop reductions in Korea that had been announced by President Carter. I gained a good respect for how carefully this was done, and I came away with an understanding of how we could deploy the remaining units in such a way as not to jeopardize the ROK.

So my experience at the Pentagon was good and useful, giving me a window on decision making at that level. As I left Washington, though, it occurred to me that when General Ginsburgh had told me that I should aim for the Air Staff or for the Academy, I had made the right choice. I looked around the Pentagon, and I saw 20,000 Olympic swimmers -- all trying to set new records in a pool of molasses.

In 1979, Major Bill Mitchell in the Department of Geography received a call from the Colorado Air National Guard, which was flying A-7s. They had been slated for a short summer NATO exercise deployment to Merzifon Air Base in Turkey. Did the Academy have anyone who knew about Turkey, who could brief the members of the Guard before their deployment?

I joined Bill's team that went to Denver once a week for six weeks, to give lectures on Turkey. I remember that the Colorado Guard was quite zealous in their preparation. Every men's room in the hangars had "Men's Room" in Turkish on the door. Underneath every sign in their offices and hangars -- "Maintenance," "Supply," "Commander," "No smoking" -- they placed a sign with the Turkish translation. Everyone learned the ranks, and how to count, and say a few sentences in Turkish. Bill gave useful cultural guidance. I still remember learning how to say "How many children do you have?" in Turkish. Bill jokingly told the Guardsman to say "ten," which would give each American real face with the Turks.

When the Guard returned, we heard what a great impression they had made with the Turks. Apparently a regular USAF fighter squadron from Spain had also been to the same Turkish base, and they had not made such a positive impression.

Stu, let me mention one other memory. Helping prepare a Department publication, I visited the illustrators in the Academy's audio-visual department. One of the older illustrators was Anzis Berzins. Perhaps you can recognize a Latvian name. We talked about the illustrations for the publication, and he showed me some items he worked on in his spare time. He was illustrating a booklet of Latvian folk and patriotic songs to use with Latvian-American young people, to keep alive the memory of the old country.

I asked him when he had come to the U.S., and he told me that he had entered the Latvian Foreign Service just before the beginning of the Second World War, and he was assigned to the Latvian legation in Washington. He was there when the Soviets occupied Latvia. I knew that the U.S. had never recognized the Soviet annexation of the Baltic republics, and I knew that the legations were still open in Washington. Mr. Berzins had indeed been kept on the Legation payroll -- funded by the U.S. from foreign assets money, as I recall -- through the war, but when the war ended the Legation had to let go most of its staff, and Mr. Berzins, no doubt from a well-educated and prominent family in Latvia, found himself an ordinary immigrant. He took up illustration. Here was another man to admire, one who lost his country and social standing, but still made his way on his talents. That he was working to keep the memory of the old republic alive was so commendable. I hope he lived to see Latvian independence in 1991.

Q: In the past, there have been controversies over improper proselytizing at the Air Force Academy. Did you see any of that?

BISHOP: The Academy and the issue of proselytizing by evangelical groups was after my time there, so I can't comment directly. I was teaching there in the late 1970s, and there was an evangelical organization, the Navigators, active among Academy cadets. The Navigators largely focused on young people in the work force. They were located in Colorado Springs, though, and they were quite open that they had an additional focus on the great national institution, the Academy, just up the road. They hoped they could lead cadets to Christ, and sharpen the feelings of those who were already believers. Among the cadets, you would find both those who were unchurched and those that were religious already, just like America. The Navigators were not coercive in any way, but they were a presence at the Academy, perhaps an indicator of things to come.

Like any Air Force base, the Academy had a structure to support those cadets and members with religious beliefs, the chaplaincy. In the great tradition of the Chaplain corps, there was no proselytizing on their part. As far as what the students learned in their courses, where questions of values might have come up, it would have been in the Philosophy Department. Now looking back, I can see some seeds of later trouble, but at the time there wasn't any.

If I can editorialize about undergraduate teaching, there are some academics who think that it is their job to challenge everything the students have ever learned. This includes challenging what they were taught by their parents, challenging received religious beliefs, and challenging national narratives. The latter is fine, but I was always reluctant to consciously try to overturn what parents had taught their sons and daughters who became

cadets. Religion provides a case in point. I would want Mormon young people to know (and most of them knew) that most question the historical foundations of their faith -- Joseph Smith finding and translating the tablets in upstate New York, say -- but I would never ridicule or push the cadets against their parents' teachings. That would be going too far. The same should be true of classroom teaching about Catholic or evangelical beliefs.

Q: As all this was going on, your wife was learning about the U.S.

BISHOP: That process began some while we lived in Columbus, but Jemma will never forget how she was welcomed by the other members of the Department of History and their wives. She joined the Officers Wives' Club singing group, "The Skylarks," which performed in Colorado Springs and Denver. The Skylarks director gave her some lessons.

Of course, Jemma made friends among the Korean immigrants in Colorado Springs, many of whom we remain in contact with today. She also found that her bilingual abilities were in demand. She became a contract interpreter for the El Paso County government and its courts, and from time to time attorneys would ask her to interpret in local depositions and claims. They valued her work not only because she did a good job with the two languages, but also because she interpreted just what was said, back and forth, without using her position to shade answers in favor of one side or the other. There's a lot of social pressure from other immigrants to do that, she found. Also, the city government asked her to translate its new examination for massage therapists -- they were tightening standards -- and we spent some time going back and forth to Denver to make sure from medical professionals that the examination questions were translated correctly.

My up close acquaintance with the Korean immigrants in Colorado Springs -- I even sang in Korean with the Korean Presbyterian Church choir -- gave me some insights into the immigration experience that would prove valuable when I was in the Foreign Service later. I published a series of articles on Koreans in the U.S. in *The Korea Times* in 1978.

Jerome attended Pine Valley School first, and then Corpus Christi School in Colorado Springs. Our sons John Patrick and Edward were born at the Academy hospital, in 1977 and 1979.

Q: The Academy was your last assignment in the Air Force, and you went into the Foreign Service from there. How did you make that decision?

BISHOP: We had a Foreign Service Officer (old FS-5, now FS-3) in the Department, Edward P. Brynn. This is the Ed Brynn who became Ambassador to Burkina Faso and Ghana; he's now the State Department historian. Commissioned through AFROTC at Georgetown, released for graduate school at the University of Dublin, he had a Ph.D. in history, which was quite unusual at the time. Colonel Hurley had gotten wind of him while Ed was still in graduate school, pulled the right strings in the personnel system, and Ed taught at the Academy when he was a second lieutenant! After his required four years in the Air Force, though, he entered the Foreign Service. Rotating back to the U.S. from an assignment in Sri Lanka, he wanted to avoid Washington, so he volunteered for the

faculty, this time as an FSO. The Foreign Service was thus well represented at the Academy with FS-5 Edward P. Brynn.

I arrived at the Academy with a little more than six years in the Air Force, and while I was enjoying my wonderful assignment, I had to decide whether I was going to stay in the Air Force for the full career, or not. I really liked teaching. I felt I was in my element. This was where I could really make a great contribution.

But as I looked ahead, there was only one colonel in each department. The colonel was always a rated officer, an aviator, so that all heads of departments appropriately role-model flying and command. I was not eligible for this path.

The Department did offer to send me back to school for a Ph.D., which meant I would have tenure at the Academy and spend the remaining years of a 20-year career on the faculty. It was a pretty attractive deal, but what I foresaw was that at the twenty-year point I would be a lieutenant colonel. I could not be promoted to colonel because I could never be chosen to be the head of the department. I could not become Department head because I was not a rated officer. I would have a Ph.D. in history, yes. But at the end of 21, 22, or 23 years of service I would be a lieutenant colonel with a Ph.D. looking for a job in a university history department. Given the anti-military prejudice in academe in the wake of Vietnam, I sensed that what was ahead for me would be teaching at a community college. That was not appealing.

I knew the Foreign Service from my association with Ken Yates and Phil Harley at the USIS Center in Kwang Ju. Ed Brynn was full of tales about the wonder of Sri Lanka. So I took the Foreign Service examination in the 1976 cycle. I recall driving to Denver, sneaking out of the Academy in civvies, incognito. You could never admit at the Academy -- where you were expected to be a role model as an officer -- that you might be thinking about doing something else. As I sat in the exam hall, hoping to be anonymous, I noticed that three other officers from our Department came in to take the examination as well. Ed Brynn was evidently recruiting as well as teaching. Of the four of us, two went to the orals, again in Denver. I was the one who passed.

Q: When did you take the orals?

BISHOP: It was 1977, I think. It lasted about an hour and a half in a hotel room in Denver. Three officers were on the panel. The chairman was Philip Wilcox, who later of course became Ambassador at Large for Counter-Terrorism. They passed me.

That summer I was in Washington, so I thought I would visit HR to learn more about the candidate register and hiring numbers. The CDO I met was John Ford. He first told me congratulations because 36,000 had taken the written exam, but in the end the Department offered commissions to only 200, me included. Looking over my record, he said it was clear I was most qualified to be a political officer. He told me, though, that the Department intended to take only six new political officers that year, and I had not made the top six. He said we're trying to help you out and get you in as a consular officer.

He was a good judge of the system, because in that cycle I did get the call to join the Foreign Service in the consular cone. I said that seemed like a good way to start in the Foreign Service, but when would I be able to move on to something else? They said no, we're offering you a commission in the consular cone, and if I entered I would develop as a consular officer for the rest of my career. My reply was "no."

I said "no," and I took the exam again the next year. This time I asked to be considered for the U.S. Information Agency. I passed the written examination and again passed the orals, again in Denver. And I took the exam a third year, just in case I needed to extend my eligibility. In any case, USIA offered me a commission. I exchanged letters with Ken Yates, then in Afghanistan. He told me about the importance of USIA's work, and I decided to go ahead.

While I was getting my name on the register for the Foreign Service, there were things going on in the Air Force. My year group of officers, commissioned in 1968, was, in the view of Air Force personnel planners, way too large, and they decided our outsize year group must be thinned out, reduced to almost half its size as things turned out. This was a "RIF," reduction in force, and there were brutal cuts, using promotion or non-promotion to major as the vehicle. I could relate all the ins and outs of the system used to decimate the 1968 year group using a much-hated and eventually short-lived "1-2-3" yearly evaluation, but it's still painful for me. Coming in as the youngest officer in the Department of History had some unintended adverse timing effects in my case.

We were to be given two bites at the apple. I did not make major on the first go-around. Asking for advice, I visited the senior Public Affairs officer at the Academy, Lieutenant Colonel Bob Hunter. I told him that I had begun to think and write about American forces in foreign cultures, and the cultural dimensions of war, and if I thought I could make a real contribution to Air Force thinking in this area, I might stay in the Air Force in the hope of being promoted the next year and continuing to work on this. He understood perfectly everything I was saying about the Air Force's failure to understand foreign cultures, but he was frank. "This is a 'fly and fight' Air Force. No one is thinking about this." He was telling me there was no institutional appreciation for what I was thinking, so there would be no career path and no promotions.

I decided to leave rather than wait another year. Even as I submitted the paperwork, assignment offers came in: to teach the COIN course at the Air Force Special Operations School, to return to Ohio State to earn a Ph.D. and then become tenured faculty at the Academy, to be a Protocol Officer for foreign officers visiting the Pentagon, or to go to Korea to work at Panmunjom on the Armistice Commission. The last offer was the most tempting, but I didn't change my mind about leaving the Air Force.

As I drove from the Academy reservation for the last time, I was, of course, looking forward to the Foreign Service, but I was discouraged because I had not been promoted. I saw my faculty colleague Jon Reynolds a little while ago -- he had gone on to become a general officer and Defense Attaché to Beijing -- and he told me that whenever my name

came up in conversation he would say -- “Don Bishop. Not good enough to be an Air Force major, apparently, but so good he became the Foreign Policy Advisor to the Chief of Staff.” It was a nice thing to hear.

Q: Your years on active duty in the Air Force are coming to an end. Do you have any reflections on how the Air Force prepared you for the Foreign Service?

BISHOP: The first thing to say is that Foreign Service Officers have to know our own country, the United States, well, very well. I'd had the chance to travel when I was young. I studied American history as an undergraduate. In the Air Force I lived and traveled in the east, the south, and the west. The Air Force gave me a fuller view of America. I don't mean this only as a matter of geography. The Air Force exposed to the wonderful variety of those who live in our country, Americans!

The second thing to say is that diplomacy is one element of national power. I was a better diplomat for my experience with another element, military power.

Third, I was in the Air Force for eleven years, but until I got to the Academy, when I began to focus on professional military education, I was not on any fixed career track. My formal Air Force specialties were Administration and Public Affairs. My records had “special duty identifiers” as a historian and as an instructor. I had been in the Military Airlift Command, the Pacific Air Forces, the Air University, and the Academy. I had had eight commanders in my first seven years.

What did you do in the Air Force, Daddy? I was ... a generalist. I had gone from job to job, specialty to specialty, command to command, and done whatever was handed to me. Other officers developed as aviators, or maintenance officers, or personnel officers, or intelligence officers. My Air Force years were different. Indeed, my Air Force career had unfolded along a line more similar to the Foreign Service, where officers are constantly thrown into new regions, new cones, new problems, and onto task forces. The Foreign Service likes officers who are “quick studies.” Usually life rewards specialization and depth, but I was developing differently, in a way that shaped me for the variety of challenges a “generalist” encounters in the Foreign Service.

INTO THE FOREIGN SERVICE, 1979-1981 **Public Affairs Trainee, U.S. Information Agency**

I had a reporting date to join the U.S. International Communication Agency in October, 1979.

In retrospect I made good decisions to leave the Air Force and to join USICA, which resumed being USIA a few years later. Most applicants for the Foreign Service dream of the political cone, but I soon came to realize that incoming political officers might spend 15 years writing cables. Political and economic officers operate on their own horsepower for all that time, and few supervise anyone. It's rather solitary. USIA, on the other hand, gave me management responsibilities right away. If you have people working for you, it

extends your reach. I found myself quite at home in the more bicultural and more management-focused atmosphere of USIA.

Q: As I've done these interviews, I have also been struck by is how much time political officers spend writing about things, with their writing going through a lot of review, screening, and editing. I was a consular officer, and we made a lot of decisions.

BISHOP: As the spouse of a Consular Associate who worked on the visa line, I quite agree -- consular officers make a lot of decisions. In USIS, we were supervising people, developing programs, writing an annual Country Public Affairs Plan, speaking in public on the record, and spending money.

Q: So, you came to Washington and the U.S. Information Agency.

BISHOP: Yes, except that you remember that for about four years, USIA had a different name, the U.S. International Communication Agency, USICA. I arranged things so that my first day in the Foreign Service followed my last day in the Air Force. We eventually rented a townhouse on Tiverton Lane in Springfield, Virginia, off Old Keene Mill Road, next to St. Bernadette's Catholic Church.

I was a member of the fourth USICA class. There were ten classes of new FSOs during USICA's short existence. Sixteen of us were sworn in by the USICA director, Ambassador John Reinhardt. We ran parallel with the 144th State A-100 class, and did some exercises together.

We were in the hands of the Training Division. The civil service officer that ran the training of new FSOs in USIA was Robert Kohls. As an academic he had "written the book" on intercultural adaptation. He was brilliant. The course was superb. His interests matched mine, and we became good friends.

Q: What was your impression of your fellow student officers, and of USIA at that time?

BISHOP: My class had quite a mix of people, some coming in from academe, some having taught, some from journalism. I was the only one with a military background. I was a little older because I was 34 at the time, but I wasn't the oldest. We had only one woman in the class. I had the shortest haircut.

Our class reflected the mix of backgrounds that characterized USIA. When the Agency was formed in 1953, it drew a diverse group of people -- some journalists, some broadcasters, some military people, some academics -- to start telling America's story to the world.

My classmates included Bob Callahan, now ambassador to Nicaragua, Greg Lagana, Paul Malamud, Hugo Kottler, Bob Andresen, Jeff Murray, Michael Seidenstriker, John Ronay, Ed Platte, David Ebinger, Laura Livingston, and others. So we had a fine introduction to Public Diplomacy, and then most of us went into language training.

Getting to know USIA during our initial training, I found that the P (Programs) and E (Education and Cultural Affairs) bureaus were full of fascinating specialists – the photo people, the A-V people, the mopix people, the magazine people, the exhibits people, the Wireless File writers, the librarians, and the English teaching people to name a few. USIA was quite a congenial crowd, with everyone interested in this or that part of communication with foreign audiences.

It was a very thick organization. If there was a communication or media problem anywhere in the world, USIA had somebody to work on it. There were very fast press reaction people. The Voice of America was part of USIA at that time, and there were Foreign Service Officers working at VOA, supervising language services and insuring that VOA editorials reflected the latest foreign policy positions of the United States. The magazine division was huge and influential, and there were the people who ran exchanges. All this was done on a budget of about one billion dollars a year. It was a small organization by Washington standards, but it was cohesive and had high morale. The Agency's orchestrated response to the shootdown of KAL flight 007 in 1983 showed real zeal, professionalism, and responsiveness.

The Foreign Service Officers ran overseas programs, and the specialists I've just mentioned were Civil Service. I didn't notice any particular tension between these two groups in the Agency. I didn't hear people complaining that the Foreign Service dumped on the Civil Service, with one exception. The career language service broadcasters at the Voice of America didn't like having their upward mobility blocked by Foreign Service supervisors of the language services.

I suppose I didn't see it clearly at first, but USIA had already begun its decline.

Q: I always found relationships between State and USIA officers at embassies and consulates were very close, even though the USIA officers had their own training and their own personnel and assignments system. For the training part, what were you taught?

BISHOP: Yes, this is a good place to say something about how we were taught to think about USIA's work. One of the most significant speakers was Allen Carter, a recently retired officer who had boldly shaped USIS Japan in the mid-1970s. His thinking and USIS-Japan's organization lay at the heart of what I would now call USIA's organizational doctrines, Public Diplomacy's best practices in the late 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s.

I use the word "doctrine" in the way we used it in the Air Force, the way it is used in the other armed forces. It's the considered professional template, rules, or guidelines for how an organization best attains its goals. Every Air Force officer understands its doctrine -- that air assets in any theatre are most effective when they are commanded by one air leader, rather than being organized into "penny packets" under many commanders, not all of them airmen. Every Marine Corps officer knows that the entire Corps is shaped around

the doctrine of “forcible entry from the sea,” organizationally expressed in scalable Marine Air-Ground-Logistics Task Forces. The whole Corps trains this way, and using it another way slackens its power. Beneath the overarching service doctrines, there are artillery doctrines, or counterinsurgency doctrines, or airlift doctrines, or submarine doctrines.

USIA had its doctrines, too, though it didn’t use the word “doctrine,” and I never found them written down in one place. I can add the editorial comment that in the consolidation of USIA with State, Public Diplomacy programs and resources were no longer internally aligned with the doctrines USIA had hammered out over the years, and doctrinal confusion has weakened the effectiveness of Public Diplomacy in the twenty-first century. But that's getting ahead of our story.

Q: So tell me more.

BISHOP: The communication model we were taught in the USICA course for new officers featured three boxes: Issue → Audience → Program. The doctrine was to decide first on the issue we needed to discuss in the countries we were stationed. Let's use an example: better protection of intellectual property.

We then should determine the audiences we needed to reach: Publishers? Economic and business journalists? Artists and musicians? Law school professors? Parliamentarians? Different approaches were needed for different audiences.

Then, having identified an issue and an audience, we should organize a “program”: a seminar, a conference, an electronic dialog (a long distance telephone call), a workshop, a U.S. speaker, a Worldnet dialog, a Fulbrighter to teach IPR at the leading law school, or perhaps simply a speech on the topic by the Ambassador.

The “issues” part of this model, the topics for its first box, were outlined in the annual Country Public Affairs Plan written by each PAO, approved by the Ambassador. Annually each PAO determined the “communications tensions” between the U.S. and the other nation, and then used the rest of the three-box program planning model to address them.

As for “audiences,” posts and FSNs always had “cuff lists” of contacts in various areas. The computerized Distribution and Records System (DRS) pioneered in Japan promised to systematize these contacts. Influential people would be entered in the database, which tracked their profession, level, age, language ability, interests, and so on. We were shown how, in small countries, PAO’s used a bank of IBM cards with punched edges to maintain their database, threading a long thin metal rod through the punches to select individuals for programs. The same cards had the names and addresses printed on them using ditto ink, so after an individual's card was selected, the same card printed the addresses for the announcements or invitations.

I later saw that in Japan and Korea, a group of dedicated FSNs could maintain a highly useful and frequently used computerized database. But the assignment of FSNs to this task was quite uneven around the world, and then, as now, audience identification and tracking is one of the consistent weaknesses of Public Diplomacy.

For the third box, “program,” we could draw on all the programs and templates that American Public Diplomacy had developed over the years. The Fulbright and speaker programs, for instance, were good ways to reach academic audiences. Sports programs and youth exchanges could be brought to bear if the target audience was youth. USIA's different publications and magazines could reach a variety of elite audiences. WorldNets and electronic dialogs were good programs to reach journalists.

The most common mistake made by Public Diplomacy officers in the field -- a mistake egged on by the staff in the P and E Bureaus in USICA and USIA, who want their own programs to have visibility -- is to decide on a program modality and then search for an audience and issue. “Let's do a Worldnet!” “The Ambassador has to give a speech!” “Let's accept this offer of a jazz quartet.” I call this the Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland Theory of Public Diplomacy -- “let's have a show.” It lacks discipline.

We were definitely taught that we were not in the business of “culture” but rather the business of “policy.” “We don't do culture, we do policy” was the mantra. Cultural events and programs might be part of an overall program, leavening a post's activities and an Embassy's public posture with events that showcased America. These cultural activities were, though, just “leaven.” Our real business was to focus on policy – economic, trade, commercial, human rights, defense, and so on. Culture was the fluff, policy was the freight. A seminar on the need to reduce non-tariff barriers during the Uruguay Round, according to the doctrine, was worth more than programming visiting clog dancers.

There were other PD practices. For instance, USIS would never pay for media coverage, or buy advertising. Events, large or small, arranged by USIS were always free. There would be no advertising in our publications.

Country Public Affairs Plans, and later Mission Program Plans, were conscious efforts to define bilateral foreign policy priorities. Usually there were four or five large issues like democratization, economic liberalization, global issues, development, and so on. Each one of these would have some country-specific subheads. Thinking about economic liberalization in one country, the largest need might be to address protectionism, perhaps, but in another country the need was for programs to wean the nation off domestic subsidies for its farmers.

It was customary to add another goal, variously described as “Understanding American Society” or later “Foundation of Trust,” that captured the need to place policy issues in a larger American social and political context. We were taught, though, that if most of a post's activities were being justified under the “Understanding American Society” goal, it

was a weak program. It meant the PAO was doing comfortable things with comfortable audiences, not addressing the hard issues.

Along these lines during our training course, one speaker told us that a PAO's most important quality was the ability to say "no." He was right, I found. The demands on a Public Affairs Section at an Embassy or Consulate are virtually limitless.

Local people are full of good ideas for you to implement, for you to spend your time on, for you to spend Uncle Sam's money. Give us English teaching for high school students. Bring plays. We need a children's library too. We need to know more about modern art. Can you teach a course on American history at our university? Can you see my son every week to give him practice with his English (this from the mayor or province governor). Send us a speaker on American poetry; can Alan Ginsburg come?

Similarly, your Embassy colleagues are full of ideas for how Public Affairs can help them do their jobs. Bring us a speaker on WTO accession. Can you send us ten pages of local media translations each day, rather than two? Send my most primo contact to the U.S. as an International Visitor. Can you send my friend the painter to the U.S. as a Fulbrighter (this from the Ambassador's wife)? And so on.

In a world of unlimited resources, unlimited money and unlimited staff time, each one of these proposals could have some kind of useful result. The reality, though, is money is short and time is dear. This is why we were taught that the first important management trait was "the ability to say 'no,'" shorthand for the ability to set program priorities that responded to our national goals in the country.

Another element of the doctrine derived from the fact that USIA had largely given up the heady dreams of its early, well-funded days -- of communicating directly to the world's peoples. By 1979, the old Mopix units were mostly disbanded. The jeep caravans -- with projector, generator, and a sheet to place on the side of a building in a village -- were only memories. The Exhibits Division that had conceptualized and built American pavilions at international exhibitions was reduced and dispirited. Films like "Day of Lightning, Day of Drums" or "The Harvest" were history. USIS Centers no longer hosted the English conversation clubs I had seen in Korea. Broadcasting was done by VOA and the surrogate radios, not by USIA.

The doctrinal result of this narrowing of focus, driven by limited resources, was that USIS was in the business of "two-step" communication. We met professors and deans, and they would reach students. We met editors and reporters, and they would write for readers. We met television journalists and anchors, and they would reach viewers. We met parliamentarians, and they would write laws. The two-step model was, no doubt, an "elite" model. Make no mistake, USIA had the old ambition to communicate directly with the world's peoples, but the two-step doctrine reflected a reality -- that the Agency would never be funded at the scale necessary for direct communication.

That Washington responded to and organized its efforts to support the Country Public Affairs Plans prepared by posts reflected one more principle in the doctrine: Public Diplomacy was to be “field driven,” not “Washington driven.” Posts would only rarely be pressured to organize activities to support a particular administration's latest initiative. Rather the Country Public Affairs Plan set priorities. If the latest wrinkle in U.S. support for Middle East peace was not an issue in Argentina, no one rode the PAO in Buenos Aires to demonstrate her fidelity to the administration's priorities; she could work on the issues she and the Ambassador had put into the Argentina-specific Country Public Affairs Plan.

Another doctrinal point: Officers shaping annual program plans were to be guided by the Country Public Affairs Plan and by bilateral foreign policy priorities – not by their own background and interests. The story we heard that illustrated this doctrinal principle came from Thailand. An officer who was a fan of square dancing had used the American Centers to launch square dancing in Thailand. As a Cultural Affairs initiative, this had some merit because square dancing was American, but it didn't press against different local standards of propriety. The problem was that when this officer left, the square dancing initiative collapsed. Again, USIS programs were to be grounded on long-term issues in the Country Public Affairs Plan and focused on discrete audiences. Their long term continuance should not depend on the individual talent or interest of an individual officer.

There were minor doctrines as well as major ones. For instance, we learned that when we brought speakers to a foreign country, or organized seminars, or set up electronic dialogs with American experts, not every speaker under our auspices had to agree with every policy of the current Administration. If a speaker went off message on this or that, we were making a secondary point about robust democratic debate over policy issues. And it was the job of the accompanying American FSO -- an FSO was to attend every event involving a visiting speaker -- to chime in and to voice the Administration's particular point of view.

Q: Was there much “career development” counseling?

BISHOP: USIA had its own sequencing for the training of new Foreign Service Officers, different than State's. As we entered, most of the counseling aimed at getting us to our first two posts.

New USIA FSOs were sent for one year to a training post, usually at one of our larger embassies. This was so the new officer could be exposed to all the different parts of Public Diplomacy, both on the “information” and the “cultural affairs” side. The year at the first post also included some months of rotation through State sections and the Foreign Commercial Service.

Afterwards, a new officer went on to a second post in a junior officer position, usually as an Assistant Information Officer or Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer. Generally, I found that new State officers were jealous of the USIA system.

Beyond, the usual USIA assignment pattern was three consecutive overseas tours “out” followed by one tour in Washington -- three out, one back, three out, one back. In USIA, being in the Foreign Service meant the focus of your career, and your rewards in the promotion system, came from your overseas postings. If you were a USIA Foreign Service Officer, most of your career was going to be in foreign places. The Marines say, “no one joins the Marine Corps to stay home.” In the USIA Foreign Service, the word “foreign” was the one that was underlined.

A State officer who wanted tours overseas, overseas, overseas could get the assignments, but there was a default career track that was out, back, out, back. To advance, State officers should log a lot of Washington time.

I found that USIA, in general, had a good and transparent system for bids and assignments, and the career counselors, under the guidance of the Director of Personnel, Harlan Rosacker, an unsung hero, really worked to fit an individual into the right job – for promotion and to prepare, in time, to be a PAO.

Q: I also noticed that USIA officers seemed to have the most fun and major responsibilities at a very early time in their careers. The problem was that when they came back to Washington, they were considered to be just a support person -- supply sergeants, if you will, as opposed to a political officer. And Washington is where careers were made.

BISHOP: You're right that the jobs in Washington for USIA officers were not very interesting and not close to policymaking. Remember that USIA officers could not bid on jobs at State, so none of us returned to Washington to serve on a country desk, or on the line in the Secretariat, or on a task force -- the jobs that advanced careers and staged an officer, in time, to become a DCM, DAS, or Ambassador.

Now I'm a member of the State Department, in the Senior Foreign Service, and I understand that my lack of Washington time (because my career was mostly overseas in the USIA pattern) closed some doors to me. It's not anyone's fault, it just is.

Q: So, how did this unfold for you as a new officer?

BISHOP: I remember one conversation with the personnel officer who handled the assignments of new officers. She was asking me whether I was more attracted to the “information” side of USIA's work, or to the “cultural” side. During the conversation, I recall telling her that being fresh out of the Air Force as a public affairs officer, every day's training suggested to me ways that USIA and military commands overseas could be cooperating -- ship visits, community relations, press work, and so on. I told her that I thought I could make a contribution in marrying up the two worlds of military and Foreign Service public affairs.

She looked at me strangely, and she asked, “when do you think you would have time for this? You'll be so busy with our own programs.” She posed her question in terms of time, but I knew she was really asking why I imagined this was important, because time yields to priorities. I was surprised that she had no sense that better civilian and military cooperation might improve our position in the world. Alas, I found that many USIA FSO's had the same attitude that she did.

I had figured that I was God's gift to Korea policy, but there were no assignments to Korea for my class. It was very vexing, and unusual, because the Korea program always needed people. I hadn't had any formal course, but I could get along in Korean, perhaps at the 1-0+ level. Not able to go to Korea, I bid on the nearest place to get myself staged for Korea next time. There was one opening in Hong Kong. I bid on the job and got it.

HONG KONG, BRITISH CROWN COLONY, 1981-1983 **Assistant Information Officer (PRC Program Support)**

My assignment to Hong Kong did not follow the usual pattern of assignments for new USIA officers that I described earlier. I would instead spend my rotational training year and my first line assignment at the same post. That made sense because they were going to train me to speak Mandarin. After the first, rotational year in Hong Kong I was to become the Assistant Information Officer (PRC Program Support) at the same post.

The U.S. had established a Liaison Office in Beijing in 1972 in the step-by-step plan to establish full diplomatic relations with the PRC. It was President Carter who finally broke relations with the Republic of China, meaning Taiwan, and established formal diplomatic relations with the PRC. The U.S. Liaison Office in Beijing thus became the Embassy in 1979, and we began to establish consulates one by one.

When I arrived in Hong Kong at the beginning of 1981, we had only a few USIA officers in China, and the local employees of the Embassy who were working on Public Diplomacy programs were inexperienced. There were many things that just couldn't be done in China. The idea was that an AIO in Hong Kong would support the posts and the programs in the PRC. That was the job I was headed for. I replaced Diane Johnston.

Q: How much language training did you receive? Was it in Mandarin or Cantonese?

BISHOP: The language designation for the AIO position was S-2, R-2. Since the focus of my work was to be China rather than Hong Kong itself, and since there were far more positions for China officers that were Mandarin- rather than Cantonese-designated, I studied Mandarin.

I went through the spring term of Mandarin at FSI, spent more class time at an institute on DuPont Circle, and went out to Hong Kong in January of 1981. During my time at FSI, classmates included Jeff Bader, Peter Tomsen, and Marshall Adair. Kathy Stephens was a few rooms away studying Cantonese.

My term at FSI was interesting, not only for language. Li Tsung-mi and Ouyang Chao were the leading teachers with long experience. They were originally from China, but they had spent some time in Taiwan after 1949 before going on to the U.S. There was a younger group of teachers who had come more recently from China. There were tensions between the two groups. They were political and social at heart, but they presented linguistically. The older teachers were not in touch with the changes in language that had taken place in China since they left thirty years before.

I recall that one day all of us were assembled to learn to sing the national anthems – the Republic of China’s “San Min Zhu Yi” and the People’s Republic of China’s “Volunteers.” When we sang “Volunteers,” I can remember one of the older teachers making sure everyone could see her frowning. Professor Li took it in stride. He and Joseph Wang had been in the Nationalist Army during the war, and at that time “Volunteers” was simply a patriotic song. Professor Li said out loud, “Ah, this reminds me of fighting the Japanese!” -- a deft way of straddling the political chasm between the two groups of teachers.

Q: You arrived in Hong Kong ...

BISHOP: In late January, 1981, the Friday before Chinese New Year. We checked into the Hilton because our apartment was not ready, and five of us spent a few weeks in the hotel.

At any other time of the year, Queen’s Road Central was jammed with traffic, but during the holidays, we could walk down the middle of the street while the wind blew odd pieces of cardboard and paper around like tumbleweeds. The downtown was an empty canyon of marble, steel, and glass. The Consulate was closed. We certainly couldn’t afford to eat at the hotel, so for a week we ate at the one or two noodle stands that remained open.

Harry Britton was PAO, Jim McHale was IO, Pat Corcoran was CAO, and George Miller was Publications Officer. Tom Shoesmith was the Consul General, the Principal Officer. In China, John Thomson was PAO, Tony Sariti was CAO, and Mark Crocker was IO. David Hess and Carl Chan were the BPAOs in Shanghai and Guangzhou, respectively.

Before the PAO at the Consulate, Harry Britton, could have me as the AIO for PRC Support, he had to honor the requirement for rotational training, first around the Consulate, then with various USIS functions. He had written up a plan on the back of an envelope -- a week in foreign Commercial Service, two weeks in the Political Section, two weeks in the Economic Section, and so on, to be followed by some months working each of the USIA portfolios -- information, cultural affairs, administration, publications.

The post’s personnel officer looked at my record, however, and she ruled out a series of short stints in different sections of the Consulate. I was older, and I’d done things. She said that my rotation would be for five months, and I would spend those five months in the Front Office as Staff Assistant to Consul General Shoesmith. The Deputy Principal

Officer was Nat Bellocchi. These were terrific people to work for, and I would see the work of the Foreign Service from a higher perch.

A month or so into the work in the Front Office, Nat went on home leave. He suggested that I work at his desk while he was gone. Some weeks later, he returned, but then he had to leave again because his mother passed away. For a month and a half or two months, then, I was sitting at the DCM's desk. I got an even closer view of Tom Shoesmith's work.

Q: Duty as a Staff Assistant usually goes to sharp officers. This was a vote of confidence in you.

BISHOP: Yes, I was lucky to have the opportunity.

This is not quite chronological, but when Nat Bellocchi finished his assignment as Deputy Principal Officer, he was replaced by Dick Williams who came from being the first Consul General to Guangzhou. Dick was very good and accessible, with plenty of tales to tell that always had lessons for a young officer. There might be stories about his time on the 1950s television program "The Quiz Kids," or about his various Foreign Service assignments. He was a very good briefer of visitors. It was from him I first heard the Cultural Revolution described as China's equivalent to the Holocaust.

Q: Hong Kong, it seems to me, was a unique post. It was located in a growing, trading city, but I gather that most of the work was focused on China.

BISHOP: I arrived at a time of transition. Hong Kong was in its closing days as a China watching and China listening post. Much of the actual "listening" was done by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service in a building across the street from the Consulate. It was the Consulate's Political and Economic sections that did the analysis of broadcasts, China's newspapers, and the news organizations in Hong Kong that followed the PRC line.

No FSO had gone to Hong Kong because she was interested in the city, or British policy, or the administration of the colony. The Consulate was rather a base for China hands to gather and analyze information on the PRC. Only one economic officer of the dozen some in the Economic Section, Joan Plaisted, worried about Hong Kong's issues like textile quotas, for instance.

The China watching in Hong Kong had its glory days in the decades before, when the first task of a junior officer was to walk over to the Bank of China office and to the PRC-owned department stores to read the red banners on the building walls. These PRC organizations were affected by all the political campaigns in China, so the banners provided an indirect glimpse of what was happening inside China. This was a small task, of course. The major work of the two sections was wringing out the meanings of every leadership speech and every People's Daily editorial to discern political and economic trends.

This China watching from Hong Kong didn't completely end when the Embassy was established in Beijing. Each day's copy of *Ming Pao* was still scoured at the Consulate for what the Chinese might be indirectly signaling via a newspaper they owned in Hong Kong. I wrote a speech for Consul General Levin that was a tour d'horizon of U.S. policy in Asia, which he gave to a group of businessmen, and the next day he sent out a cable highlighting what parts of the speech had been favorably reported by *Ming Pao*, signaling us that these issues were open for more discussion with the PRC.

Even so, the shift was clear. By the time I arrived the China watchers were going directly to China, and you could sense the letdown as the Consulate lost its major raison d'être. There was a slow mission deflation. USIS had had a large role in Hong Kong in its China watching days, producing lengthy press translations and analyses. The bound volumes of years of translations were on the shelves, but USIS had let go of that mission.

One of the China watching traditions continued, however, an exchange of April 1 cables between Washington and the China posts. I had not been clued into this tradition when I read a fascinating political analysis from the Embassy in Beijing in 1981, reporting on “behind the screen” maneuvers by senior leaders. It wasn't till I got to the line about one of the octogenarian members of the Standing Committee of the Politburo having an affair with the tennis player Hu Na that I realized I was being spoofed by a cable sent on April Fool's Day.

I had a chance to get a feel for China-watching in the past when I met Father Lazlo Ladany, the Hungarian Jesuit who had some rooms at the Matteo Ricci Center at Hong Kong University. He was not a person who was out and about, and it took me some time to get someone to introduce me to him. We spent an afternoon together in his room.

Father Ladany was a legend among China hands. He had been expelled from China after 1949. He set up shop in Hong Kong, and he made it his life's work to listen to every broadcast coming out of China. He listened to central and provincial broadcasts, and he closely examined the issues by comparing how the different Chinese news and editorial writers in different towns covered the same stories and stated the same party lines.

Interestingly, his view of PRC broadcasts was grounded on a Thomist view of truth. Even propaganda and lies reflect underlying truths, he reasoned, and it was possible to discern the facts on the ground in China by listening to various versions and rewrites of the PRC's falsehoods and applying some Jesuit logic. His *China News Analysis* was legendary among the China hands, six or eight pages every few weeks, when there was no direct contact between China and so much of the rest of the world.

I could read his analyses in his newsletter, so our conversation focused elsewhere. His own homeland had become Communist. His mission land had become Communist. He had immense affections for Hungary, China, and for Hong Kong, but his “home” was the Society of Jesus, and the aim of his life was not to serve a nation, or an ideology, but rather Christ and ... the truth. So he listened, and thought, and wrote. What an admirable

person, what an admirable life, I thought. Father Ladany died in 1990. I imagine that he and Matteo Ricci are now the best of friends.

Q: This was the early 1980s. Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997. Was there talk about Hong Kong's eventual return while you were at the Consulate?

BISHOP: Certainly. Indeed.

Sir Murray MacLehose was the Governor of Hong Kong when I arrived, but Sir Edward Youde became governor in 1982. Sir Edward was a Foreign Office diplomat, not a colonial administrator, and he was charged to move toward a UK-China agreement for Hong Kong's reversion to China. The agreement was completed a little after we left Hong Kong, in 1984, setting up Hong Kong for the reversion in 1997.

Even before the agreement was signed, Hong Kong people knew that Hong Kong's status as a British colony was going to come to an end. There were many discussions about Hong Kong's two kinds of passports. "Belongers" had British passports, though their status excluded the "right of abode" in the U.K. "Residents," recent arrivals from China, had brown passports issued by the Hong Kong government. The discussion of the passports and right of abode didn't show the UK's citizenship laws in a very favorable light. Those with British passports from the Falklands and Gibraltar had the right of abode, for instance, but the Queen's "subjects" in Hong Kong did not.

The consular officers were fascinated to learn from the newspapers all the ins and outs of British citizenship law, which was a little ragged when it came to people born in colonies and possessions. "My father was born in Southern Rhodesia, and while he was in the Royal Air Force during the Burma campaign, he met my mother. She was the daughter of a British NCO in India who married an Irish woman. My parents moved to Hong Kong after the war and my home is here. My wife was born in South Africa when it was a dominion. Neither of us have ever lived in the U.K. We have British passports, but do we have right of abode?" No doubt there were some headaches at Hong Kong's passport office.

At the Consulate, our FSNs began to carefully anticipate when they would complete 15 years of U.S. government service, qualifying them to apply for a Special Immigration Visa. In general, the FSN's in Hong Kong who applied received SIV's without having to wait additional years.

Q: What else were you learning as Staff Assistant to the Consul General?

BISHOP: At the time, it seemed that every CODEL visiting Asia from Washington was routed through Hong Kong so the members could shop. Handling the arrangements for sixteen CODELs in August, 1981, was quite taxing, but I learned a lot.

A delegation on refugee policy came in from Washington. A retired Foreign Service legend, Marshall Green, was its leader. Along with the group of notables was an FS-2

from the China Desk as escort officer. I saw him looking into the DPO's office, sizing me up. I was the youngest DPO he had ever seen. Perhaps he was thinking of asking for career advice from a fast burner. He addressed me very deferentially. It pained me to fess up that I was only the Staff Assistant sitting at the desk.

This was 1981, six years after the fall of Saigon. The flow of refugees out of Vietnam had diminished, but a few vessels full of boat people still reached Hong Kong or Macau. Both places, however, still had hundreds of Vietnamese refugees from earlier waves in camps, awaiting resettlement. Some of these "camps" were buildings and compounds in downtown areas, with refugees looking out at urban Hong Kong, perhaps doing piecework for local factories on the cottage system. Other camps were on outlying islands. I got to travel with Marshall Green's delegation on their visits to the camps.

The Hong Kong government did an excellent job of organizing the camps in a physical way -- dorms, food, exercise, and so on -- but they couldn't do much for refugee morale. The refugees wanted to see progress on their resettlement, and even in 1981 there were many bureaucratic tangles to be worked through. The refugees had an outspoken advocate in the Consulate's refugee officer, Jere Broh-Kahn. I saw him go head-to-head with Tom Shoesmith a few times, and I admired Jere's commitment.

The regional director for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Joe Sureck, worked at the Consulate, and he reviewed cases from immigration petitioners from many Asian countries. An increasing number of cases involving the Amerasian children of U.S. servicemen born in Vietnam during the war were coming to his desk, and he was strictly applying the law in refusing most of the petitions.

One day in the Consulate canteen we shared a table -- Karen Clark, later Karen Clark Stanton, was with us, I remember -- and I asked him about his reasoning. He told me that he was sympathetic to the cases if there had been a long-term relationship between an American and a Vietnamese woman that could be properly documented, but he couldn't see approving visas if it had been a one-night stand. Who knew, moreover, whether the Caucasian father had been an American or, say, an Australian? We couldn't allow immigration in the face of the uncertainty, he said.

I was appalled by his line of thinking, and wrapping myself in the flag as a Vietnam veteran, I told him that these were our American children, and the irregular circumstances of their birth should not bar them from immigration to their fathers' country. When I had been in Vietnam, there were 524,000 Americans in country, and the Australians had about 7,000. He was going to disallow immigration when there was a 1 in 75 chance that the father was Australian?

He was a little startled by my outburst, and I sensed Karen was wondering how a bleeding heart liberal like me had managed to get into the Foreign Service.

A few days later, the Wireless File clacked out an announcement that Congressman Stewart McKinney's Amerasian Immigration Act of 1982 had become law. I rather enjoyed sending copies to Joe and Karen.

Q: Eventually you left the Front Office to work in USIS. What did you do then?

BISHOP: The incumbent AIO (PRC Support), Diane Johnson, was transferred early to join her husband in Beijing. When I returned to USIS, then, the idea of a “rotation” among the different portfolios was never mentioned. I just went to work on the AIO (PRC Support) portfolio.

My main work was extending the reach of USIA products and programs into the PRC. In a small operation like USIS Hong Kong, however, I helped out on all our programs, and as AIO I backstopped the post's IO and Spokesman -- Jim McHale when I arrived, David Miller later.

Let me talk about the general work of USIS first, and then get on to the job of supporting our posts in the PRC.

The PAO, Harry Britton had a good approach to materials made available to us by USICA. When we received a new publication or a new videotape, Harry convened a full review by the Americans and senior FSNs. Who in Hong Kong should see this videotape? Who would benefit from reading this publication? Can we organize an event? I liked the way he made product and program review a definite step in the program process. In a way, it was “by the numbers,” but USIS Hong Kong with Harry Britton as PAO did not have the casual approach to materials I later saw at other posts.

We were still receiving the daily Wireless File ... wirelessly. An FSN tended a large short wave receiver linked to a teletype, and when each day's file was completed in Washington, it began to clack out in Hong Kong. On a good day, Jim's FSN secretary, Betty Lai, one of the fastest and most accurate typists I had ever seen, typed out the important texts -- a speech by the President or Secretary, for instance -- on offset masters. Our offset press would print, collate, and staple a few hundred copies, and our FSN courier would hop on his USG motorbike, weave through Hong Kong's downtown traffic, and deliver the freshly printed texts to the media in town.

Providing the texts was important because the wires -- AP, UPI, Reuters and so on -- had already excerpted the same speeches in their feeds. Since their reports were first, worldwide, and second, brief, the wire reports often alarmed people in Hong Kong and China, and columnists were ready to buzz out alarmist commentary based on partial excerpts. We had to get full texts to them as soon as possible so that they could see how the one bald sentence included in the early wire reports was actually part of a longer, more thoughtful, more balanced statement of policy.

As Jim McHale pulled the texts off the printer, and as Betty Lai's electric typewriter clacked at full speed, I might suddenly hear loud swearing and oaths coming out of Jim's

door. Sunspot eruptions often frazzled the airwaves and garbled the texts, and it seemed virtually certain that sunspots erupted at the very moment that the most important paragraph in the speech, say, was coming across the teletype. Jim was fuming. He then had to make an expensive telephone call to Washington to get someone to read him the sentence that had been garbled -- all this even as calls were coming in from journalists demanding to know what the President had really said.

It was while I was in Hong Kong that the first computer-to-computer feed of the Wireless File began, linking our post's Wang computer to another Wang in Washington over the telephone line. Given the slow processing speeds of the time, the entire file could be transferred in about 15 or 20 minutes, but we thought we had witnessed a technical advance as great as Alexander Graham Bell's. We became indifferent to sunspots! It was wizard fast!

We were ahead of Hong Kong media on technology, however. We made a commercial purchase of a hardware gizmo that could take the computer text of the file and turn it into a punched tape. We then raced the tape over to the Hong Kong Newswire which transmitted it to newsroom teletypes.

In retrospect, I realize that the Information Office spent the largest share of its time providing materials to and backgrounding the international press corps. The number of international journalists in Hong Kong was large because so many media organizations covered all of Asia from the colony. Indeed, Harry Britton used to say that his post of duty was the bar at the Foreign Correspondents Club. We weren't giving much attention to Hong Kong's Chinese-language press at all.

From time to time I'd be called upon to respond to media queries when the IO was away. I remember David Miller coaching me. "Here's the one-size-fits-all response, Don. 'I don't have anything for you on that.' Say it with no emphasis at all, just say it flat." Did it mean "*I* don't have anything for you on that"? Or, "I don't have *anything* for you on that"? Or, "I don't have anything for *you* on that"? Or, "I don't have anything for you on *that*"? This was on the job training.

Focused on our programs for the PRC, I wasn't much involved on the Cultural Affairs side of the house in Hong Kong. Pat Corcoran was running a full spectrum program. It was in his cubicle that I met Herman Wouk, author of *The Caine Mutiny*, *The Winds of War*, and *War and Remembrance*. He had finished a speaking tour in China, and with Pat he met Hong Kong literary figures.

Wouk had allowed *The Winds of War* and *War and Remembrance* to be published in Chinese without asking for any royalties, and the volumes were best sellers. He told me that one gratifying aspect of his trip was to learn that many Chinese first read about the Holocaust in his novels. The Chinese had read many articles in Party publications about the Jews and Israel as obstacles to the struggle of the Palestinian people, but they had never heard of the awful historical events that provided background and context. This was an example of a USIA speaker program that had real impact.

A few years later, Charlton Heston coached Chinese actors in Beijing performing Wouk's play, *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial*, which helped Chinese think through, in retrospect, the problems of a society with one "great helmsman."

The violinist Isaac Stern was invited to China in 1979, and his visit was captured in the 1981 film, "From Mao to Mozart." The screening rights for Hong Kong were immediately bought up by a theatre chain controlled by the PRC, and thousands attended the big invitational premiere. Consul General Burt Levin and his wife Lily, PAO Mike Yaki with Madeleine, and Jemma and I were among the VIP guests seated prominently in the first row of the balcony, and we got the spotlight treatment before the film began.

There's a rather moving sequence in the movie when music director Tan Shuzhen tells how he was treated during the Cultural Revolution, kept in a closet under a stairway, with a septic tank below him, for 14 months. It's a rather vital part of the film, providing a contrast for the film's main story of Stern helping Chinese musicians get a new start. We had watched an advance 16mm copy of the documentary at USIS, and we were eager to see how the audience would react to Tan Shuzhen's testimony.

Came the moment, and there was no Director Tan. The PRC theatre chain had deleted the entire sequence. Those of us from the Consulate all gasped and then exclaimed out loud "they deleted the scene" so that others could hear. In 1981, the PRC couldn't allow the brutality of the Cultural Revolution to be shown publicly.

There was one other random duty that I might mention. We also read all the letters sent from China (and Vietnam) to "P.O. Box 66, Hong Kong," which was the Voice of America's mailbox. From the Consulate we mailed each sender a schedule for the VOA Chinese service and an article on American culture. Sometimes we passed requests to contact separated relatives in the U.S. to the Consular Section or to INS. Otherwise we sent the letters in bulk to VOA for them to use as part of their listener analysis.

Q: This is quite an interesting mix of experiences. Let's hear more about your work providing support for programs in China.

BISHOP: Let me go through a list. A major ongoing task was distribute the USIA magazines into China from Hong Kong. This allowed a kind of direct mail diplomacy for China from Hong Kong.

The Embassy and the consulates in China were beginning to feed us the names of contacts. If one of our officers in China met a professor of English, or a Deputy Minister, or a policy institute scholar, we would get the contact information and put their names into our database so that they could receive materials. I set up the first computerized Distribution and Records System (DRS) for China using the then-new Wang system. We sent thousands of our publications from Hong Kong into China using international mail.

In addition to moving the materials into China, I eventually took on an editorial role too - deciding how we might best explain the U.S.

I mentioned that the Consulate had changed when the Embassy in Beijing had opened. So did USIS Hong Kong. In the 60s and 70s, the post had published a magazine in Chinese regular characters, *World Today*, *Jinri Shijie* in Chinese. By “regular characters,” I mean Chinese characters in their traditional form, *fanti zi*, as used in China before Chairman Mao launched the script reforms. The traditional characters are still used in Hong Kong, Korea, and Taiwan. The magazine's audience was the Chinese in Hong Kong and Taiwan, and the Chinese Asian diaspora in the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, etc. That magazine had ceased publication a little before I arrived, though we held on to the legal registration of the title and a linked book imprint. The “World Today Press” published translations of American titles -- some were USIS publications, some were translations of American books -- again in regular characters.

Because my work would involve a new magazine for China, I looked through several years of back issues of *World Today*. It was a fine, attractive magazine that mixed articles on policy (“the freight”) with features on American culture (“the fluff”). Looking through the issues from the sixties, however, I noticed that in the course of a nine-year war in Vietnam there were only two or three articles on the war in *World Today*. I thought it illustrated the principle that a country's public diplomacy is usually mute on issues that are domestically controversial. It's only consensus issues that get communicated to foreign audiences. If Americans don't agree among themselves on an issue, it can't be very well communicated overseas. This was the case for the Vietnam war. And here's another example of the principle. Even though the Supreme Court has long ruled that abortion and the right to privacy derive from the Constitution, when was the last time you saw an article on abortion in any USIA, USAID, or State publication?

One of the USIA worldwide magazines was *Dialogue*. When I arrived, USIS Hong Kong had just begun to translate each issue into Chinese, using simplified characters for the PRC audience. The Chinese texts of the articles were sent to the USIA Regional Service Center in Manila, where they were dropped into the same layouts that had been used for the original English edition. The Chinese edition of the magazine was, then, a mirror of the original English-language issue. Its Chinese title was *Jiaoliu*, which translates as “interchange.”

One of USIA's publication specialists oversaw this work in Hong Kong. When I arrived, the publications officer was George Miller. Later it was Herb Lee. The small group of USIA publications specialists sent overseas edited and published magazines that comprised a small publishing empire -- *Trends* in Japan, *Span* in New Delhi, *World Today* in Hong Kong, and others. In Washington they edited magazines in the world languages like *Topic* in French for Africa, *Al-Majal* in Arabic, and of course *America Illustrated* for the Soviet Union.

Dialogue generally focused on high culture -- literature, film, dance, the arts, etc. As our magazine diplomacy for China raised its profile, I saw that we needed a vehicle for other

topics -- economic, political, history, and U.S.-China relations, for instance. I suggested that we add a 16 page supplement to each issue of *Jiaoliu*, which we would just call *Meiguo*, America. I took on the editorial tasks -- selecting articles that would be useful or interesting for Chinese readers, overseeing the translation of the texts, choosing photos and laying out the pages, and sending the packages to Manila for printing. We actually bound the 16 pages of *Meiguo* into the back of each issue of *Jiaoliu*.

It was very satisfying work, intellectual and creative. I realized that if life had taken me in a different direction, I would have been very happy being a magazine editor. I loved going in every morning to shape up the next issue of the magazine, obtain copyright permissions, work with the translators, and so on.

Q: USIA used to have a publication which was very well thought of which was called Problems of Communism. Were you circulating it?

BISHOP: How could Communism have any problems?

We never translated *Problems of Communism* into Chinese, and we had only a small circulation for Hong Kong. At that time, you couldn't imply that there were any "problems" associated with Communism. I am sure there are a few libraries in China that have copies, but even today they might be under lock and key.

Q: So USIS was publishing magazines. How about books?

BISHOP: We had a book translation program too. We translated Teddy White's book, *America in Search of Itself*, to help Chinese understand the Presidential elections. Because Chinese language usages in the PRC, Taiwan, and Hong Kong had diverged over time since 1949, we contracted with a Chinese government firm for the first draft, and then the texts were edited by four FSNs in Hong Kong led by David Shek. Language wizard John Thomson looked over the translations from Beijing, too.

We published the three volumes in Daniel Boorstin's history of America. Copies of these translations were highly prized in China. And we worked our way through translations of all the worldwide USIA titles about the United States -- the four volumes of the *Outline* series (American government, history, economy, and geography), *What is America?*, and so on.

A standard publication used all over the world was *Living Documents of American History*, translations of important documents and speeches, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Gettysburg Address, President Kennedy's inaugural address, and so on.

When I arrived, the publications officer was cleaning up a failure. *Living Documents* had long been available in Chinese regular characters, and USIS Hong Kong wanted to have new editions ready in Chinese simplified characters. In China, the first round of character simplification happened in 1956, and a second list was promulgated in 1964. A third list

was announced in 1977, and USIS Hong Kong rushed out a new edition using the third simplifications. Tens of thousands of copies were printed, but the PRC withdrew the third simplification before it became required. As I arrived, these copies of *Living Documents* using the third simplification were being sold as waste paper.

As I looked over the aborted edition, however, I noted something else. Not all of the American documents were translated in full. For instance, Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech breaks into two parts. The first uses the metaphor of the check returned for "insufficient funds," and the second part is the inspirational call to equality. Our edition for China quoted only the last section, as if we were embarrassed by our nation's shortcomings and decided to hide them from the Chinese. The Chinese government regularly published "Selected Works," but thoughtful Chinese all knew they were reading heavily edited versions of what Chairman Mao had written or said, for instance, heavily edited so that the abridged version of a yesteryear speech conformed to today's Party policy.

I didn't want the Chinese to criticize us for the same process of "selection," meaning scrubbing or filtering or happy faces only. So I went back through all the speeches and documents to assure we were publishing full texts. I added a few to the list, like the opinion in *Quock Walker v. Jennison*. Then I set in motion a new English-Chinese edition of *Living Documents*. English learning had recovered enough so that many Chinese wanted to be able to compare texts in the two languages, side by side. I'm rather proud of the 1983 USIS Hong Kong edition. It's often cited.

Marshall Adair was a classmate in the Mandarin course at FSI, and we met one day in the Consulate elevator. I asked him what he was working on, and he sighed about textile quotas. How about you, he asked. I said I was thinking over Madison's comments about faction in Federalist Paper 10, and whether to include it in our new edition. As the elevator door opened, he shook his head and said, "I knew I should have joined USIA."

Q: So distributing books and magazines to China – and taking on an editorial role for the materials – was a large part of your work. Were there other projects?

BISHOP: Navy ships frequently visited Hong Kong, and the Navy had a template list of community relations activities for a ship visit – call on the Consul General, open the ship for community tours for one day, visit an orphanage, play a basketball game against a local team. These were all well and good, but they received little media coverage because they were so frequent and so uneventful. Hong Kong editors had bigger fish to fry than an orphanage visit. From a Public Diplomacy point of view, the ship visits weren't making the impact that they might.

One initiative was to start inviting Chinese officials assigned to the New China News Agency, Xinhua, the unofficial PRC office in Hong Kong, to receive VIP tours of the ships. Visiting an aircraft carrier would make a far stronger impression on a PRC cadre about Pacific security and American presence than a seminar. I led an early group of four Xinhua "editors" to the USS Ranger.

The Navy's original response to the proposal was "sure, the editors can come aboard. We can probably fit them between the Hong Kong firefighters and the Boy Scouts." Talk about not seeing the big picture! I chatted some more with the Defense Liaison Office, and the PRC visitors were properly greeted, assigned an escort officer, met the Executive Officer, had coffee in the wardroom, and so on. This experience led me to draft standard language for ship visits to Hong Kong, emphasizing the need to contact the Consulate's Public Affairs Officer and to be ready to host PRC visitors. PACOM approved it and it went out to the fleet.

One other duty that came my way was setting up a few days of orientation at USIS Hong Kong for Public Diplomacy FSNs from the China posts. They often came our way after an FSN course at USICA in Washington. My main memory of their visits is that they had saved as many greenback dollars as they could squeeze out of their per diem, and Hong Kong was one last place to spend the money before returning to China. Consumer goods were still unavailable in China, and the China FSNs descended on appliance stores in Hong Kong like caravan travelers reaching a desert oasis.

I offered to drive one FSN from the Luk Kwok Hotel to Kai Tak airport, and when I arrived at the hotel he had not only his bags but a large refrigerator and a microwave. It must have been quite a scene -- the two of us trying to wrestle the boxed refrigerator into the back seat of my Holden. Eventually we drove through the tunnel to the airport with the refrigerator sticking out of the open trunk.

Another project that occupied a good deal of our time was preparing the Chinese-language catalog for the first exhibit of American art in China in 1982. The paintings were from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The Regional Service Center in Manila published the catalog rather lavishly on thick paper, with many color illustrations of the paintings. The text was written not only to describe the individual paintings, but also introduce the history of American art.

I suppose I can insert a personal story here. President Reagan appointed a high-level delegation to attend the opening in Beijing. Chief Justice Warren Burger was the head. USIA Director Charles Wick was also a member. As I looked down the list, I saw the name of the former Governor of Connecticut, John Lodge.

When the delegation arrived at Kai Tak, the Consul General took the Chief Justice to the hotel in his car, and PAO Mike Yaki took Director Wick in his car. All the other members of the delegation rode a bus, and I was their riding escort. As the bus left the airport, I walked down the aisle past the other dignitaries to greet the Lodges. "Governor Lodge." He looked up and said, "I haven't been called that in a long time." "We have met before, when President Eisenhower visited Trinity College, in 1955. I was nine years old, but I was proud to shake your hand." He and his wife Francesca were quite pleased to be noticed among the many other dignitaries. USIA area director Cliff Forster was visibly surprised that I was so well-connected.

That evening at the Consul General's reception, I introduced my wife to Governor and Mrs. Lodge. He smiled at her broadly and said "Jemma! Your husband and I have known each other for 25 years!" It was such a warm greeting that I said to myself, "now I know how you got to be Governor of Connecticut!"

The next day, on Sir Y.K. Pao's yacht, Governor Lodge and I chatted some more. When he learned I was continuing in the Air Force Reserve, he talked about his own time as a Navy reservist, even insisting that he perform his two weeks of active duty on a cruiser in the Med while he was Ambassador to Spain. And he told me he had had seven careers in his life: attorney, Hollywood actor, Navy officer during the war, member of the House of Representatives, politician, Governor, and ambassador. He liked being in the Navy best.

Q: You briefly mentioned the name of President Reagan's Director of USIA, Charles Wick. He was quite controversial, as I recall.

BISHOP: Yes, there was a lot of critical buzz in USIA about Director Wick. Some of it was shallow stuff. One of his forays into moviemaking had been to make *Snow White and the Three Stooges*, which invited derisive comments in the same way that it was easy to take a cheap shot at President Reagan by mentioning *Bedtime for Bonzo*. There was more dismissive talk about his personal style. When he traveled, he expected to be welcomed as not only the Director of an independent federal agency, but as the President's close personal friend.

Since then, however, the memories of Director Wick have changed. Old USIA hands now say "we need a Director like Charlie Wick." Or, "Charlie Wick would never have let us be consolidated into the State Department." He was closer to the President than any subsequent Director, or subsequent Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, and this secured funding and standing.

Part of the initial negative reaction to Director Wick came, I think, because he had a more negative view of the Soviet Union, a view shared by the President, and a more robust and active concept of what Public Diplomacy could achieve in the Cold War. USIA in the 1970s had been comfortable with President Carter's view of the Soviet Union and detente, and it lost some of the ideological edge that had characterized USIA in the 1950s. The thinking seems to have been that ideas side of the Cold War would play out with exchanges, world's fairs, more jazz, and clog dancers. When Director Wick came in, he was far more assertive, ready to do battle in the war of ideas.

Not every one of his initiatives had the impact he hoped for. I'm thinking of the "Let Poland be Poland" documentary, and the videotape of Kirk Douglas with the Afghan resistance. PAO Mike Yaki called in chips with Hong Kong broadcasters so that these programs were broadcast, and the broadcasters obliged him, but only in English and not in prime time. Without Director Wick's personal focus on the war of ideas, though, much of the Agency and the Department would have been inert in the final decade of the Soviet Union, comfortably doing comfortable things. Director Wick was a vital part of the Agency's full court press on the shutdown of KAL flight 007 and our convincing

European governments and people to accept IRBM deployments. These were important victories.

Q: Did you visit China?

BISHOP: I traveled to China a few times. Secretary Haig traveled to Beijing, and my name was added as a member of the U.S. delegation, number 80 in a delegation of 80.

I remember that when I landed at the airport in Beijing, I was met by a rather senior protocol official, and he said "I have a car to take you to the hotel." We traveled from the airport to the hotel, through the countryside and the fields, then into the city. I remember noticing that I saw only one tractor on the long drive. Chinese agriculture was not mechanized the way their propaganda portrayed.

I thought he was very chatty, really interested in me, and I realized that what he was doing was opening my dossier. I was a first time arriving China hand. As soon as I hear that there is a Freedom of Information Act passed in China, I am going to ask for my file! I expect that there will be a paper from that ride in from the airport.

During the visit, whenever I was introduced to Chinese officials, they would say in Chinese, "he is from USIA." People noticeably jumped. They had this non-verbal reaction because Xinhua, the New China News Agency, in Hong Kong and other places overseas, provided cover for intelligence and Party work. Journalism was not its only mission. You had to pay attention to someone from Xinhua. According to PRC logic, USIA must be doing what Xinhua does. Powerful propagandists! Maybe a spy, too! It was kind of heady to be a junior officer and be noticed because you were from USIA.

During the visit, I was supervising the Media Center on the top floor of the Minzu Fandian, "The Nationalities Hotel," so that all the journalists could have copies of wire service reports on hand, and know when Secretary Haig would meet the press.

The AP and UPI tickers printed their stories on rolls of newsprint with carbons, and we had to keep an eye on the tickers to make sure that there was enough paper remaining on the rolls. One afternoon I noticed that the roll of paper on the AP ticker was getting close to the end, so I took it off, put on a fresh, full roll, and tossed the remainder of the old roll in the wastebasket. One of the FSNs working with me was upset because I so thoughtlessly threw away valuable paper, and she reproved me, "we Chinese don't waste things."

I explained that I had discarded the roll, even though the paper was not quite exhausted, because I didn't want to miss changing the paper if we were busy, during the press conference, for instance. She was not mollified, adding that Americans always waste things.

I sat her down and said, "listen to me. I'm going to share a universal economic principle. It applies to all countries, peoples, and cultures. Here it is: People -- anywhere -- save

what they don't have, but people -- anywhere -- feel free to waste what things they have in abundance. In America we have trees, billions of trees, in great tracts of forest that can stretch for hundreds of miles. Paper is cheap, so it's something we feel we can waste. Relax.”

“But China is poor, so we don't waste anything,” she said rather petulantly, “not like you Americans.” I said, “you didn't listen closely. Let me say it again. 'People save what they don't have, but they feel free to waste what they do have,' and the same is true in China. You don't waste materials like paper, because you don't have as many trees as we do, but you do waste what you do have plenty of, like ... time.”

It was as if I had plunged a bayonet into her solar plexus, she was so startled and hurt, and she left the room.

The next day, she came to work at the Press Center, and she said “I thought about what you said to me all day and all night. I couldn't sleep. And I apologize. You are right, we Chinese waste time.”

Score one for me.

I made other trips to China, visiting the Consulates in Shanghai and Guangzhou too. These were largely to coordinate with the Public Affairs Sections there.

Q: As I recall, Macao is part of the Hong Kong consular district. It was a Portuguese colony. Did your work take you there?

BISHOP: Yes, Macao was in the Hong Kong consular district, and both Mike Yaki and I were accredited to Macao as well as to Hong Kong. I still have my exequatur signed by the President of Portugal, recognizing my status as Consul to Macao. I made a number of visits to the Portuguese territory, and we began distribution of our materials to the newspapers and radio stations there.

There was some careful language required. Following the PRC practice, we didn't say that Macao was a Portuguese colony. It was “territory administered by Portugal.”

A well known figure in Macao was Father Manuel Teixeira, an elderly Catholic priest who had lived in Macao his whole adult life. He had come to Macao from Portugal as a seminarian well before World War II. He was quite a character. It happened that the archives of the Catholic diocese of Macao had materials that recorded the early Catholic evangelization of China, Japan, and Asia east of Goa. The Bishop of Macao's diocese had once extended thousands of miles in all directions.

Father Teixeira had worked hard to collect and preserve the priceless documents, and he was quite a prolific historian. I would say he was a “local historian” without formal training, but great historians like Charles Boxer had used the documents and relied on Father Tex to translate the Latin and the old court Portuguese. In my spare time I styled

and polished his English for a volume on early U.S.-Macao relations. The most interesting chapters were on the early China traders, and the Pan Am clipper flights that landed in Macao, sometimes.

During the Cultural Revolution, Macau's Catholic seminary had been forced to close, but it was still there, largely vacant. Father Tex took us into the seminary. The walls were covered with Chinese, Japanese, and missionary paintings of Christ and the saints, along with many large hand carved crucifixes -- priceless items. And in the main hallway lined by the seminarian's rooms, the floors were still worn down by the footsteps of priests and seminarians who walked up and down the hallway each evening reciting the rosary. I was quite moved. Father Tex also took us to see where the first Catholic seminarians from Korea had studied. Among them was Father Andrew Kim, the first Korean priest and one of Korea's first Christian martyrs. He was canonized in 1984.

Q: How did your wife keep busy in Hong Kong?

BISHOP: Our boys were still quite young, John and Edward were not yet in school when we arrived. She was a homemaker. She sang in the parish choir.

And, as the most fluent Korean speaker at the Consulate, she was on call if anyone needed Korean interpreting. On a few occasions, the Special Branch of the Royal Hong Kong Police asked her to come help them when North Koreans who had fled their country arrived in Hong Kong.

Q: Before we leave Hong Kong, might you comment on life at post, and in this commercial city, one of the last colonies?

BISHOP: The Consulate General, then as now, was located at 26 Garden Road. My wife and I were in Hong Kong a few years ago, and the building is now fenced and fortified. In the early 1980s, there weren't such stringent security barriers. The building is L-shaped, and along the short leg of the L, on the ground level, there was an open space. Pillars supported the rest of the building, and visa applicants would line up in the open space, made a little cooler by the harbor breezes, protected from any rain by the upper stories above them.

We Americans took some satisfaction when a British resident came to the Consulate to apply for a visa, saw the waiting line with so many Hong Kong Chinese, and asked "where's our line?" There was only one line for all.

We lived in an apartment at 5 Babington Path in mid-levels. We were the only Americans in the building. I rather liked the circumstances of the post, where we lived in an ordinary local neighborhood. We had Chinese friends, British friends, and international friends. It was very congenial.

Soon after we moved into the apartment, I fulfilled the promise I had made to myself in 1969 when I visited Hong Kong on R&R from Vietnam – to take my future wife for

dinner on the veranda of the Repulse Bay Hotel. It was a fine evening for Jemma and me, and we felt a faint echo of the colonial past.

I bought the Consul General's former car in a GSO auction for \$605. It was an Australian Holden right-hand drive copy of a Chevrolet Impala with a V-8 engine and a corroded muffler. It was the noisiest car in the Colony. Because of our consular status, I did not have to pay the Hong Kong auto tax which was based on engine size. Had I owned the car as an expat, the yearly tax would have run more than \$4000 in greenback dollars, not Hong Kong dollars. The janitors and doormen at our apartment building regularly set up their Chinese chess board and stools in our parking space while we were away. They knew they could always vacate the space on time when we returned because they could hear our car coming a long way off.

Jerome went to Hong Kong International School, and while we were in Hong Kong John began school. We enrolled John not in the International School on the other side of Hong Kong Island, but in one of the old British schools, Glenealy English Junior School. The Brits don't have "kindergarten," so he went directly to Primary 1. He wore a handsome gray woolen uniform with blazer and shorts. Edward began in a local preschool.

Hong Kong International School was run by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. They have many parochial schools in the U.S., and I believe teachers from all over their system hoped they might be able to teach at HKIS for a few years. The religious character of the school was not "in your face" in any way, but they had a "BKG" course, "Bringing Kids to God," that I thought had a good influence on Jerome.

A nearby Catholic church had one mass in English each Sunday. A small choir, the "Don Bosco Singers," sang hymns in English. Soon after we began going to mass there, the choir asked for parishioners to join, and my wife signed up, a little to my surprise. She was the only foreign member. We thus made friends with a wonderful group of Hong Kong people, mostly young professionals -- the school teacher, the insurance man, the woman who worked at the Tourist Association, and so on. We were with them every Sunday.

After Sunday mass, the choir families spent afternoons together. They alternated their Sunday activities. One week they would go to a restaurant and eat, quite well. They knew places my wife and I would never have found -- snake restaurants whose place of business was the alley between two office buildings, for instance. The next week they "went hiking." Hong Kong has an elaborate system of parks, very well designed for a densely populated city. We visited dozens of those parks. We took the ferry to outlying islands, hiked up mountains, ate our picnic box lunches, and then returned. Jemma and I got a close-up look at Hong Kong in a way that few of our Consulate colleagues enjoyed. It was a great intercultural experience.

Jerome was a Boy Scout in the troop at Hong Kong International School, and the scouts regularly hiked the MacLehose Trail on Lantau Island. Jerome needed to check off the box for a five-mile hike before he attained the next Scout rank, and he and I did it

together. We drove to the end of the road on the Sai Kung peninsula and hiked a mile or two to Tai Miu Temple, facing Joss House Bay.

I had figured out a route for the next parts of our hike using the large scale maps of the area, then without roads, and we took the foot trail that headed northwest from the temple to take in some of the fishing villages that were not linked by road to the rest of the colony. Finally we had to hike back to the parking lot.

It was getting dark, and the slopes of the hills had recently been burned to clear out underbrush. I had not looked carefully at the contour lines on the map, so it was unexpectedly hilly. There were no lights, and we were feeling our way along the trail. This unsettled and unconnected part of the colony was home for many abandoned dogs, which were howling. It was a nervous adventure until we got back to our car. Over the years, the dogs' howls have gotten louder and more threatening with each retelling of this family story.

Of course, we served in Hong Kong long before there was cable television. There were only four television channels, two in Cantonese and two in English. As tired American expats sat down in front of their televisions after dinner, they might hear "... and tonight we bring you the third test match between West Indies and Sri Lanka." Cricket matches are s-l-o-w, no American understands the rules, and they could run for hours. You could hear the groans from every American apartment in the colony.

And I still remember the television advertising war between Cathay Pacific Airways and British Caledonian Airways, competing to fly British expats to London. Both ads showed their airline stewardesses pampering *gweilo* executives in business class. The Cathay Pacific ads showed delicate Chinese beauties in their airline's uniform, attentive to the passenger's every whim, and the British Caledonian ads featured buxom blondes in tartans. The appeals in the advertisements were not very subtle.

The Brits had their own form of April Fool's Day humor. You had to be skeptical of news stories aired on April 1. Hong Kong was always short of fresh water, importing much of what it needed from China, and one April 1 there was a deadpan television news story about the government's plan to build a huge dehumidifier cooling coil, many stories high, to draw water from the moist winds. The kicker in the story was that it was to be built on the Peak -- meaning on some of Hong Kong's ritziest and most expensive real estate. An outraged letter of protest was printed in the *South China Morning Post* the next day, showing that at least one British expat had not gotten the joke.

The next year, the April Fool's Day news story was that the government had released drawings of the next phase in the harbor landfill scheme. The British didn't have plans, they had "schemes." The news reader announced that in the next phase, the land between Hong Kong island and the Kowloon peninsula would be filled in, creating new land for a park. The "architect's drawing" shown on the TV screens showed a verdant stretch of refilled land. In the center of the new park was to be a long and handsome reflecting pool.

The news reader told viewers that the planners had included a reflecting pool in the design so that the Star Ferry could continue to run between Hong Kong and Kowloon.

One of the usual criticisms of Hong Kong by expatriates was that it was a heartless place that didn't take care of its poor and neediest. The usual talk was that it needed first, a social safety net, second, public programs for the poor and elderly, and third, progressive tax rates. Hong Kong had a flat tax on all citizens – 17 percent of income as I recall, with no exceptions and no writeoffs.

Hong Kong friends helped me see things differently after a while. In the choir were Winston and Nora Man, and Winston's widowed mother lived with them and their daughters. I mentioned the lack of social security for the elderly to Winston one day, and he said, "Donald, my wife and I work hard so that we can take care of my mother too. Don't take that pride away from me."

Across the street from us on Babington Path were Parvez and Yuriko Kerawala. Parvez had come to Hong Kong from Pakistan with nothing, and he had become successful with his company, Mach Two, and married Yuriko whom he had met when she visited Hong Kong from Japan. He was very proud that he had "made his own cup of tea." He was telling me that adversity often drove accomplishment. So many people in Hong Kong had come from China and other places with nothing. Hong Kong's place in the world was based on their drive. He was cautious about any social welfare policy that would impair that drive.

The British still ruled Hong Kong, but the career government services like the Police had been largely localized, and the British police officers seconded to Hong Kong that I met always had a laudable respect for Cantonese society. As for the British Forces, my impression was that there were more Gurkhas in Hong Kong than Tommies. The British knew that Hong Kong was indefensible, so there was no need for large garrisons.

The Falklands War took place while we were in Hong Kong. I was surprised to learn that British warships still had Hong Kong Chinese laundrymen aboard – so there was more local interest in the war's progress than might be imagined.

On the other hand, I was in a local shop bargaining with the Chinese shopkeeper while the wedding of Prince Charles and Princess Diana was showing on the TV. The shopkeeper didn't seem to be engaging in the spirit of give and take in our bargaining, and looking for a fresh gambit, I suggested that he could give me a special "Royal Wedding discount." He had heard many attempts by Westerners, *gweilos* in local lingo, to persuade him to lower a price, but this was something original! He looked straight at me and said, "Do you think we care anything about this wedding?" So, I got points for originality, but no discount. And I learned something about Hong Kong's fidelity to the Crown.

One of the intangibles that affected American families at the Consulate was "rock fever," the ambient feeling of isolation and confinement in a small place that didn't offer much

relief from urban crowding. There was no differential for Hong Kong, and there was no R&R point. Remember that no one could drive across the Chinese border for a weekend getaway, and any other destination meant air travel, too expensive for most Consulate families. So there was never any “change of pace” and no break from coping with the surrounding culture.

Tom Shoesmith worked up a formal request for personnel assigned to Hong Kong to be allowed to go on R&R. The problem was that Hong Kong was the designated R&R point for a few dozen other posts. If you were in Nairobi, a week or two in bustling Hong Kong, living in a great hotel, filling up on Chinese food or western food as you desired, and shopping your heart out was just what you needed to “rest” and “recuperate.”

Those who had visited Hong Kong on R&R from other posts couldn't understand what the Consulate General was complaining about, and the Consul General's request went nowhere in the Washington bureaucracy. Indeed, when I was in Washington looking through some files, I came across the copy of the request that had been passed to USIA. The Area Director had written “Ridiculous!” in large script on the cover page.

Q: You left Hong Kong when?

BISHOP: It was in the summer of 1983. I was replaced by Richard Aker.

TAEGU, KOREA, 1985-1987
Branch Public Affairs Officer

Q: To go where?

BISHOP: To Korea. I went back to Washington for the first year of the Korean course at FSI, and then went to the Field School at the Embassy in Seoul for the autumn term. I got to my assignment in Taegu in January of 1985.

Q: OK. Today is the 3rd of January, 2011 and with Don Bishop. And we are moving -- 1983, you've left Hong Kong and you're going to Korea. What are you going as?

BISHOP: My assignment was to be the Branch Public Affairs Officer (BPAO) in Taegu. We spelled the name of the city, using roman letters, as Taegu, with a “T,” back then. Now, with a new romanization system for Korean, it's “Daegu.” And Independence Gate in Seoul, once “Tong'nipmun,” is now “Dogrib-mun.”

I followed Maureen Taylor.

I had volunteered for Korea because of my positive experiences when I was in the Air Force. That included seeing the activities of the USIS Center in Kwang Ju. For my wife, it was of course a highly congenial assignment.

When I was in the USIA training course for incoming officers, I had learned that BPAO jobs were highly regarded for development and promotion, “the chance to run your own program” early. There were two kinds of BPAOs. Usually, a BPAO was the PAO at a consulate. BPAO Sapporo worked at the consulate, for instance. But there were twelve posts with independent, freestanding American Cultural Centers in cities with no consulate. Poznan was an example. Medan was another. I wanted to be that kind of BPAO because I wanted the relative autonomy.

There were two of the freestanding Centers in Korea -- Kwang Ju and Taegu. Taegu was important in Korea because it was the third largest city and the textile capital. It was also important because it was in North Kyongsang province, which had provided so much of Korea’s leadership. It's fair to say that its high schools and universities were incubators for Korean leadership in that time. There were five major universities in the Taegu area -- Kyongsang Bukdo National University, Keimyung University, Youngnam University, Taegu University, and Hyosong Women's University.

We moved into a home in the Apsan neighborhood of Taegu, a few hundred yards west of Camp Walker. By this time, Jerome was studying at Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts, and John and Edward were students at the Army's Taegu American School at Camp George.

Q: Who was the Ambassador in Seoul?

BISHOP: Richard L. Walker was the ambassador. His academic background was pretty interesting, and I think history will be much kinder to Dixie Walker, both as a China hand and as an Asia hand, than his academic contemporaries were. In any case, I rate him high as an Ambassador.

The Public Affairs Officer was a USIA legend, Bernie Lavin. The DPAOs in Seoul who were my direct bosses were Duane Davidson and Hugh Burleson.

A consulate had been established in Pusan, and Taegu was in the Pusan consular district. Frances Sullinger – and later Don Q. Washington -- was the BPAO there, and the Principal Officer was Ken Quinones.

Q: How far were you from Seoul?

BISHOP: It was a four-hour train ride or a four-hour drive in those days. It was a comfortable distance. I could get up to Seoul whenever I needed to pretty easily. I could lift up the telephone and call them any time. Visitors came from the Embassy infrequently, though, so I had the feeling of autonomy than I wanted.

Every day, the USIS driver would go to the railroad station to pick up the pouch sent down from the Embassy. It contained all the unclassified cables, the USIA and Embassy circulars, instructions, offers of speakers, and so on. Every day we waited for the arrival of the pouch.

During my tour USIS-Taegu received one of USIA's first PCs, a Victor 9000, but there was no email. Before I left, though, we received the daily Wireless File by computer to computer transmission using telephone lines. This allowed USIS Taegu to reach local newspapers and television stations with fresh news and policy statements.

Eventually, I set up a USIS account and telegraphic address at the 19th Support Command's communications center. This allowed me to begin receiving Embassy reporting cables. I would stop at the Army comm center to read the cables each morning before going to the American Cultural Center. I was in good form in my discussions with local officials and journalists and with the Commanding General. They realized I was in touch with policy, and I could pick up more things in my conversations.

Q: Do I recall there were attacks on USIS centers in Korea in the 1980s?

BISHOP: Yes.

When I got to Taegu, one of the first things the staff had me do was visit a small memorial stone that had been erected outside the door of the City Hall. It honored the Korean student who had spotted a backpack lying on the steps of the American Cultural Center. The student had reported the backpack to a policeman. When he and the policeman went back together, the student touched it first. It exploded and killed the student, and the policeman was severely injured. This led to a great manhunt, and it did turn out that it was a North Korean agent who had slipped into the country with the mission of putting the bomb on the steps of the American Cultural Center. This had happened, if I recall correctly, in September of 1983.

So on one hand, there were aspirations for democracy within South Korea's domestic polity. The bomb showed that in Korea, domestic developments were also affected by the mix-in of the threat from the North, and what was happening there.

Q: It sounds like you had to pay attention to the security of your Center.

BISHOP: Yes, a lot of attention. I applied some things I had learned in Vietnam, and the commander of the Military Police brigade at Camp George, Lieutenant Colonel Richard Pomager, gave me some more tips. He told me, though, that I was on my own. If something happened at the Center, there would be no MP cavalry sent to rescue my USIS wagon train.

The local staff of USIS-Taegu was seven FSNs and seven local contract guards paid for by the Embassy. Because of the recent bombing that had killed the student, the Korean National Police didn't think our seven security men were anywhere near adequate, and they assigned members of what were called in English the "combat police" to guard the Center full time. They were draftees assigned to the police rather than to the Army. On any given day, six of them stood shoulder-to-shoulder in front of the double doors to our Center. They could modulate their security posture based on their analysis of any given

day's threat. The policemen could be in civilian clothes, or in uniform, or in uniform carrying their carbines. The Korean police commanders felt their men should be able to enter the Center at will, especially to look over suspicious visitors using our library, but I drew the line at the Center door. They had to ask my permission to enter.

One day I was chatting with the commander of the combat policemen guarding the center, and I asked him how many men do you have assigned to this mission? I thought he'd say a one or two dozen, but he quite surprised me. One hundred and five combat policemen guarded the center. There were six on the front steps. There were walking patrols, pairs of policemen going in each of four directions at the intersection, and roving patrols. There were three shifts a day, and additional men to cover the days when the others had a day or weekend off. It all added to 105 bodies.

Q: Since 9/11, there's been a lot of discussion in the Foreign Service about the tension between security, on one hand, and open access to embassies and consulates. Your experience seemed to preview this debate.

BISHOP: Well, there's another angle to that. The combat police at the American Cultural Center were justified as "security," yes. It wasn't hard to see, however, that they had another effect -- a positive effect as far as the Korean government was concerned. It was to help insulate Korean society from America's liberal views.

The heavy security presence meant that any Korean who wanted to visit our library had to satisfy the policemen that he or she had peaceable intentions. It discouraged visitors. We had very low attendance at the library, as few as a dozen people on some days. Thirty visitors was a banner day. It meant that I had to find ways to get our programs out of the center and get them and myself around town.

This sometimes had unexpected results. In order to increase the number of people who might visit our Library, I was always trying to think of ways to highlight the availability of our resources. I had received the latest World Bank report on countries of the world. I made up a list of ten countries including the U.S., the Soviet Union, England, Japan, and North and South Korea. I took statistics from the tables in the report, things like population and GDP per capita. I mailed out this informative list from the report to a few hundred local contacts, saying "Here's the kind of information available to you at the USIS library."

Now, of course, all this is available on the internet, but in those days it was not so easy to come by. One of the columns that I had copied out of the World Bank report was about calories per day of nutrition. And according to the report, printing North Korea's own statistics, they were slightly better fed up there than in the south. I sent my comparison sheet out routinely, not thinking much about it. A few days later, however, the police came to ask our FSN Mr. Kwon Hwa-soon why I was spreading untruths about the north; I was going to create a lack of confidence in the ROK government. They had been telling the South Korean people -- accurately -- that North Korea was an increasingly poor society. So there was a lot of vigilance on what we were doing.

One weekend I received a call at home from a local Catholic priest with radical leanings, asking if he could drop by and see me. It was, it turned out, about a visa for another priest. He was at my house about ten minutes after I talked to him on the phone. Five minutes after his leaving, there was a knock on my door. It was the local police commander asking whether that radical priest done anything while he was here at my house. I asked, “how did you know that he was here?” “Oh, the policemen at the box outside your residence is very alert. He just happened to recognize him.” This seemed unlikely, and it made me think they were listening to my calls. The possibility angered me.

Back to your original question about security vs. access, over the years I’ve come to think we have to reduce our reliance on fixed venues – an embassy, consulate, or center – in Public Diplomacy. Officers have to get out more, and we need to hold more programs off our premises.

Q: You were in Korea at an important time in its political development. Before we get to your programs and work in Taegu, can you help set the scene?

BISHOP: As I mentioned, there were many areas of official engagement. There was the military cooperation. I’d seen that military cooperation in depth when I’d worked that summer at the Pentagon on the Security Consultative Meeting. I’d seen how well knit together the two armed forces were. Both countries were working through trade problems.

The official relationship, based on mutual interest, then, was quite close. The senior people on both sides -- ministers, generals, ambassadors, counselors – all had living memories of the war. All were certainly united in support of the alliance.

Chun Doo-hwan was President, a general now wearing civilian clothes. Just how he had advanced himself to the front rank of Korean generals in the wake of President Park’s assassination, and what had been his relationship with Park Chung-hee, wasn’t very clear.

By this time the modernization of Korea was well underway, and the democratic aspirations I had seen in Kwang Ju more than a decade before had really begun to bloom. The old habits of the generals – I make decisions, I give orders, you follow -- were running up against the aspirations of the middle class and of the younger generation. As I mentioned, among younger people you could also sense their longing for unification and a new suspicion of the United States, imagining that there must be ulterior motives behind our support for South Korea. You could feel this tension.

This was not helped by the South Korean government’s own efforts to curb the democratic forces within South Korea. The government and its security agencies were quite rough with the students, for instance. Actually, saying “rough” is inadequate. It could be much more ugly. There were torture rooms in the police headquarters in Seoul, and I presume in other cities, where they routinely gave the water treatment to students.

This was brutal and excessive. Indeed it was immoral on one hand, and on the other hand it was destructive for the Korean government maintaining the support of its own people. There's a lot to say about this. We'll touch on it some more I'm sure. The memories are flooding back.

As I turned this over in my mind, I thought through some of the history. I mentioned before that Park Chung-hee received his initial military training from the Japanese, at the Japanese Military Academy in Manchuria. He had been first in his class. He'd won the Emperor's silver watch. He had to have scored 100 percent on every examination -- artillery ranging and infantry tactics, to be sure, but also on political subjects.

Many scholars have traced the militarization of Japanese education in the 20s and 30s, during the run up to the Second World War. Park, when he thought about society and politics, was a Korean patriot, yes, but he was also affected by his education under the Japanese during this period of military hegemony in Japanese society. He had been taught that citizens were all supposed to have one consciousness, and the one consciousness should uphold the leader. This idea was operationalized in the Third Republic by teachers and professors of "National Ethics" at the schools and universities, and by the Ministry of Education when it wrote textbooks. They spoke of "reform of consciousness," *uisik kaehyok*. The generals who succeeded Park Chung-hee as President had absorbed the same attitude when they were educated and when they were on active duty.

The military experience of the generals, tied in with the notion that there should be one national consciousness, ran up against the aspirations for democracy, many of which had been set in motion by the American example before, during, and after the Korean War. In the Mission we could see this interesting mix. There were economic issues related to trade and development, and the political officers, as always, kept busy reporting the ups and downs of politics and policies in Seoul, or Seoul's relationship with other nations. But there were also human rights issues that derived from the contest between the generals' authoritarian frame of mind and the popular desire for democratization.

This contest, the contentions, these divided emotions, and frustrations did much to create what we called the "anti-American wind" in the mid-1980s. There was a perception that U.S. support for Korea was U.S. support for the generals' authoritarianism. It was an impression the generals were happy to ride.

Q: Had the repression in Kwang Ju contributed to this?

BISHOP: Absolutely.

I had been in the Air Force in Kwang Ju, so I knew the city quite well. I had just entered the Foreign Service when the "incident," the Kwang Ju "incident" -- I'm putting quotes around that word "incident," *satae* in Korean -- took place. It was surely a "rising," but it was part of the Korean government's damage control strategy to contain domestic and foreign outrage by using the word "incident," assuring that articles and broadcasts used this weaker term.

There's a large and growing historical literature on the rising, and even as I talk about it, I feel the need for dozens of footnotes and qualifiers, but let try to describe it simply, all in one go.

It happened in 1980. The rising in the city had been prompted by the arrest of Cholla Namdo's favorite son, Kim Dae-jung. The local outrage ran so high that protesters seized the weapons in the reserve armories and expelled the Korean Army from the city. They held it for some days. The government's response was to move troops from other parts of the country to surround Kwang Ju, and a ROK Army Special Forces unit entered the city and brutally reasserted control, killing some hundreds of citizens. (Some years later, one of my former English club students in Kwang Ju told me of her terror as the troops violently entered the shops on Walking Street. She was trembling behind the shop's steel accordion door, which was fortunately down and locked.)

I was really wrought up by the news reports because I knew the city, the students, and many leading people. The Korean Government at the time said the “incident” was inspired by radicals or communists. This was disinformation directed both at domestic and foreign audiences, justifying the repression and discrediting Kim Dae-jung and people's aspirations for democracy. I just knew that story was preposterous. But it had some currency, even among some Americans.

The rising took place in May of 1980. I was just in the Foreign Service, studying Chinese to go to Hong Kong. The news reports that came back were fragmentary, and they included the Korean government's line that the justification for arresting Kim Dae-jung was that he was a communist agitator, a tool of the North, a threat to national security. Somehow he had infected the city of Kwang Ju, they said, so the Army had only killed radicals and communists who were opposing the government. This was so false, so utterly vile, that it really enraged me.

The Korean government's disinformation, in 1980 during the rising, and in 1985 when I arrived in Taegu, was a one-two punch. First, the government said the rising was inspired by radicals and communists. Second, the movement of Korean Army troops to quell the rising had been approved by the United States because Korean units were under the operational control, the “opcon,” of the CINCUNC who was also the Commander of U.S. Forces in Korea.

When I got to Taegu in January, 1985, I found that the Gordian knot of things related to the Kwang Ju “incident” was very much on people's minds, especially that the United States approved sending the ROKA units into Kwang Ju to kill the demonstrators. The entire question of operational control, however, was much muddier than the common belief.

Actually the Korean units deployed to Kwang Ju had been very deftly chosen from among units in the southern areas of the country, which were not under UNC authority. In general, units assigned to the Second ROK Army were not under UNC operational

control. The Korean government didn't need any "permission" to move them, but it deftly shaped the narrative of the "incident" to imply that we had.

Yes, the Kwang Ju incident was a running sore in U.S.-Korean relations.

Q: Well, as it affected you, how did we view the North Korean government? And how did the Koreans look at the North Korean government?

BISHOP: When I arrived in Taegu in 1985, it was more than 30 years past the end of the Korean War, which had affected everybody in the country. The younger generation didn't go through the war themselves, but their parents did. And whether it came from memories of the war, or whether it came from the South Korean government keeping alive the brutality of the North Korean invasion, or whether it came from North Korean provocations over the years, there was strong, and official, and widespread hatred of North Korea.

I had seen it in Cholla Namdo when I was in the Air Force. I remember driving down a country road and there was a big sign: *Kim Ilsongul taeryokijukija* -- "skin Kim Il-song alive." Skin him alive, that's pretty strong. We don't even quite say skin Osama bin Laden alive. We say bring him to justice.

By the mid-1980s, that kind of visceral hatred of the North had perhaps receded some, though it was still the dominant opinion. Among younger, college-educated Koreans, however, there were signs of a kind of romantic longing for national unification. There was the idea that Koreans would never do wrong to one another, so it was only the outside powers, including the United States, that kept Korea divided and kept North Koreans and South Koreans from rushing together to embrace.

To some larger or smaller degree -- I thought it was "smaller" -- the North, through its broadcasts and perhaps through some agents in the South, was also stimulating that kind of thinking.

Among younger people, then, there was something I had certainly never seen in Korea in the 1970s when I was there in the Air Force -- the need to recall the war and justify the extraordinary measures that South Korea and the United States had to take for Korea's defense.

As I mentioned, part of this generation change that resulted in the anti-American wind of the time was caused by frustration over the ambiguity of the American position at the time of the Kwang Ju rising.

There was another part of the generation change. New ideas were coming into Korea -- dependency theory, for instance. And liberation theology began to affect the liberal clergy of Korea. It was a challenging mix of ideas in circulation.

Q: I know about liberation theology. What's dependency theory?

BISHOP: Boiling down a lot of theory into a few words, and probably not giving full justice to its nuance and complexity, it was that the idea that the world was centered on a superpower. At the periphery are the other nations. In one way or another, said the theory, all were in a dependent relationship with the superpower. Since the two sides are unequal in power, the result is social injustice. The Korean students cast us as the superpower, the core. Korea was, in this line of thinking, one of the innocent nations on the periphery, under the thumb of the big powerful nation at the center.

Q: What, then, was USIS in Seoul doing?

BISHOP: Of course the press work, the exchanges, and the library work were ongoing. In 1972, when I was a frequent visitor to the USIS Center in Kwang Ju, it was jammed with students studying for their exams, meeting other students in English conversation groups, and watching USIS films. In 1973, though, USIS in Seoul decided that the Centers would no longer host high school English clubs, and a few years later the Centers stopped hosting university groups. I'd say that in the decade after I left Korea, the program shifted – in accordance with the USIA doctrines we discussed a while ago – to focus on influencers rather than direct contact with students. In the 1980s, a university student could use the USIS library, but the desired patrons were journalists, faculty, and government employees.

The PAO in Seoul, Bernie Lavin, was very committed to and fond of Korea. He saw the need for Embassy people to hear the new, challenging ideas directly from Koreans, and the need to answer them face to face. He funded a series of seminars, one every month or so. He would invite 20 or 30 Koreans, a mix of academics, government people, journalists -- vocal folks with plenty of angry younger people mixed in. He would pick out a hot springs hotel somewhere in the countryside, and we would all go there for a weekend. Of course each branch -- Taegu, Pusan, Kwang Ju -- would contribute a few participants to the guest list. You went to the hotel with some of your contacts, and over the weekend you talked through all the issues. A few officers would come down from the Embassy to be able to talk about specialized topics. There were some very tense and very charged exchanges.

All of us who were in the program while Bernie Lavin was PAO remember these seminars. During the business part of the seminar, things got really hot and heavy, with agitated back and forth between angry Koreans and Americans whose feelings were hurt by their anger. Embassy section heads sent newly arrived officers down to the seminars in order to break them in. They didn't confront these raw feelings when they went over and visited the Ministry of Economic Affairs. But they would get them when they went down to those seminars.

The highlight of these weekend seminars was the Saturday evening dinner, Korean style, sitting on the floor around the tables, with beer and Korean white lightning helping out the conversation. Bernie was well known as a singer, and during earlier tours in Korea he had translated some of the famous Korean folksongs into English. So he personally led

everybody in the rounds of singing in English and in Korean, which along with the various spirits helped thaw people out, calm people down after the day of sometimes hot and heavy exchanges. Despite the charged opinions, everyone left the seminars with new friends.

(Proving that no good deed goes unpunished, Bernie was asked by a local recording company to sing his translations of the Korean songs, and “Songs Koreans Love to Sing” came out on cassette. The Yongsan PX made a nice display to sell copies, and they played on a boom box in the aisle. One soldier, listening to Bernie's voice, said: “No, they got that wrong, it's 'songs old Koreans love to sing.’”))

Q: Was this gap between the young university students who had not been affected by the Korean War and the older generation, was this manifesting itself more and more?

BISHOP: I think that was one of the major sources of the tension that we faced in the Public Affairs. This was the age before the internet and the social media. Bernie was, admirably and directly and openly, following the USIA doctrines of the time, which was to focus on influencers. Whether the invitees were older professors or what Bill Maurer called “young and nasty” faculty, say, we were focused on opinion leaders, confident that professors would speak to students, editors and journalists who would write for readers, and so on.

Q: We've had some of this in our schools, particularly in the '60s and '70s, the young nasty educators, young rebels, perhaps. You get your kicks out of influencing young people and it's not necessarily rational, but it's there in every generation.

BISHOP: So if a future historian lists the origins of this anti-American wind -- this tension I've been talking about -- part of it was simply the generational difference and the coming of age of a new intelligent college-educated future Korean leadership cohort. Yes, that's one of the things you'd have to list.

Ambassador Jim Lilley told me once -- and we'll get to Jim Lilley later -- but I remember hearing it from him first, “When you're young, if you're not a socialist, you have no heart. When you're old, if you're not a conservative, you have no brains.”

Q: I think that was Clemenceau.

BISHOP: Oh, Clemenceau! Jim Lilley quoting Clemenceau! I think he attributed it to Winston Churchill!

Q: OK, but one of the things that always struck me in the United States about the left – the Communist Party and all – was that although the Stalin regime was awful, yet somehow or another a bunch of very bright people during the 1930s could justify the destruction of the peasantry, the purges, everything.

BISHOP: Right, it was appalling.

I agree with you that in retrospect it's astonishing how many in the leadership and in the opinion-forming sectors of Western societies had been seduced by the dreams or the aspirations of socialism and communism. And you're right, there were many notorious cases in the 1930s -- Walter Duranty, Paul Robeson, Malcolm Cowley, Henry Wallace, not to mention Alger Hiss later.

Anyone who studied Cold War apologetics knows that it was common to contrast the low and mean shortcomings of free societies against the lofty ideals of socialism and communism, and that this comparison of realities vs. ideals must always be challenged. In fact, however, there was kind of a default unthinking acceptance that it was the aspirations of socialism that should be counted, and the realities of poverty and purges and gulags that should be ignored. So should all the ugly dehumanizing oppressions that we see now in movies like "The Inner Circle" and "The Lives of Others."

Q: About East Germany, even now we still confront this, we're not through it. Focusing on Korea, I think the problem was that the same government that was beating up the students was also trying to make this case about the Communists. The Korean government was gradually discrediting its own clear-headedness about life in the north. I served in Korea, too, and I also saw this notion inside young Koreans, that Koreans won't hurt each other, when indeed their own government was treating them cruelly, and the north if given the chance would also. In fact, we've just seen how shocking was the North Korean attack on a small island village. It's changed attitudes.

BISHOP: Right, right. All I can say is, it was part of the times.

One of the conclusions I have drawn, over the years, about anti-Americanism as a phenomena in the world, and about the challenges to American power, is that very few of them are actually indigenous or homegrown. It's not that the scholars of Egypt sat down and came up with the Egyptian critique of America, or the Nigerians thought up a unique Nigerian take on American power. Rather, they read our own domestic criticism and add a few local twists. Reading U.S. critiques of our own country, and its place in the world, strikes something in them, and they repack and reshape it. It's domestic criticisms of our own society that come back and are used against us. In a way, our domestic politics exports ideas that come back to us in the form of criticism.

There is a competition of social visions in the United States, and the competition just doesn't take place among us. If we speak of 9/11 and the war on terrorism, there's a body of American opinion that supports the war and is confident that our interventions are a force for good in the world. There's another body of opinion that believes the world would be better off without American meddling, and that indeed America is the source of much of the evil in the world. The critical takes on the United States go out to other countries, and for a whole lot of intellectual reasons they come back as criticism of American foreign policy.

This is a roundabout way of saying that Korean academics in the 1980s didn't think of liberation theology on their own. It began in European and American faculties and spread to Korean thinkers. The same was true of the dependency theory we began to encounter in the same decade.

Q: Well, when you went to Taegu, were you given particular marching orders, or just told to go do your job?

BISHOP: I don't recall anybody sitting me down and telling me "this is what we need you to do." It was implicit that I would continue to do what USIS posts always did. I would run the Center and organize its activities, tend the Fulbright program, find international visitors, and I'd go to local events, meet local leaders, and I'd help an occasional Embassy visitor -- the low-key USIS things.

When I arrived, I found that my predecessor, Maureen Taylor, had focused the program mostly on the universities in Taegu. She had a Ph.D. in English, and she shaped the program to match her strengths, using American literature as an avenue to create dialogue.

Q: You mentioned that Taegu was a center of higher education. I'm guessing you were frequently on the campuses.

BISHOP: There were five universities in Taegu and more in the rest of the province, and so there were plenty of opportunities to continue the traditional USIS programs that reached higher education.

In my conversations, I came to understand that professors chafed at the psychological limits that they faced, the dissonance between their ideals and the reality that they faced for their families and their jobs. And they also chafed at the controls that the Ministry of Education was putting on universities to make sure the demonstrations and the students were kept quiet.

All the universities had departments of "national ethics," and students were required to take so many hours. These departments aimed to strengthen Korean unity and the traditional values of deference to rulers. They were a kind of vigilance against people who were too radical.

All during the 1980s the government was implementing a policy to move main campuses away from downtowns, to relocate to new campuses outside the cities. On the face of it, this was a good idea because many of the universities had outgrown their small downtown campuses. Taegu University moved outside Taegu. Part of Kyongbuk National University moved out of its old downtown campus near the American Cultural Center. Keimyung University undergraduates left their wonderful ivied campus for a new locale. In the capital, Seoul National University moved to Kwanak.

The universities tended to leave the professional schools, like medicine, or perhaps the adult graduate courses in business, downtown. But they moved the undergraduates whenever possible so that the students were farther away. If things got out of hand – if the students began marching – they could be interdicted by the police before they could reach downtown.

I think I developed a good rapport with most of Taegu's educators. One of the deans regularly shared with me what he learned at Ministry of Education confabs for deans. All the deans were gathered by the Ministry every few months.

In Taegu I was implementing many of the tried and proven Public Diplomacy programs. I got to know university people and nominated individuals for Fulbrights or for seminars. At that time, Korea was given about 20 international visitors a year. Ordinarily, each branch (Taegu, Kwang Ju, and Pusan) could have one International Visitor, and Seoul would take the other 17. I called my staff together and said, let's shoot for five. We did it. The IV committee in Seoul approved five of our nominees. We had sent up nominations for "young and nasties."

I wasn't choosing poets and professors of English literature to be International Visitors. They were already convinced or won over. Rather I was after younger and more radical nominees, feeling that they needed a chance to visit the U.S. and see American society at first hand. I wanted their feelings about the U.S. to be based on a visit, not based on what they read in radical magazines.

In general, what I wanted to do was lean all our Public Diplomacy programs towards issues in U.S.-Korean relations, to increase the number of policy-relevant issues in our program mix. I thought the traditional USIS attitude -- that we create dialogue, and we get together with the academic elites, that better relations will automatically result -- was fine as far as it went, but it wasn't enough.

Q: What were the effects of our Fulbright program? In other words, were people going to the United States and coming back?

BISHOP: By the time I got to Korea with the Embassy, the Fulbright program had been going on for more than 30 years. There was a pretty extensive alumni network.

One of the benefits of the Fulbright program, all over the world, in any country, is that once the U.S. had sponsored an academic for a Fulbright year, or sent someone to the U.S. as an International Visitor, they felt a sense of gratitude. They might organize a seminar, host a reception, and so on. In a way, we were always able to reap dividends from the earlier investment. Among academics, as among other sectors of Korean society, an individual fell somewhere on a continuum between right and left. In general, I found that the Fulbright year was liberalizing.

In the 1980s, there were many young faculty who were beginning to challenge the U.S.-Korean relationship. We had not had enough time to reach enough of them, though.

When I chose “young and nasties” for the International Visitor Program I was trying to make up for that deficit. Still, we had not reached the stage of payoff yet.

And responding to one part of your question, I don't recall any of the Korean Fulbrighters or International Visitors “jumping” to stay in the U.S.

Q: How about the performing arts?

BISHOP: The Agency had a fine program called Artistic Ambassadors. A promising young pianist would come out from the U.S. and perform at the branches as well as in Seoul. If the other branches asked to host one performance, I would ask to do two, in Kyongju or Andong as well as Taegu.

Shirley Ann Seguin played in Taegu and Kyongju, and she performed a piece especially written for the program by George Perle. She asked us to find a page turner, and we lined up an honors pianist from one of the local universities. I remember the young woman's startled, even alarmed, reaction when she saw the handwritten Perle score dense with seemingly unplayable combinations of notes!

Q: Speakers and seminars?

BISHOP: In general I programmed every U.S. speaker sent by USIA to Korea. We had some programs at the Center, but I preferred to host programs on the campuses, in downtown hotels and other venues, or at places like the Taegu Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Pittsburg attorney Dennis Unkovic helped our Korean contacts understand American concepts of intellectual property, for instance.

As the government pressed the opposition, the question of whether the Korean constitution should be revised was beginning to be discussed. There were some interesting twists to the discussion. Liberal Koreans wanted to watch AFKN news because it had stories they could not see on their own stations, but the government could trump that desire by claiming that the AFKN broadcasts were one more sign of America doing whatever it wanted to do in Korea, in this case violating Korea's sovereignty over its airwaves. Liberal Koreans thought that the Constitution should be amended, and they hoped for American support for liberalization, but the government raised the spectre of the U.S. strong-arming Korea into amending the constitution.

The Embassy, then, needed to talk about constitutionalism, and Ambassador Walker needed to be able to make a statement about American non-interference in Korea's constitutional processes.

Sensing that the Mission needed a way, but an indirect way, to make a statement, I had a sudden urge to organize a seminar on the American constitution in Taegu. And what could be more natural than to invite Ambassador Walker to give the keynote address? This was the USIS indirect way. The Ambassador and the PAO quite liked the idea, and I got the green light.

The reward for my initiative was being sentenced to write the Ambassador's speech, Ken Quinones' speech, and my own. Fortunately our little USIS library in Taegu had an old volume listing every constitutional amendment that had passed Congress and been sent to the states – actually quite a long list, so I could fill up the speech with plenty of facts before getting to the main message. Ambassador Walker read his lines – that it was Koreans who would revise the Korean constitution -- perfectly. News of the seminar, with my punch line, was carried nationwide on the front pages of all the major newspapers.

A Foreign Service joke: Ambassadors, cabinet secretaries, and Presidents are all actors. It's the Foreign Service that writes their lines.

Q: Korea is a country with a large U.S. military command. Did this affect your work?

BISHOP: Yes, one of the other features of Taegu as a diplomatic post was that the U.S. Army's 19th Support Command, commanded by a one-star, was in the city. Charles Murray was the Commanding General when I arrived, and Herman Kammer was in command when I left. The three bases in the city were Camp Walker, Camp Henry, and Camp George. The Command had large tasks to perform in the war plans -- to provide fuel and supplies for the fighting to the north if there was another conflict. It was the Eighth Army's rear command, largely with ordnance, transportation, and quartermaster units.

Also in Taegu was the headquarters of the Second ROK Army, commanded by full General Oh Ja-bok, which had its own roles as backup, support, and reinforcement for the Korean military commands farther north.

I wanted to try and fit our USIS activities with the U.S. Army's efforts to strengthen its partnership with the Korean Army.

I noticed from my association with the 19th Support Command that the Korean Army and the U.S. Army, although they had been serving side by side for decades, didn't really understand each other very well. My concept was to organize a one-day seminar simply titled "Military Leadership," inviting both the 19th Support Command and the Second ROK Army to participate. I heard later that my proposal – nothing like it had ever been organized before – was debated among the Korean four stars before they gave the nod for the Korean command in Taegu to participate.

It was quite a fine event, with generals and field grade officers from the two allied armies sitting down to talk about leadership for a day. I provided the extra funds for simultaneous interpretation, so there was none of the usual delay for translation. Because the Korean colonels did not have to speak English to join the seminar, we got Korean Army participants who were not from the usual group that met Americans.

I must say that the eyes of the American participants were wide open the whole time. The Korean concept of leadership was more different than anyone had imagined. The Korean presenters anchored their papers on Sun Tzu as a leadership exemplar. Sun Tzu's views on what we call leadership were grounded in a Confucian view of human nature -- that some men are leaders and some are followers, just as some are kings and some are subjects, and one brother is older and another is younger. That there are leaders and followers -- that some command and others obey -- was to the Koreans a natural feature of human society.

In his lead paper, the Judge Advocate of the 19th Support Command began with the authorities in the Constitution. The Korean participants were shaking their heads. What does the Constitution have to do with leadership? So the Koreans were hearing for the first time American concepts of military leadership, and military law, and a lot of other things.

Going to lunch, I was in the car with the Second ROK Army's G-2, a one-star general. I asked him whether, leading a platoon or a company, he wanted to have country boys or city boys in his unit. He answered, country boys of course. The city kids have too much education. I told him that it was axiomatic for Americans that a smarter soldier is almost always a better soldier, even when duties are not challenging. The general was quite plainly surprised by this concept.

I asked him about Korea's democratization, and he said of course Korea will become democratic but it will take time. How long, I asked. I thought to myself that he might say "twenty years," and I planned to reply that five years sounded like plenty of time. He surprised me by saying, maybe in 50 years.

Q: Your program in Taegu seems a little more expansive than was usual.

BISHOP: I went down to Taegu with a more robust concept of what the BPAO should do. On one hand I pulled out of thin air the concept that the BPAO was also the U.S. diplomatic representative in the province, and the Center should be a kind of limited services Embassy office. In my view, then, any Embassy people who came Taegu way, say FCS or FAS, would use the Center as their platform for meetings, presentations, and catalog shows. We arranged with the Consular section in Seoul that visa appointments could be scheduled by our librarian. Visiting vice consuls met Amcits in our Center. And I aimed to make myself the Mission's most expert officer on North Kyongsang province.

As part of my robust view of being the U.S. Diplomatic Representative, I wanted to do reporting. I had the FSNs scanning the headlines from the local papers, which we translated and sent up to Seoul. We'd occasionally translate an article or the political cartoons from the Taegu newspapers. This was something that none of the other branches were doing, and the Political Section in Seoul loved it.

Traveling through the countryside, I began to notice empty houses in villages when I would drive through. I couldn't understand how a country with a growing population

would have abandoned houses. Examining the census results for the counties of North Kyongsang province, I found out that, yes, while the population of Korea and the province was growing, rural counties were losing population. I visited villages with the dean of one of the colleges to see things at first hand.

One could describe the population losses economically by saying labor was finding a greater return in the cities. You could describe it sociologically, saying it was young people responding to new opportunities in the cities, a polite way of saying the chance to get away from the confinements of village life. Both trends worked in the same direction -- the gradual emptying of villages. Yes, conditions and incomes for those who remained in the rural areas of Korea were better off. Even so, the countryside was losing population.

I wrote a fine airgram tracing out how the pull of the cities, the factories, and the export zones was so great, and the opportunities in the villages were so scant, that the rural population was declining and houses were empty. I understood that the younger people who were staying in the villages were mostly oldest sons, because they had the responsibility for their parents. The Embassy liked my reports. I was being noticed in Seoul.

Q: Well, one of the supposed great pluses for the Park Chung-hee Government was that he was slowing this movement to the cities down, by making farming pay for itself rather than milking the farmers to feed the cities as it so often is done.

BISHOP: Yes, President Park had launched that New Community Movement, the *Saemaeul Undong*. It had many positive effects on village life. In an unintended way, perhaps, it was one of the social changes that over the long run favored democratization, because there was a big emphasis on village councils, village meetings, getting together to decide what to do with the concrete or the money that came to them under the program. I've mentioned that program many times in other countries as a model of how to get things started, both development and democratization.

Another reporting project: I was reading the Taegu newspapers a month or so after the great cycle of university exams which so grip Korean society. A month previously, the students had taken the exams. The universities had published their score cutlines for admission to the various departments. The newspaper article was a follow-up, reporting to readers the grading criteria for the written essays on the examination.

I was quite surprised to see that essays were not merely graded on writing skill and organization. They were also graded on correct content. In writing out the essays, there were certain points the student needed to have made to receive a high mark.

So for instance, one question noted that Koreans eat rice while foreigners eat bread. The question was, why is this good? It's a strange question. The newspaper article revealed that the ideal answer, an essay that would receive the top score, what we used to call "the school solution" in the Air Force, would note that rice expressed Korea's national

character. The flip side of this thinking was that Koreans who choose to eat bread were letting go of their heritage, were being weaned away from the culture of our society.

I was reading this article about the essays just when Korea was going to great lengths to protect its rice crop from any foreign imports. So the essay was a thinly disguised support for rice protectionism, wrapped in the garb of what I thought to be a rather crude nutritional determinism, given a nationalist spin. The Korean word usually translated as “nationalism” is *minjokjuui*, but an examination of the Chinese characters indicates it might also be translated as “racialism.”

Those who wrote the question were using the examination to assure that Koreans continued to eat rice. No doubt the students had earlier had lessons on Korea’s rice culture and the national character. A good score would result from writing out a memorized summary of the lesson. The question is interesting for what it said about Korean education, the teaching of what was called “national ethics,” and for its parallel economic agenda. But it’s also interesting because it revealed deeper concepts about the purposes of education, or perhaps the frame of education. This seemed an echo of how Park Chung-hee got an education during the colonial period. He had to learn to answer the Japanese questions the Japanese way.

I think I might have sent the last airgram in the Foreign Service analyzing the national examination questions.

Again, I was trying to enlarge what a Branch Public Affairs officer did. When the new Public Affairs Officer arrived in Seoul, John Reid, a man I greatly admire, came to Taegu the first time, however, he told me “I notice you’re doing all these reports. Public Affairs Officers don’t report. They go out and they run programs.” I still had a few items I had begun and sent them in. He called me to say, “I thought I told you to stop.” So I stopped.

Q: Did any American companies have operations in the Taegu area?

BISHOP: One of Jack Welsh's initiatives at General Motors was to launch five auto parts joint ventures with Daewoo Corporation, and while I was in Taegu, American executives and engineers began to arrive in the city. They came from GM subsidiary companies like Delphi, Fisher Body, Saginaw Steering, and AC Delco.

I soon realized that few of these Americans had been overseas before, and few were ready for the intercultural challenges of working and living in Korea. As a stopgap, I persuaded the 19th Support Command to issue special passes to the American employees so they could eat American comfort food at their clubs, and I worked with the overall American boss of the joint ventures, Marion Eigsti, to set up orientations to the city. It helped some, but GM had not selected people with overseas experience who were likely to adapt. Some years later I learned that Daewoo had bought out the GM joint ventures. The experience was checkered.

There were a few other American companies in the Taegu area, and I took the initiative to gather them for a monthly breakfast to talk over their common problems. Their American employees were having problems obtaining the proper residence permits from the Taegu office of the Foreign Ministry, for instance, and I “demarched” the office on their behalf. Eventually the American businessmen founded the American Business Committee, Daegu (ABCD), a mini-Amcham.

Q: The decade of the 80s was an important period in Korea's political development, away from authoritarianism, toward democracy. Did you see this in your work?

BISHOP: Certainly. As the tension between the government and the opposition unfolded -- the opposition was largely a shifting coalition of political parties organized around prominent personalities -- there were demonstrations here and there in different cities. A big demonstration was scheduled for Taegu. Ken Quinones, the Consul in Pusan, came to Taegu to cover it. I joined him to observe the rally.

As a Principal Officer, Ken had a huge black car. We slowly cruised down the main avenues near the rally, which was held in a downtown theater. With its diplomatic plates, Ken was showing one and all that the Americans were there. The driver parked the car, and Ken and I began to amble toward the planned route of march. Within 30 seconds we had a tail of security officers walking not-so-discreetly behind us.

Ken talked to a few people. We found an office building. We went in the front door, went up the stairs, and went onto the roof of the building. We were looking down on the square. So were the policemen who were with us. So far we weren't doing anything that would alarm the police, but they were watching us. Indeed, the police had anticipated our presence and had assured that some policemen were ready to follow us.

When people left the theatre after the speeches, they poured out, raised a big party banner, and began a long march down the main road, passing right by the building. I thought to myself, “So this is what political officers do! It's pretty neat stuff.” We were relishing our great view of things, our anonymity, and how clever we had been.

Below us, the opposition leaders were walking just behind the huge party flag. One of them was future President Kim Young-sam. Another was Yi Man-sup, who would become Speaker of the National Assembly. We heard a buzz from the street, and we noticed that everybody in the march was looking up at the two of us and waving. They were passing the word down the line of march that the Americans are here. We waved back. How they spotted us I still have no idea, but anyway, we were local stars.

The government at the time was trying to use any legal method possible to suppress these demonstrations. So for instance, members of the opposition who were asking citizens to sign petitions were detained under the authority of the Control of Sidewalks Law. Of course if they had applied for a permit, they wouldn't have gotten it.

I think it was in 1986, when we organized our July 4 reception at the American Cultural Center, the mayor and all the city's senior officials attended. I got roused up and wrote out remarks for that ceremonial occasion that expressed our support for democracy and a criticism of using the Control of Sidewalks Law. The mayor left. I was a brash young officer who had pushed the local folks a little too hard. The mayor was friendly and fine with me, before and after, but that day I had crossed a line. Once again, this was how I was trying to be more than a Branch Public Affairs Officer.

When Jim Lilley became Ambassador he was anxious to get around to see the different cities. He came to Taegu, and he intended to stay overnight, so it was a large effort for me to organize the visit. Naturally, he had to call on the Mayor, and they had a good talk, partly because I had prepared a list of intelligent questions for the Ambassador to ask the Mayor. Afterwards, a newspaper reported that the Mayor had told a conference of city officials that he'd been surprised by how well-informed Ambassador Lilley was about local conditions, and that all of his own people should be equally well-informed. I smiled inside.

I was anxious for Ambassador Lilley to meet some of the opposition people in the Taegu area. I arranged for him to meet four prominent local radicals, or at least radicals who were not completely off the wall. I knew that the local authorities would be quite unhappy with the idea of the Ambassador meeting these people. For instance, one was the Catholic priest who had visited my house when I discovered the police vigilance on my activities.

I wrote out Ambassador Lilley's schedule to say that he would lunch at Camp Walker, and then he'd rest for an hour and a half. On that day, the Korean National Police motorcycle unit, which took the Ambassador through the city on every one of his calls, motored up with his car to the front gate of Camp Walker. They let him pass through the gate, and then the motorcycle policemen stood down for him to come back two and a half hours later.

We didn't go to lunch on the base, though. We drove right through the camp, and we exited via the back gate. We went, on our own, to a local Catholic church where the radicals and the interpreters were waiting. I'm kind of pleased with my small deception of the KNP.

It was a very good meeting with really frank talk between the radicals and Ambassador Lilley. The Ambassador learned some things from the conversation – absorbed nuance and context – that he hadn't heard before.

And -- I think that Ambassador Lilley, with his background in the CIA, liked the spunk of that event, sort of pulling a fast one on the local authorities who were none the wiser. When I went up to Seoul for a few months after I had finished in Taegu, I found that I was pulled into a lot of meetings with Ambassador Lilley because he valued my experience in the field.

I'd been hearing rumors that the opposition published an underground magazine, named *Mal*, the word for talk, or speech. I began to ask around, who has a copy? The usual response was "magazine, what magazine?" The word was out, though, that I was interested, and finally I was given a copy by one of my contacts at a university. With the FSNs, we translated the table of contents and a few articles to give a full report to the Embassy. I was the first in the Mission to have a copy.

The article that most caught my eye explained the system of press controls by the government. The article described how the editors of all the newspapers in Korea received a daily conference call from the Ministry of Information. They were told about what stories to play up, or play down, or omit. What stories to run on page 1 above the fold, which to place on page 13. Which facts to report, what photos to use, or what stories not to report at all. For instance, when the CIA Director visited Korea, the Ministry told the editors not to report it at all.

One of the Ministry's regular techniques focused on Congressional testimonies by Administration principals. The usual shape of remarks at Congressional hearings was this. After the obligatory genuflection to the Committee Chairman -- we have accomplished so much thanks to your leadership, Mr. Chairman -- the body of the statement spoke of balance in U.S. policy. On one hand, the U.S. expressed its solidarity with the Republic of Korea as it faced threats from the North. On the other hand, however, we were pressing the Korean government to improve its record in human rights and to respond to the Korean people's hopes for a greater democracy.

Editors knew of the testimonies and speeches because the Embassy sent them full copies, and of course they read reports on the hearings coming in from the wires. But the instructions from the Ministry to editors were -- you may quote the first part of the remarks, the part that emphasizes U.S. solidarity with the ROK on security -- while you may not report the criticism of human rights. The Korean Government was itself editing or filtering what we said. It was scrubbing any news about U.S. policy that supported democratization. Over time, this was increasing the public perception that the United States supported and empowered President Chun's authoritarianism.

In any case, I was the first in the Mission to obtain a copy of the magazine, and in this case I broke John Reid's ruling that branches not engage in reporting.

While my #2 FSN, Mr. Kwon Hwa-soon, was translating articles for that report to the Embassy, I could hear him cursing in his office. The article in *Mal* revealed things he was unaware of. He was hopping mad over what was being done by the Ministry because he was part of our daily efforts to explain U.S. policy.

My report to the Embassy was leaked to UPI, so my analysis had a brief moment in the sun. We understood better that the anti-American wind hadn't just started blowing on its own. The Korean government was adversely shaping public perceptions of its ally.

Q: I was listening to our last interview, and we talked in some length about the publication Problems of Communism. But in a way this wouldn't be particularly apropos of North Korea because North Korea was so beyond the pale. Other Communist societies were benign by comparison.

BISHOP: *(laughs)* Right. I remember we circulated *Problems of Communism* in Korea, and there were some regular readers. I think you're right, though, the journal mostly focused on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Q: It was a different world then. By the way, during this time we were improving our relations with China.

BISHOP: Well, you're right, we were trying to develop a positive relationship with China in the mid-1980s, but I don't recall that we in Korea were talking much about China. I also think that the South Koreans had not quite begun to appreciate the changes in China. It had not begun to register with them yet. Trade across the Yellow Sea had not yet begun to develop. I'm not sure it was on young people's minds.

Q: What about Japan?

BISHOP: Well, Japan. Anybody who's been around Korea very long knows that the mistrust between Koreans and the Japanese runs very deep. The colonial period is still within living memory. After the establishment of the First Republic in 1948, it took more than a decade and a half for Korea even to establish diplomatic relations with Japan. The prospect of normalization in the 1960s created quite a backlash, quite a stir, and there were angry demonstrations by the students. I know because my wife participated when she was at Seoul National University.

Japan's reluctance to own up to what they did during the colonial period and the war has always made things more difficult, too.

Certain countries have deeply scarred national memories, or deep scars of memory. For us, there's a deep scar about the Civil War. It's now a century and a half since the Civil War began, but the war's still alive with us. It touches all kinds of our domestic issues and still affects our thinking. The scar heals more as the years pass, and today we have a little calmer understanding of the Civil War, but it had such a wrenching emotional impact on our country's history that we never get away from it.

With China, the Second World War was the big scar -- the agony from 1937 until 1945, the sheer scale of suffering and death, the viciousness of the Japanese, the uprooting of so many people. China's scars and its narrative of the Second World War fit into its larger narrative of victimization and humiliation from the time of the Opium Wars. The thinking goes that the Westerners put China down and destroyed our country from the outside. They denied us our rightful place in the world, and we're going to get even.

With Korea the scars were the Japanese colonial period and the Korean War. These scars are important because they shape and color the national narrative, the self-understanding that people have about themselves. With Korea, the narrative of the Japanese colonial period nests inside the idea that Korea is a poor defenseless country caught between the large powers. The large powers are only trouble, and they're unhelpful for the development of our own pure Korean nation.

Continuing a little more on national histories, for Americans, the scars of the Civil War are a long time ago, so while the memory is alive, we don't get shocked by something that challenges our usual understanding of the Civil War. Indeed, we continue to think about the Civil War in new ways.

In China's and Korea's case, the scars are fresh enough, just a generation or two behind, that when the scar is poked, things can really be stirred up. In China, the Belgrade bombing did so. In Korea, we were sometimes surprised by how something would come out of blue, hit the scar and cause a scream, so to speak.

Sorry for a very long explanation.

Q: Oh no, no. It's important to think about these things. We still have 25,000 troops in Korea. There are still incidents, especially where young men of a certain age group are congregated, like rape in Okinawa. Was there anything like that in Korea?

BISHOP: This is worth a seminar.

When I was in the Air Force in Korea, in the early 1970s, I had seen the ugliness of "ville" culture and of prostitution. I sensed its long term moral impact, and I knew it wasn't winning us friends among the Korean people, but the official response was based on disease control, good order, race relations, discipline, and morale. I think, moreover, the Korean government and Korean press weren't inclined to report incidents involving U.S. soldiers. Also, there were Koreans who profited from the villes, and I'm reasonably sure they shared some of the profits with the police and officials so that there were no public stirs. By the 1980s, when I was in Taegu, however, the ville culture had mostly disappeared.

I haven't thought this all the way through, but there were "push" and "pull" factors affecting women found in the camp towns. Women who left their home towns in Korea in the 1960s and 1970s didn't have many employment possibilities, and some of them were lured to the bars. By the 1980s, though, millions of women were working in the factories and the export zones.

And so I do not remember any incident that had terrible effects -- as rapes in Okinawa had recently.

Q: How about your wife?

BISHOP: We were a team.

First, she was the gracious hostess for every event that we did. She baked all the pumpkin and apple pies for our Thanksgiving reception, for instance. She hosted the many guests who came for dinner at our residence.

You'll recall that Jemma is from Cholla Namdo. And you'll recall that for centuries there has been a tension between the Cholla provinces and the Kyongsang provinces. It goes back to the time of the Three Kingdoms, when the Kyongsang provinces were part of Shilla and the Cholla provinces were part of Paekche. You could call it a social tension, a deep buried rivalry, even a distrust. This tension was sharpened because Park Chung-hee favored the Kyongsang provinces, generously funding their development, appointing Kyongsang people to high office, while he slighted or ignored or damned with scant investments the Cholla provinces. Not to mention that Kim Dae-jung was from Cholla Namdo.

Jemma bridged these tensions very well. It helped that she is a graduate of Seoul National University, and she was known among Catholic clergy from her work at the seminary in Kwang Ju and at Sogang University in Seoul. She would meet other Seoul National University alumni in Taegu. She was one of the very few who were from Cholla among the Kyongsang alumni. The vehicle of the alumni association gave her standing. She also organized the first get-together of her own high school's alumnae in Taegu.

Not to mention that when I might be explaining something to a contact in my awkward Korean, she might be at my side helping to explain things right. People listened to her. From her a message was credible in a way that it wasn't if it came from me. She is a gifted diplomat on her own.

I might add that while we were in Taegu she worked at Camp Henry – in Army Community Services under the 20th Support Group. They asked her to organize the bride school programs for the new Korean fiancées of American soldiers – classes, speakers, field trips, and activities. To this day some of the students keep in touch with her, saying how much they appreciate what she did to help them get ready for new lives in the U.S., and to shape their views of the United States in a positive direction before they got there.

Jemma's great gift is as an organizer. While she and her staff were running the Bride Schools, she also referred soldiers and family members from the entire 19th Support Command to its counseling center -- for alcohol and drug abuse and for gambling. This was a very large job, for which they paid her nickels and dimes. We can sum up by saying she was a bridge between Korea and the United States, helping the Army, yes, but helping me and the Mission even more. She can rightly be proud of everything she did in Taegu. As always, she made me proud of her.

Q: You left there when?

BISHOP: We had arrived in Taegu in January of 1985, and we left in January of 1987. My replacement was Donna Welton.

SEOUL, KOREA, 1987
USIS Policy Officer

In the personnel system, I was “off cycle,” and I wasn’t due at the Chinese language school in Taipei until it began in August. So I arranged things with PAO John Reid that I could work for a few more months in Korea -- at USIS in Seoul. I became the “Policy Officer” for USIS Korea. I worked on various projects, and perhaps you could say I became John Reid’s utility infielder. I mostly worked two issues.

Q: You know, I mean the thing is -- today is the 4th of February, 2011 with Don Bishop. And we have you -- you’ve left Taegu and you’ve gone up to Seoul.

By this time Ambassador Jim Lilley had replaced Dixie Walker. Can you tell us about Jim Lilley and these forces you have described?

BISHOP: I never met anyone who worked for Jim Lilley who did not rate him as one of our finest Ambassadors, ever. We used to say of him that “what you see is what you get.” He was straightforward with the Koreans. He shared his thinking quite frankly with his Embassy team. He had an incisive way of thinking and a blunt way of talking that I quite liked. I think the Koreans, and the Taiwans, and the Chinese appreciated his directness, compared with more circumspect and cautious talk by many other Americans from the Embassy or from Washington.

Now that I have read his book, I have a better feeling for how Ambassador Lilley may have developed that way. Ambassador Lilley’s older brother had committed suicide soon after the end of World War II, and it affected Jim. Ambassador Lilley’s take on what had happened was that his brother had been a very idealistic person depressed by the dissonance between his ideals and the reality that he saw in wartime China, post-war China, and post-war Japan. In the grip of the depression he took his own life.

This led Jim Lilley to always hone in on realities, to face things as they are. We often talk about “realists” and “idealists” in foreign policy. I editorialize that these labels are not always helpful. Many “realists” don’t admit plain facts that mess up their concepts. Or they hesitate to report realities that run against an Administration’s policy. But that’s a topic for another day.

Most, I suppose, would count Ambassador Lilley as a realist, but I found his “realism” co-existed with a deep fidelity to American ideals and America’s role in the world. He had a different shade of realism. In any case, his manner was invariably honest and direct. He edged up toward bluntness in normal diplomacy. I found this refreshing, perhaps because my own learned habits of diplomatic circumspection are somewhat at war with my desire for straight talk.

Jim Lilley stories? I sat in on an interview he gave with a famous American journalist. Actually, it was little more complicated than that. The meeting was scheduled with the journalist's wife, who was with one of the foundations, as I recall, and the journalist came along. Speaking to the wife about his experiences working in Korea, Ambassador Lilley was relating how the Korean government was resisting opening its market to American products. Korean government interlocutors frequently relied on the need to protect infant industries, even though their conglomerates were becoming quite competitive.

Ambassador Lilley said something like, "Oh well, one day, there's the little cute infant in the bathtub, but pretty soon you have a gorilla in your tub." Everyone laughed.

The journalist violated the guidelines for the conversation and published it in the *Baltimore Sun*. Whenever you use animal metaphors in other societies you'd better be very careful. A general at the Eighth Army had called the Koreans lemmings, which got translated as "field rats" in Korean, and there was a sharp reaction. After the interview appeared in the newspaper, there was some ducking and weaving needed to try to extract Jim Lilley from having called the Koreans gorillas. He had merely used an off the cuff metaphor.

I wrote one of his speeches for the Korean Bar Association about constitutional reform and change, and we had some back and forth as he put his own stamp on my draft. Ambassador Lilley was not a wild-eyed liberal. I guess I would say he favored a careful transition from the authoritarian system that was in place to something that was more liberal and democratic. By "careful" I don't mean "prolonged," but he wasn't in favor of radical solutions to the crisis. At least this was my junior officer's take on things.

Q: Well, did you in this see a division in maybe viewpoint or -- between our military command and the Embassy?

BISHOP: It's entirely natural and understandable that some senior officers at Yongsan, being soldiers, had close working relationships with Korean generals, and they had a natural rapport with their Korean allies. They tended to most value the need for American solidarity with Korea against the threat of the north. I'd say they were less knowledgeable about the rising desires for liberalization among students and families and businesspeople. So there was that.

USIS people didn't generally get to be in on the innermost political discussions between the political officers and the Ambassador and DCM, or when the Assistant Secretary or one of the DAS's (Deputy Assistant Secretary) would come to visit, so I can't give you any sense of American policy discussions at the highest level. It's clear, though, that the Embassy on the whole was on the side of liberalization but was trying to figure out how to make it work smoothly.

Q: What were the issues on your plate in Seoul?

BISHOP: As in Taegu, the large public affairs issue at that time was what we called the anti-American wind, in Korean the *pan-Mi param*, a big bundle of tensions and grievances about America's place in Korea, and the control or the influence or the ties we had with the generals, meaning in this case President Chun Doo-hwan. As I've mentioned before, the wind was stronger because many Koreans believed that the U.S. supported the generals. This may carry the weather metaphors too far, but the anti-American wind was part of the brewing storm over Korea's democratization.

The democratic wind was blowing harder in 1987 when we moved to Seoul. They came to a head in June of 1987. I've just finished rereading Jim Lilley's chapters on Korea in his book, *China Hands*. He, and the Mission, were trying to align the firm American commitment to Korea security and the ordinary and necessary ties we had with the Korean government with the rising aspirations of the Korean people and their desire for a more democratic government. At USIS we were dealing with the growing anti-American feeling.

It was clear we had to start communicating directly with Korean students. As a subset of the population they were highly idealistic. They were away from home and feeling more independent. They carried within themselves the idea once they graduated and got on with their lives – and once they had families, once they had jobs, they would be vulnerable to any pressure from the government -- which would weaken their willingness to take risks for democracy. As students, this was the time that they were unencumbered by these obligations, and this was when they could act.

As I mentioned earlier, the students had an idealistic yearning for the unification of Korea. They were attracted to the lines of thinking that blamed the original division of Korea on the United States, and they wondered whether the U.S. hindered Korean reunification for some dark reason of our own. We were cruelly thwarting the natural unity of the Korean people, who longed to be together, some reasoned. The publication and translation into Korean of Bruce Cumings' history of U.S.-Korean relations gave a boost to this interpretation.

I knew these feelings and the anti-American wind were natural expressions of heartfelt opinion – misinformed, yes, romantic, perhaps, but entirely understandable and entirely developing within the idea-forming sectors of Korean society.

There were others – some in the South Korean security agencies – who believed these ideas must have come from North Korea because they ran parallel to so much propaganda from the North. When a discredited and disliked ROK government said liberal thinking comes from the North – have you been listening to North Korean broadcasts? – it caused resentment. It led some Koreans to believe that their government always lies, so its accounts of a cruel and repressive North Korea were suspect.

In any case, it was clear that USIS needed to give more attention to students. I had been meeting them in Taegu, so my understanding of their thinking and their misconceptions about the U.S. and U.S. policy in Korea was fairly fresh.

The AIO in Seoul was Carl Chan, who is just now finishing up as Executive Director of the Advisory Commission of Public Diplomacy. His idea for reaching the student audience was to publish a special newspaper for students. He created *Sisa Nonpyong* out of nothing. It was an eight-page tabloid, words only, no photos, published once a month. I worked with Carl on content. We could, for instance, report on both sides of U.S. policy – both our support for security against the North and support for democracy. The Korean government’s daily instructions to newspaper editors blocked this full view. In any case, the newspaper aimed at the students really made an impact on the campuses. Even if the students didn’t appreciate all of our policies, they appreciated being communicated with directly.

As I’ve mentioned before, there were some Korea experts in the administration who were reluctant to undermine the Korean government. A U.S. internal policy debate over Korea would have hampered our direct communication with the students and other publics because we in USIS would have to be careful and restrained in what we might say. Carl and I were helped by the speech given by Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Gaston Sigur in February, 1987, which put the U.S. firmly on the side of democratization. It illustrates the principle that Public Diplomacy people in the field need words to quote, principles to hone in on, policy to follow. Ambiguity, careful words, or hesitation don’t foster strong advocacy.

Q: Well, were you there for the student demonstrations?

BISHOP: By the time I got to Seoul, there were daily and weekly student demonstrations. When you had a chance to see them occur at first hand (not just on television) as I did in Taegu and Seoul, you noticed quite clearly that they were very confined, usually taking place in front of a university’s gates.

It was theater in a way. The combat police with their shields were on one side. Many of those combat policemen were draftees. On the other side were the students, coming out of the university main gate to shake their fists and to toss a “Molotov cocktail” -- often just a soda bottle with a tablespoon full of kerosene or lighter fluid. They wanted it to show well on TV but not to actually harm their own classmates who were in the combat police.

I recall flying in a helicopter over Seoul. It just happened that a demonstration was going on outside the Yonsei University gate. From the air I could see a bit of smoke and the crowd. But the rest of the city was completely untouched.

The tight focus of the television cameras on the demonstrations, day after day, communicated the impression of a great social disorder -- and possibly an imminent revolution in Korean society -- in a way that certainly wasn’t justified by any objective view of what was going on. And of course you wonder that even today about events in Egypt. The cameras are on the crowd, but what else goes on in the city? You never know. That’s why Foreign Service Officers have to see things with their own eyes.

I do remember walking through the Kyonghui University campus as the cherry blossoms were blooming that spring, however. This is a famous sight; the campus is stunningly beautiful at that time of year; thousands of Koreans come from all over to stroll through the grounds. As my wife and I entered the campus, though, I began to sneeze. A slight breeze blew through the tree leaves, blowing off tear gas particulates that had come to rest during an earlier campus demonstration.

Q: Well, now while you were in Seoul, did you have contact with the professors or the faculties at any of the universities? And if you did, sort of what was their take on what was happening?

BISHOP: I'd had two years of contact with academics in Taegu because a Branch Public Affairs Officer does more on what we call the cultural affairs side of Public Diplomacy. And yes, through my wife, and from past contacts, and from my own minor standing as a Korean studies scholar, I had plenty of contacts at the universities.

I would say that the professors clearly stood on the liberal side of things. They ardently hoped for liberalization. They were basically sympathetic to their students. Still, they, like all adults in Korea, knew that their positions were vulnerable to government pressure and sanction. A prof who became too radical knew he placed his job at risk. So many faculty tended to channel their aspirations in scholarly ways, whereas the students channeled them in demonstrative and political ways.

There's another thread to mention. This was 1987. A student who was 20 would have been born in 1966 or 1967. Their parents had endured the Korean War, but the students hadn't. It wasn't in their memories. They had grown up as Korea had begun its economic takeoff. So there was a generational divide between the students and their professors.

A second issue I dealt with concerned the American Forces Korea Network, AFKN.

Political tensions were growing in the spring of 1987. So was the number of demonstrations. What Koreans knew about these demonstrations did not come to them from their own newspapers, television, or the Yonhap News Agency. Rather the news reached them from foreign news reports. Foreign correspondents were at every demonstration, and of course they made good visuals for television. Many Koreans saw these foreign news reports on the American Forces Korea Network, AFKN television. At the time, AFKN was Channel 2 on any Korean television set.

AFKN, then, was thwarting the Korean Government's attempts to render the demonstrations invisible. The Eighth Army and the Embassy heard the government's complaints. They said the government had allowed broadcasting of AFKN over the Korean airwaves because it understood the U.S. need to provide news, entertainment, and command messages to soldiers. Now, however, you're showing news clips from the U.S. networks on our own Channel 2. You're broadcasting news about Korea, and you're showing videos of the demonstrations that we won't show on our own networks.

The result was a brewing conflict over the broadcasting by the Armed Forces Korea Network. Of course the Armed Forces Network had its own charter, so to speak, which was to pass on American and world news to American soldiers and their families. The AFN mission wasn't quite the same as the Voice of America's, but interfering with the news that the Armed Forces Network broadcast to soldiers would cause a stir in Washington.

I spent some time working with Eighth Army Public Affairs and AFKN, and I wrote out about a dozen brief guidelines for the AFKN news broadcasts. On ordinary Korean domestic news, AFKN would always source their reports to Yonhap, which was perfectly reliable. This was a gesture of respect for Korean journalism. If there was news of demonstrations (not run by Yonhap), AFKN would always source, say, the Associated Press or perhaps a Japanese news agency. The point was that AFN was not to broadcast its own reports. That was to deflect any direct criticism of AFKN, even as it allowed Korean television viewers to hear and see foreign media reports on Channel 2. This did not directly answer the Korean government's objections, but it blunted any criticism that AFKN was itself taking sides in Korean politics. It served for the moment.

Jemma and I left in May, and a few weeks later President Chun Doo-hwan threw up his hands and said, "the system can't continue." He made what was called "the momentous decision." I call it Korea's "turn for democracy." And although generals continued as Korean leaders for some years afterward, they were generals who were elected. Looking back, my efforts were to deflect a direct Korean government challenge to AFKN broadcasts -- so that local Koreans could continue to see things on AFKN that could not be broadcast on their own networks. This was my small role in the events of 1987.

Q: Your time in Korea was coming to an end. Did you feel that new times were coming?

BISHOP: Yes, I had confidence that new times were coming. It was just a matter of how the transition would be managed. On the whole, Korea has taken a positive direction since then.

I did one last thing before leaving Korea. I had consistently been frustrated by the unwillingness of the Embassy and the Department to rebut the Korean government's disinformation on the Kwang Ju rising -- for instance, to clarify that the Korean troops that savaged the city had not been under U.N. operational control, and the U.S. had not "approved" their deployment.

I was dumbfounded that some in the Embassy -- and some in the Department -- felt that if we did so, we would pull the rug out from under the Chun government. Keeping the truth from the Korean people, and placing the Chun government's interests ahead of our own, meant that those of us in Korea dealing with the students and the public were left hanging out to dry. It was shortsighted, and contemptible, but most of all it was *dishonorable*. You don't do this to your people in the field.

It occurred to me as I was leaving that I needed to put something on the record. On the last page of my final evaluation I wrote out that I was one of the officers that urged that the United States needed to put the facts on the record.

Our failure to be forthright, open, and *true*, was a mistake that lasted 15 years. When Ambassador Laney formally apologized to the Korean people – not for helping suppress the rising, but for failing to tell the Korean people the facts – I felt vindicated.

TAIPEI, TAIWAN, 1987-1991 Information Officer and Spokesman

The USIA office of Foreign Service personnel called. “Would you like to be the Information Officer in Taipei as your next job? You’ve had some Chinese, and in Korea you’ve done a good job.”

I asked Ambassador Lilley what he thought of a Taiwan assignment. He had been Director of American Institute in Taiwan before becoming Ambassador to Korea. He said, “Yes, feel free to take the job. Here’s why. There are only four and a half countries of any importance in Asia. The Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs thinks about four places every single day. He thinks about China, he thinks about Japan, he thinks about the Philippines because of the bases, and he thinks about Korea because of the security ties. All the other countries in the region don’t amount to much.” Then he said, “Because Taiwan is always a factor in any dealings with China, whenever he thinks about China he also thinks about Taiwan. So Taiwan is the half country on his list that’s four and a half countries long.”

That was then, of course. The list would be different now.

The USIS posts in Japan, China, Korea, and the Philippines all had elaborate organizational hierarchies with many Assistant Information Officers and Assistant Cultural Affairs Officers. It would take me a few more assignments to qualify to be the Information Officer in any one of those countries. Taipei was a much smaller post, so I had a shot at being the Information Officer. In USIA, an IO was considered to be senior management, so with Ambassador Lilley’s wise counsel I went ahead and took the offer of the job in Taiwan.

The normal track for a China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan assignment was to study Chinese in Washington for a year and then go to the FSI field school in Taipei for the second year of language. I had studied Chinese for only a year before my Hong Kong assignment. I needed the second year, so the Agency arranged my direct transfer from Korea to Taiwan so that I could study at the field school. I got to Taiwan early and had some weeks of one-on-one tutorials. While I was studying, the officers who had just spent their first year studying Chinese at FSI began to arrive at post. I was with them for the 1987-88 school year.

Q: So your first year in Taiwan was at the FSI field school?

BISHOP: Yes.

Tom Madden was the principal of the field school, the CLASS, the Chinese Language and Area Studies School. It was located on Yangmingshan above Taipei, a few hundred yards from the campus of China Culture University. Tom was then and is now one of America's great educators, perhaps one of half a dozen Americans who knows the most about teaching Chinese to English speakers. Another fine teacher led the China area studies block, Richard Vuylsteke.

In our large class of about 30 students were a French colonel, two Australians, and four Brits, so there was a cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Language students in Taiwan didn't live downtown, but rather "on the mountain," Yangminshan, in the area around the language school. Before 1979, when the American Embassy in Taipei included a large group of military advisors, they lived in a large neighborhood of American-built cinder block houses on the mountain. When they left in 1979, many of these homes were vacated. They were formally sold to the Bank of Taiwan, which re-rented some of the blocks of houses to the new American Institute in Taiwan. During our years in Taipei, AIT's Americans lived in the old "C" or "Little H" or "Big H" blocks of properties. It wasn't a gated community, but we lived in little neighborhoods of American families. I liked the housing arrangements in Hong Kong better. There, we were the only American family in our apartment building. We were more naturally exposed to Hong Kong society.

The school and the housing areas were just a few hundred yards from China Culture University. The University's grounds were small, and there were very few on-campus dormitory rooms. The dining hall was quite small. Outside the main gate of the University, though, was Hwakang New Village with dozens of steam table restaurants and video game parlors.

At lunch time, we language school students could walk a short distance to the village. We handed a styrofoam box to a waiter behind the steam table who whacked in all the Chinese food you wanted. They served all the dishes by the spoon, and you paid by the ounce. It cost about \$1.25 for an enormous plate full of Chinese food, made even more tasty by generous dollops of MSG. It was quite an agreeable circumstance. The spouses at home liked it too. If they were busy, and it was too late to fix dinner at home, the whole family could go to the village and eat from the steam tables.

I've just read Nick Platt's autobiography. He and the previous generation of China hands had gone to the old field school in Taichung. In those days the students were few, and they were living in a small Taiwan city. They were away from the capital in Taipei, and there were no Embassy events that might distract a student from the textbooks and the tapes. It was probably a more ideal circumstance, both for language learning and for the bonding of the new China hands. In Taipei, there were more distractions from study, and the classes were larger so that perhaps the bonding was not as great.

Political officers who were at the language school knew that they would soon be focusing on China's internal affairs or its external relations, so they focused their study on learning how to talk about China. Economic officers were doing the same, focusing on China's economy, trade, banking, and so on. These subjects would be grist for their cables to Washington.

My focus as a USIA officer was to be able to explain the United States. Instead of learning the vocabulary of the Central Committee and the Party congresses, I was learning how to talk about the Electoral College, or Congress and legislation. (I enjoyed telling political officers that I had heard that our final examination would be to explain the Electoral College in Mandarin, and you could see their panic until they realized I was ribbing them. A typical response was, "I'm not sure I can explain the Electoral College in English!") In any case, I had a little different focus of study than my classmates in other cones.

One of Tom Madden's initiatives was that each student would spend a week away from the school on a practicum. Many of the students bound for China went there for the practicum, but my assignment was in Taiwan. I went down to the United Daily News Group and worked with the division that translated *U.S. News and World Report* magazine into Chinese every week.

Q: OK. Well, let's see, did you notice any differences between the American China Hands who were focused on China, and those focused on Taiwan?

BISHOP: That's an interesting question. Among China hands, most officers were committed to a new era in U.S.-PRC relations though there were some who had an attachment to the Republic of China on Taiwan.

By the time that I was in Taiwan that had moderated. Officers who had developed a strong feel for Taiwan when they were assigned to the Embassy in Taipei were retiring. My classmates at the Chinese Language School were mostly going to Beijing or to one of the consulates. I was one of a small number who stayed in Taiwan. What I would say is that, by the time I arrived, Taiwan had become the small potatoes in U.S.-China relations. It was, as Jim Lilley had told me, the half country. You had to think about Taiwan when you thought about the PRC, yes. But the shift in priority to developing the relationship with China was well underway by the time I was in Taiwan. That's where the momentum was.

A short editorial, if I may. I should say, however, that there was, and is, a great value to having all the officers bound for China study in Taiwan. While they studied, they were able to see Taiwan at first hand. If they would later deal with cross-Strait relations, they at least had a feel for Taiwan, valuable firsthand experience, an understanding that Taiwan is *the* Chinese society that has become democratic and trading and liberal.

Every China hand will work Taiwan issues and cross-strait relations. A language year in Taiwan had the bonus of giving the future China hands direct experience on the island, experience with its democracy in particular. It gave them a commitment to implementing the Taiwan Relations Act. I've noticed that young China hands without a year in Taiwan have often absorbed the PRC view of Taiwan. That concludes the editorial.

Q: Let's talk about what you were up to after you finished the language school.

BISHOP: When I arrived, the Director of the American Institute of Taiwan, Taipei office, was David Dea. When I left the Director was Stan Brooks. I became the post's Information Officer from 1988 to 1991, three years.

I cannot omit mentioning that every year Taiwan's Ministry of Culture commissioned local artists to create a series of Chinese folk art prints, and the government printed 3,000 copies a year for VIP distribution. I suppose President Lee received copy 1 of 3000. My copy, the AIT Spokesman's copy, was number 704 of 3000. Taiwan is the only place that I knew my exact number in the pecking order – number 704 among 20 million in the population!

Q: Other people I've interviewed have given me the impression AIT is a strange bird, sometimes just like an Embassy, and sometimes not. What was your take on things?

BISHOP: Yes, sometimes like an embassy, and sometimes not!

AIT is a non-Embassy, created by Congress to continue the commercial and cultural relations between the people of Taiwan and the people of the United States. AIT had its own labels to distinguish itself from an Embassy. POL was called GAS, General Affairs Section. It's very satisfying to call the Political Section "GAS," by the way. DATT was called TSS, Technical Services Section. PAS was called CIS, Culture and Information Section. And the IO was called the "Spokesman." I followed David Hess in the job.

We regularly warped the language. Unable to say that Taiwan is a "country" or a "state" or a "nation," unable to use the word "national" or any other word that might imply sovereignty, we came up with our own usages, saying "on the island" or "in this society."

The people who live on the island are usually broken into two groups, the Mainlanders and the Taiwanese. The Mainlanders are those who came to Taiwan in 1949 with Chiang Kai-shek. Whatever their family's place of origin in China, in Taiwan they spoke Mandarin, the "national language."

The English word "Taiwanese" is properly an ethnic description of those Chinese, mostly from Fujian province across the strait, who had migrated to Taiwan 300 or 400 years ago. As I mentioned, they speak "Taiwanese," the language spoken in Fujian, also called "Hokkien" or *Minnanhua*. So "Taiwanese" is an anthropological concept describing the Han people who have lived on the island since they immigrated a few centuries ago. In

Chinese, these Taiwanese are just called *benshengren*, “people from our own province,” and the Mainlanders are called *waishengren*, “people from outside the province.”

It’s quite ordinary, however, to hear English speakers say “Taiwanese” when they mean anyone who lives in Taiwan, or as an adjective meaning “of or pertaining to Taiwan,” the island, when the same word could also mean those residents of Taiwan descended from the Fujian settlers who spoke Taiwanese. But AIT was always more careful. We would never say “Taiwanese” to mean everybody in Taiwan. So we just called them “the Taiwans.” “We went and met the Taiwans.” It was a strange usage to everyone but those of us at AIT.

On the whole, people in the Taiwan government and the Foreign Ministry understood the American policy and the imperatives that had led the U.S. to recognize the PRC. They pragmatically dealt with the non-recognition and their diminished international standing as they needed to. Sometimes, though, their resentment at our references to “Taiwan authorities,” “the island,” “this society,” and so on showed.

I recall one dinner when Vice Foreign Minister John Chang -- this is Chiang Kai-shek's grandson, Chang Hsiao-yen -- had an uncharacteristic outburst, telling his American guests that just because we would not call Taiwan a “country,” “nation,” or “republic” didn't mean it wasn't. The Republic of China had a proud history and real standing in the world for its many accomplishments and contributions, he said. He was telling us not to assume the Taiwans would passively accept every slight. I quite admired him for it.

Of course there was more than language that was unique. AIT's organizational status -- created by legislation, an independent organization with “resigned” State Department personnel, not formally a diplomatic post, funded partly by a separate line item in the State budget and partly by visa fees -- created its own headaches. Whenever Washington wanted it to be part of the Department, it was. Whenever it would be inconvenient, the Department disavowed it. This was done in what was to me a cynical ad hoc manner, and the inconsistencies often vexed us.

Visas issued by the Consular Section -- the Travel Services Section, excuse me -- read that they were issued in Hong Kong. Visa fees were an important source of revenue for AIT's operations, but they couldn't be called “visa fees” lest it appear that AIT was performing an Embassy function. They were colloquially called “telex fees” to give the appearance that there were communication costs with Hong Kong and to sidestep any visa fee reciprocity issues.

There was no Marine Security Guard detachment at AIT. All AIT Americans were night watchstanders in rotation, sleeping at Post One for an evening every few months. We generated and received classified materials from the Defense courier network through Okinawa.

Every Friday an AIT officer took our classified materials up to Okinawa, returning on Monday with the materials sent to Taipei. This allowed a weekend in Okinawa, bunking

at Kadena Air Base, renting an old car from a dealer outside the main gate. The trip was on AIT's dime, of course, but with the purchase of an extra airline ticket it could provide a weekend getaway for a couple. Jemma and I made the trip a few times. There were the historical and natural sights including the reminders of the terrible Battle of Okinawa in 1945. One weekend Jemma and I drove from base to base to see how the Air Force, Navy, and the Marine Corps were deployed. That knowledge proved useful during my future assignment as the POLAD to the Commandant.

Q: What was the status of the Nationalists' rule over Taiwan? It had been quite harsh at times.

BISHOP: The Mainlanders had gotten a bad reputation as early as February 28, 1948, when Nationalist Army units killed many Taiwanese. This was before Chiang's final defeat on the Mainland. These troops had come to Taiwan after the defeat of Japan and the Japanese evacuation from their Taiwan colony. The massacres were called "2.28."

When Chiang Kai-shek came to Taiwan in 1949, he and the Nationalist Party (the Kuomintang, or KMT) relocated the national government of the Republic of China from Nanking to Taipei. Chiang and the KMT also took control of the Taiwan province government. Any Taiwanese who had been officials in the province or municipal governments were eased out to make room for KMT cadres who needed jobs. Taiwanese teachers were let go from the schools to make room for Mainlanders. At first the Army was all Mainlanders, officers and men, but as old soldiers were discharged, the Army took in Taiwanese draftees, but KMT Mainlanders were the officers. Within a short time the Taiwanese no longer had any positions of influence in government on their own island. The deep resentment among many Taiwanese never went away.

With the KMT in charge of government, the only realm that was left open for the Taiwanese was business. All other doors were closed. In Korea, the big, politically favored conglomerates, the *chaebol*, were the engines of economic development. Taiwan took a different direction, growth in small and medium businesses, family businesses mostly. The KMT's arrogation of power left the Taiwanese with business as the only field where they could earn a living and excel.

Those opposed to the KMT's rule in Taiwan were not allowed to organize a formal political party. The KMT thus derailed one normal response to their, meaning Mainlander, control over Taiwan, not allowing opposition or discontent or new ideas or Taiwanese aspirations to find a home in a political party. The Nationalists could be pretty heavy-handed in their suppression of dissent and opposition, but by the early 80s they could feel limits on their sway over Taiwan.

Some Taiwanese organized the Democratic Progressive Party to bear their standard, but this new Party was suppressed or given no recognition as a legitimate political organization. For a time the opposition had to be content with calling themselves *dangwai*, which means "outside the party," outside the KMT. They could say they were "outside the KMT," but they couldn't say they supported this Democratic Progressive

Party, which could not run candidates in any case. Even so, the DPP on its part knew how to poke the KMT in the eye. For instance, they wanted their DPP flag to become the national flag, rather than the sun flag of Sun Yat-sen, the KMT, and the ROC.

After the death of Chiang Kai-Shek in 1975, the new President, his son, Chiang Ching-kuo, opened the KMT to more Taiwanese members, and the Party became a vehicle, a channel you might say, for gradually bringing Taiwanese back into leadership roles in their own society. He gave the “dangwai” political movement some space. And the sharp reactions in America to the 1984 death of Henry Liu in Daly City, California, with allegations of involvement by Taiwan military intelligence being aired in American newspapers and courtrooms, showed that suppression of Taiwan's dissidents must come to an end.

It was while I was at the language school that President Chiang Ching-kuo, Chiang Kai-Shek's son, died. The Vice President of the Republic of China, meaning Taiwan, was Lee Teng-hui. Because Lee was Taiwanese, not a Mainlander, this was an important tilting point in the evolution of Taiwan society and politics. Chiang Ching-kuo had, in his last five years or so, seen that the tight Mainlander control of all aspects of Taiwan society was not sustainable.

All of this is a way of saying that Chiang Ching-kuo's death, while I was in the language school, allowed Taiwan to move in some new directions.

When Chiang Ching-kuo died, Taiwan's television did not broadcast their regular lineup of entertainment programs for three days. As an additional sign of respect, they broadcast only in black and white. They filled up the time with retrospectives and patriotic films. Among them were the movies based on the Pearl Buck novels *The Good Earth* and *Dragon Seed*. I had not seen either film, and of course it's a little jarring to see Paul Muni, Louise Rainer, Katherine Hepburn, and Walter Huston playing Chinese. Indeed, Asian-American activists in the U.S. regularly criticized the old films that used Hollywood stars with a lot of makeup as Asian characters. But on Taiwan, the films were seen as patriotic -- as Pearl Buck surely intended the novels -- and the use of Hollywood's greatest stars was seen as a fine gesture.

When Chiang died, there were the great funeral ceremonies and observances, and everyone stressed continuity. As the months went by under the new President, however, we began to see, little by little, elements of KMT control drop away. Lee was transitioning Taiwan to have a much more robust politics in which the Taiwanese had a full voice.

When Lee Teng-hui became President, he inherited a lot of pent-up resentment over the KMT's political dominance. The hottest of the hot buttons was “2.28,” the memory of the suppression as the Army put down Taiwanese unrest on February 28, 1948. I thought that Lee handled the situation quite creatively. He began a series of national events that examined, and indirectly regretted, 2.28, including a full scale, nationally televised concert from the National Symphony Hall of Haydn's funeral mass, to which many

families who had lost members in 1948 were invited. Here was culture used to promote long-overdue healing.

When I arrived, the majority of members in the Legislative Yuan, the legislative branch, were elderly. They had been elected in 1948 from mainland constituencies but had followed Chiang Kai-shek to Taiwan.

At the beginning of each session of the Legislative Yuan, there was a small drama. Members had to renew their oaths to the Republic of China as the sessions commenced. Some members over the years had become American citizens or held green cards, and the opposition press were anxious to photograph them taking their oaths, so that they could hector them in the U.S. by showing that they had violated the new oaths of allegiance to the United States when they became U.S. citizens. The Legislative Yuan always managed things so that these members renewed their oaths to the Republic of China in a separate room with no cameras.

When one of these elderly members died, the individual who had received the next largest number of votes in the constituency in 1948 took the seat, provided he was not living in mainland China. By 1988, the original members of the Legislative Yuan had been in office forty years without facing an election. The constitution and the emergency regulations had been tweaked to provide for regular elections from additional Taiwan constituencies, but the elected-in-Taiwan members were not a majority.

After the death of Chiang Ching-kuo, though, the old system was phased out, and the Judicial Yuan ruled that the terms of all the old members would conclude at the end of 1991, a little after we left Taiwan. Perhaps we can say the political transition set in motion by the death of Chiang Ching-kuo and the presidency of Lee Teng-hui took five years.

Q: Didn't many Taiwanese want independence? Was the new President opening Pandora's box?

BISHOP: Yes, many Taiwanese really hoped for *de jure* independence from China, which was quite problematic. The independence-minded Taiwanese moved into the opposition Democratic Progressive Party when it became legal. No matter if their heart's desire was independence, the cooler heads in the opposition realized that a formal declaration of independence from China would bring an immediate and forceful PRC response.

They realized, too, that they already had *de facto* independence, and so they understood that the status quo served their economic and social needs well enough. At least while I was there, the DPP understood that with a Taiwanese as President of the ROC and as Chairman of the KMT, an important process of liberalization and democratization was underway, one that favored them in the long run. This is a rather brief take on a process that was enormously complex, with lots of interesting currents flowing in many

directions, and many small political tempests. There were hundreds of cables from AIT reporting the changes to Washington.

U.S. policy favored Taiwan's social development and its political liberalization. In accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act, the U.S. would help assure Taiwan's security by providing defensive weapons. When we said that the ultimate resolution of Taiwan's status would be something that should be peacefully worked out between Taiwan and the PRC, we were also saying that the social development and the political liberalization of Taiwan could take place free of PRC coercion or pressure. Taiwan, on its part, needed to understand that it could not cross any political red lines that would cause a PRC reaction, meaning perhaps war. Independence was the brightest red line.

Taiwan certainly had enough support in the United States that if the PRC did something militarily, we would come to Taiwan's support. We all knew – China, the U.S., Taiwan – that a PRC invasion would set in motion catastrophe after catastrophe for the international order. All this meant independence advocates in Taiwan were walking a tight rope.

So far I've talked about the political dimension of Taiwan. There was, however, a swim of other trends underway.

As I mentioned earlier, the language we call "Taiwanese" is also called Fujianese ("Fukianese" in the old spelling), or *Minnanyu*, or Hokkien. It's spoken on both sides of the strait, in Taiwan and in Fujian province. It's not Mandarin. After the KMT took over Taiwan, they made Mandarin the language of instruction in the schools, and other policies relating to education and language slighted the Taiwanese language. Even so, the fact that *Minnanyu* was spoken on both sides of the strait meant there was a cultural pull between the two sides.

When the KMT arrived in 1949, however, they put in place policies to frustrate that cultural pull. They barred contact and trade with the Mainland. There were no direct air links. If an individual had to fly from Taiwan to China for any reason, she had to go to Hong Kong, or perhaps to Japan, to change planes.

As Taiwan prospered, wages and salaries rose, so little by little the labor intensive light industries that had powered Taiwan's economic growth in the 1950s and 1960s lost competitiveness. The Mainland, however, had cheap labor, and new enterprises in China could benefit from Taiwan's more advanced management and Taiwanese investment. So the potential complementarity of the two economies was shaping the desire for more interaction.

There was a social dimension to this interaction as well. A soldier who had come to Taiwan with Chiang Kai-shek in 1949, when he was, say, 20, was by 1989 sixty years old. He hadn't seen his relatives in forty years. He may have left a wife and children behind in China. There had been many personal dramas. For a married soldier, should he be faithful to his beloved wife back on the Mainland, with whom he has had no contact or

communication? Or should he take a new wife in Taiwan? Indeed, many had married Taiwanese, and others, especially those in the mountains, had married *shandiren*, minority girls, “aborigines.”

In Taiwan, we could travel all over the country in our car with the kids. There’s a mountain range that runs north and south on the east side of the island. We made a trip to Taichung and then we drove over the mountains to go to Tailuge, “Taroko Gorge,” a famous sight. The mountain road was not very frequently traveled. In the rain it was hazardous, and it ran through an area where the KMT had given the old soldiers land grants. Their land grants were in the mountains. There wasn’t to be a nice little rice plot for them because all the flat arable land was already owned and farmed by Taiwanese. So as you drove these mountain roads, you saw bamboo scaffolding running up the mountain slopes at perhaps 60 degrees. The old soldier didn’t walk his land, he climbed it using the scaffolding. He couldn’t grow rice. He grew wax apples, planting the trees which bent themselves to grow sideways and up.

The choice of wax apples -- *syzygium samarangense* – “mushy apples,” we Americans called them – as the crop grown by the old soldiers in this part of Taiwan set in motion other problems. These apples that grew in Taiwan’s warm climate weren’t much in demand, so they needed protection, and the Taiwan government banned apple imports from other countries.

In any case, seeing the men in their 50s and 60s climbing up and down the scaffolding touched me. For their loyalty to Chiang Kai-shek and the old Republic, they got a mighty small reward, but they were making the best of things. I thought these old soldiers were quite admirable for their grit. They had been dealt a bad hand by life. But it’s not the hand you get, but the way you play it, that counts.

I digress a little on the old soldiers. By the time I was in Taiwan, they wanted to be in contact with their relatives back in China. The two governments agreed they could make the trips – Taiwan agreeing to let them go, the PRC agreeing they could visit. This was the beginning of what has now become very open and robust travel, and one of the threads leading to more economic integration. I know Jim Lilley thought that the process of economic integration would be the key factor moving the two sides to come to some kind of agreement on Taiwan’s future.

Q: We’ve talked about AIT as a unique organization. How about USIS in Taipei? What was the situation?

BISHOP: USIS was called “CIS,” the Culture and Information Section of AIT. It was USIS by another name. We occupied a fine old building on Nanhai Road away from the main AIT compound. The building had once housed the province assembly during the Japanese colonial period.

My Information Unit occupied the third floor. The second floor was shared by the Cultural Affairs Unit and the Fulbright Commission’s student counseling center

promoting study in the U.S. The first floor had an exhibit hall in one wing and the Library in the other wing. CIS frequently hosted exhibits by local artists, which kept AIT in contact with Taiwan's creative community.

Michael Yaki was the PAO when I arrived. A few weeks later, however, Mike was suddenly transferred to be PAO in Indonesia, and he wasn't replaced for two years. That put us down one officer for most of my tour. Lynne Martin became Acting PAO in addition to being CAO. Later David Miller was Acting PAO and CAO. It was only in my third year that we had a permanently assigned PAO, Ivan Klecka.

Another feature unique to AIT was that the Information Officer was the single manager of translations for the whole post. Most USIS posts translated a few sentences or paragraphs of editorials in the local media to send to Washington. We were doing way more -- between 5000 and 10,000 words each day. My office had a very heavy translation burden, and I had a large staff doing translations. For China, the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) provided dozens of translations per day, but they were not listening to Taiwan. That fell to us. We were translating articles from the newspapers on domestic issues as well as foreign relations. And if any section of AIT needed translations from English to Chinese, the Information Unit was doing that as well.

This was a heavy burden on the Information Officer. I had one locally hired American who did the first "styling" or "polishing" of the translations written out by the FSNs, but I had to go over the final product every day. One of those locally hired Americans, Chris Adams, made a career in FCS and became Deputy Assistant U.S. Trade Representative.

We sold these press translations to local American businesses and to others. We made a quarter of a million dollars a year from selling subscriptions.

As for the normal work of an Information Officer, the journalists all had my name and telephone numbers. The Taiwan media were very lively, and very loose with the facts. I remember that any time the U.S. recommended or urged that Taiwan do this or that, the journalists used the Chinese verb "demanded." Just that choice of a word made us seem overbearing. I did a lot of work explaining that when we did "recommend" or "urge," it was for mutual benefit.

The DCM, Scott Hallford, and others made it clear to me that they favored less press, not more. It was in Taiwan that I understood one of the main stresses on an Information Officer at any Embassy. The book says you should be open, you should be engaged, you should be out with the media all the time in order to explain American policy. That kind of forwardness with the media, however, is hazardous. It's inevitable that an IO will in the course of dozens and hundreds of encounters get a few words wrong -- in Chinese or in English. In Taiwan the media could make quite a stir. Then AIT management, not to mention the China desk, would remember not your dozens of good meetings, but only the bad encounter.

In accordance with the Front Office guidance, then, I'm afraid I had a reputation for being a fairly closed mouth AIT spokesman, congenial but not very forthcoming. Low profile would be another way to say it. Only two foreigners, me and the Korean Ambassador, were asked to attend the annual journalists' dinner and karaoke session, however, so I had good personal relationships.

One of the other features of AIT is we didn't get many visitors from Washington, the Department, the executive branch, or CODELs. Those who did come tended not to be prominent or high profile. One higher-level visitor who did give us a good workout was Steven Solarz, who came to pronounce judgment on the Taiwan elections. He landed in Taipei just as there was a coup attempt in Manila, so within a few hours we had to set him up for an interview on "Nightline" and brief him up on all the views of the Administration.

Knowing the top people at Taiwan's newspaper groups was part of the job. The United Daily News group and the China Times group were the largest. There were a number of well-funded newspapers affiliated with the KMT – Central Daily News was the most prominent – though we tended not to do much with the KMT-owned newspapers.

One evening the Chairman of the China Times group invited some AIT people to an elaborate banquet in the penthouse atop their headquarters building. It was magnificent, sitting at a large, round Chinese table with some of Taiwan's leading political leaders and businessmen there too. David Dean was the guest of honor, and I was at the table as Spokesman. The various dishes served to us were all to die for – the group Chairman had some of the best cooks in Taiwan on his personal staff. The city was darkening below us, the city lights were twinkling, and we were dining on pigeon balls in cantaloupe broth and drinking the finest shaoxing wine. I said to myself, "Wowwww, this is *grand*. I have made it!"

I was feeling puffed up until I realized Don Bishop had not received an invitation because he is so knowledgeable, influential, engaging, congenial, informative, and so on. It was Uncle Sam that was invited to the dinner, and I just got to sit in his seat this one time. I enjoyed the feeling of grandeur for only a moment or two before I brought myself down to reality, realizing how humble a role I was playing in this.

Another thing was different in Taipei: One of PAO Mike Yaki's last initiatives was to set up direct English teaching – the Program for Advanced English Studies -- and he chose my wife to run it. There was some spare space on our property, so Mike built classrooms, and Jemma hired local Americans to do the teaching. Jemma built up the program. Eventually there were 800 students per term, taught by more than 20 Americans. Compared to other local institutes that hired Americans to teach English, the teachers in the AIT program received quarterly training from a visiting RELO and by the several teachers who had master's degrees in ESL. AIT was making another quarter million dollars in revenue from the English classes. Not to mention that over the dinner table I learned quite a lot about running a direct English teaching program.

Q: Trade must have been an important part of AIT's work. Tell me about the entrepreneurial class in Taiwan. You said they're mostly Taiwanese. What were their connections in the United States? How did they get along with some of the Mainland Chinese who were also becoming entrepreneurs?

BISHOP: Several big questions!

In Taiwan, there were some big companies that were owned by Mainlanders, usually government supported companies. Some of them were owned by the KMT because Sun Yat-sen had the idea that the revolution, and the Nationalist Party, could be partially financed by business profits.

Most of the businesses, however, were owned by Taiwanese. I've already mentioned that Taiwan's entrepreneurial energy was in the small and medium businesses. They were export-oriented, trading with the world. Often, the Taiwan companies were producing components of products to send to Japan or the United States. Sometime they produced whole products, but the brand was "Sears" or "Westinghouse."

The Taiwan firms knew they needed to produce for export under their own brand names, but this had just begun. They could make money producing components, but they wanted the additional profits that came from producing and selling their own brand through their own distribution networks. I suppose Acer Computers was the first well-known Taiwan brand.

Taiwan entrepreneurs were beginning to open franchises of American companies, and Avon Products was pioneering direct sales by their Taiwan Avon Ladies. The American head of the Taiwan branch of Avon Products, Tom Coopat, was a good friend. One day I asked him how many Avon Ladies there were in Taiwan. Sometimes when you ask a question you think you know what the answer may be. I thought he would say there were eight or nine hundred Avon Ladies. But he startled me by saying, "18,000." He had an army division's worth of Avon ladies marketing their cosmetics and beginning shape the company's product lines in this new market.

Taiwan's trade patterns were affected to some degree by its unique, outsider political status. Taiwan and South Africa – apartheid South Africa, another political outsider – had a very robust trade relationship. I heard that almost all the personal computers used in South Africa came from Taiwan. Every South African Airways flight from Johannesburg to Taipei was full of South African products.

Taiwan was earning its foreign exchange as a producer, but when I arrived it was thought of as a rising consumer market too. The businesses across the strait in China had not yet - - this was the late '80s -- shaped themselves for international trade.

Talking about trade, an unusual amount of AIT's work dealt with trade frictions between the United States and Taiwan. USTR people made frequent visits. A little unusually, wearing my hat as Spokesman I got to actually sit at the trade talks table, not just sit

behind the row of American negotiators, not just receiving a readout after the sessions. I was introduced as Don Bishop, one of our delegates. To view the trade talks up close, to see the back and forth, the horse trading, got pretty interesting.

Delegations from USTR were often headed by Sandy Kristoff. She was what we used to call “big boned,” not fat, and her larger frame was part of her presence. I can recall her sitting down at the negotiating table for the first morning session, looking across at a team of seven Taiwan men, seven suits, so to speak. She opened the conversation by saying, “well, now that I have all three food groups ...” She gestured with her cigarette toward her cup of coffee and some cookies. “... sugar, caffeine, and nicotine, I’m ready to deal.” This discombobulated the Taiwans twice, once because she was a woman, not petite and demure, and second because she was so direct. A great moment to watch!

Did you know there was a U.S.-Taiwan turkey war? The turkey growers in the U.S. had identified Taiwan as a potential big market. Now, if you say “turkey” to Chinese they say, “We don’t like turkey. It’s too dry.” But the American turkey growers wanted to export the birds and see if they could develop the market. Taiwan had a non-tariff barrier, an outright bar against imports of turkey. We would ask them to remove the non-tariff barrier, and they would say “Chinese people don’t like turkey. It’s too dry.” We would reply, “then you have no need to bar turkey, let the exporters try, and if Chinese really don’t like the bird, the turkey farmers in the U.S. will learn this soon enough.”

While I was in Taipei, then, the U.S. and Taiwan went head-to-head over opening Taiwan’s market to U.S. turkey. After a lot of arm-twisting and negotiations, the Taiwans replaced the ban with a tariff – a “bound” tariff -- and agreed to take a couple of shipments of turkey, to see how turkey would sell in the local market. When the Taiwan buyers went to Utah and visited the turkey farms to make a deal, the U.S. suppliers agreed to send the big frozen turkeys, and they asked the Taiwans, “would you like that with giblets or not?” The Taiwans asked for the giblets to be included with the frozen turkeys. The buyers also noticed that there were – to be indelicate – turkey gonads piling up in the processing plants, and they asked for those as well.

When the containers arrived, it turned out that the turkey meat indeed sold pretty well. Chinese mothers didn’t cook sweet and sour turkey for the family, but they put the turkey meat in soup for the kids, to make the household budget go farther. There definitely was market potential for turkey meat. And they liked having the giblets.

It was, however, the turkey private parts that caused a stir. They were, we heard, “good for health.” The men would wink when they said it. The sudden surge of the American turkey private parts undercut the market for other domestically provided poultry parts that were “good for health.” It turned out that a local chicken producer made more money from the chicken private parts than from the flesh of the bird. The chicken producers made a squawk, and Taiwan refused to allow any more imports of American turkey.

This set in motion the U.S.-Taiwan turkey war. Of course, not a word was said about consumer preferences for certain parts of the turkey vs. local chicken. Rather the public terms were unfair competition and taking care of Taiwan's own farmers.

There were demonstrations outside AIT by the poultry farmers who felt that our exports were going to ruin their livelihoods. At one of the demonstrations, they threw live young turkeys over the wall of AIT. The local guards had to run down the frightened little turkeys darting into every corner of the compound. Eventually they were rounded up, but not before the GSO, Ron Peters, a farmer before joining the Foreign Service, who lived next door to me on the mountain, grabbed one to put in his back yard. All through the spring and summer the turkey strutted around his back yard, ate grubs and worms and leftovers, grew to Thanksgiving size, and was then eaten for dinner on Thanksgiving. I was always worried that some Taiwan reporter would hear about the turkey that was wandering around the yard next to mine getting fat. I could imagine the news story – innocent Taiwan turkey beheaded by the American superpower. Luckily, it escaped notice.

The conflict was eventually resolved. The turkey growers agreed they would send only turkey carcasses to Taiwan, sans the parts that were “good for health.” And at the trade negotiation table, the Taiwans offered to liberalize sausage imports to allow them to retain import limitations on turkey.

At the negotiation table, our side accepted their offer to liberalize sausage imports, and we gave each other some looks that said, “do they know that Americans are buying less pork sausage, and buying turkey sausage instead”?

In Taiwan, I also learned a new word, “anadromous.” This high class adjective refers to species of fish that spawn in fresh water, grow and live in the ocean, and return to fresh water to spawn. Salmon jumping up the salmon ladders on the Columbia River is one of America's finest spectacles.

Salmon spawn in the Pacific northwest, Canada's Pacific coast, Alaska, Russia, Japan, and Korea. There's a Pacific Salmon Treaty between the U.S. and Canada and a five-nation North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission. The member nations are the U.S., Canada, Russia, Japan, and Korea. Taiwan is not a member.

New fishing technology on Japanese and Taiwan trawlers -- huge floating filament driftnets with small mesh size -- were catching large schools of fish in the north Pacific Ocean. Previously, the use of large mesh size hemp nets allowed small salmon to escape even when the large salmon were caught, but the new filament gillnets scoured large patches of ocean. In addition to salmon, the nets snared a “by-catch” of other species including dolphin, sharks, whales, and sea birds. From time to time the fishing boats lost nets, and on the surface or on the ocean bottom, they were not biodegradable.

Runs of returning salmon up the rivers of the Pacific northwest noticeably diminished. In 1987 Congress passed a law to limit drift netting, and in 1992 the United Nations banned

it. I was in Taiwan in the period between, and we had many talks with the Taiwans to bring their driftnet trawlers under control with domestic law and regulations.

At first the Taiwans denied their trawlers were hazarding the fish stocks, and there was expected pushback from their fishing industry, but gradually studies of declining fish stocks and videos of driftnet operations and by-catch damage persuaded the ROC government to ban the practice. A mere ban did not end drift netting, however. Taiwan trawlers still fished using driftnets, but they sold the catch elsewhere.

The Taiwans eventually gave the U.S. Coast Guard permission to board and inspect Taiwan trawlers, and in time the Coast Guard cutters embarked Taiwan fish and wildlife agents with arrest powers. This was a result of bilateral EST diplomacy.

At AIT we watched some videotapes of interceptions at sea. When the Coast Guard cutter came into view, the driftnet vessel's crew threw crates of fish into the water, getting rid of the evidence before the Americans could board. When the boarding took place, there might be no salmon in the hold, but it was a simple matter to find salmon scales all over the vessel's interior, providing proof.

One Coast Guard boarding party confronted the captain in his cabin and noticed that there was a poster showing Pacific fish species on the wall. The varieties of salmon on the chart were circled. The captain protested -- I circled those fish to know which ones to throw back in if we caught any! Of course the scales proved the opposite.

This was the kind of issue that made public affairs in Taiwan interesting. We provided materials to the media to create awareness of the issue, and to deflect any interest group criticism of the United States as overbearing and violating the sovereignty of Taiwan vessels in international waters. We organized a special one-off group International Visitor program for Taiwan journalists to visit the fishing areas in the U.S. Pacific northwest.

It was in Taiwan that I learned a lot about phytosanitary standards as possible trade barriers. And we played a role in raising public awareness of how Chinese demand for unique animal products like rhinoceros horn was harming wildlife.

Something more to say on Taiwan: I had the best ever comment on my annual evaluation in Taiwan. I've copied it out. "The Chief of the Economic/Commercial Section admitted that Mr. Bishop had explained the U.S. positions more precisely, comprehensibly and authoritatively at his press briefings than had the American delegates at the negotiations themselves." Whew! Great copy! Thanks again, Joan Plaisted!

Q: Do I recall that this was the time of the "Alar scare," about the pesticide?

BISHOP: Well, Stu, you have a way of calling up old and unpleasant memories. Let me think about this for a minute.

The chemical name of Alar, a chemical used on apples and other fruit, is Daminozide. It wasn't a pesticide. It was sprayed on the fruit to control, maybe regulate, growth and allow the fruit to ripen more before harvesting. This meant the apples could be fuller and redder on the store shelves. It had been used by some growers since the 1960s, and there was some evidence that in extremely heavy doses it could be a carcinogen.

The National Defense Resources Council worked with "Sixty Minutes" on a program that dramatized the risks. This was, if I remember right, in 1989. Meryl Streep added her star power to the cause, and after the Sixty Minutes program, all over the U.S., and all over the world, grocery chains and school boards cancelled contracts for apples. Actually, only a fraction of Washington apples were grown using Alar, but in the panic all apple sales plummeted.

As I recall, this happened over a weekend news cycle in the U.S., and there was a furor, something the communications theory people call an "episodic panic." I got a telephone call direct from the Washington State Apple people on a Sunday, telling me their man was in the air to Taipei at that very moment, would I meet with him first thing Monday morning. I called my AIT colleagues, of course, and the USIA desk officer handling Taiwan. He told me about the impact of the program in the U.S., but nothing could be done until Monday when Agriculture, State, and USIA could assess things.

The apple fellow did indeed show up at my office Monday morning, which was still Sunday night in Washington. I learned that the apple growers faced a major crisis. Contracts were being cancelled in the U.S. There were ships loaded with apples on their way to Asia -- the way things were shaping up, no one would accept the shipments. Layoffs in the orchards and at the juice factories would soon begin.

I put him together with the Foreign Agricultural Service, which had to work the substantive issue. As for public affairs, I told him, we needed cleared facts from Washington. By Tuesday, Monday in the U.S., we had the promise from Agriculture and USIA to provide us with papers and articles, but as I recall we didn't receive anything until Thursday. Washington had its own problems to deal with, and even writing out a fact sheet would get bogged down as everyone in the capital had to clear it.

The crisis, and the apple contract cancellations, unfolded more quickly than the bureaucracy could respond, an early example of "demosclerosis." The main helpful information eventually provided by the Washington fact sheet was how many apples, or how much juice, would have to be ingested for there to be a cancer risk. A person would have to drink hundreds of gallons a day to be at risk. Having cleared words from Washington allowed us to issue press releases, and FAS to try and calm buyers, but the damage had been done.

So, the panic hit Taiwan with full force without us being able to do much about it. The manufacturer withdrew Alar from the market before the EPA could ban it, but the decision was not, I would say, based strictly on scientific grounds.

The ripple effects of the Alar scare in Taiwan barely registered in the public debate in the U.S., I'm sure. My personal takeaway was that single-issue groups had by the end of the 1980s figured out how to gain publicity for their causes by being sensational, and the public affairs machinery in Washington was not well adapted to this new kind of challenge

One more thing to say: I've mentioned the Alar scare as a public affairs issue. It was much more. That AIT's efforts to increase fruit exports to Taiwan were set back, with Meryl Streep and a TV show dismantling years of work to open the market and introduce American products -- this is the small stuff. The large effect is that real people lost real jobs. Job losses are not just a number on a chart -- they set in motion family stress, and some divorces, and some sons and daughters not going to college. Real agony and pains. All while there was no true risk to consumers. It was low and dishonest.

Q: Were there other dimensions to U.S.-Taiwan relations that should be mentioned?

BISHOP: Well, the American business community wanted us to knock down any tariff and non-tariff barriers that blocked American access to Taiwan's increasingly prosperous market.

Most Chinese-Americans who were active on the issue of U.S.-China and U.S.-Taiwan relations had come to the U.S. from Taiwan, or through Taiwan, rather than from the Mainland, as is the case now. The Chinese-American ethnic community was generally in favor of firm support of the ROC, the Republic of China -- gosh, I've just used a forbidden phrase -- but at the same time there was a subset of that community which identified with Taiwan independence. We all got the fliers and speeches from the Taiwan diaspora in the United States that had views on China and Taiwan.

Q: Well, how did you find Taiwan's officials, especially with the PRC officials you met later? Can you compare and contrast?

BISHOP: The officials in the Foreign Ministry, people in government broadcasting, and the senior figures in the big newspaper groups when I was there were still mostly Mainlanders. Their families had come in 1949 or 1950, but these men and women had grown up in Taiwan. Being Mainlanders, they spoke Mandarin or another Chinese dialect (not Taiwanese) at home. Their families still had feelings about China. They had, moreover, grown up in the KMT, which was nominally committed to reunification.

If you compared them with a parallel cohort of officials in China, the PRC, the Taiwans were way more cosmopolitan, and they knew a lot more about the world. They had grown up in a Taiwan society that was authoritarian and controlled, but the Emergency Decrees that made Taiwan authoritarian modified an underlying constitution that was democratic in form, and they knew they were part of the Free World. They knew that Taiwan's future, and their personal futures too, lay in being part of a liberal international order. They looked to the United States as the guarantor of their security. The best had

studied in the United States. So they were quite different from the PRC's officials, and enjoyable to work with.

Q: Did you find that you were you clued in from Washington on what was happening from the China desk?

BISHOP: From where I sat, I never felt I was right up to date. I'm sure all the cables relating high level U.S.-PRC diplomacy were copied to Taipei, but we were dealing in the unclassified realm over at the Culture and Information Section. So I didn't always feel read in about China policy at the top levels of the Department. We were largely focused on Taiwan.

Q: Did the voice of America beam anything to Taiwan?

BISHOP: The Chinese language services weren't broadcasting especially for Taiwan. They would include Taiwan news in the news broadcast, but the audience of focus was in the PRC.

Q: In Taiwan, did you feel the end of the Cold War?

BISHOP: Of course we all followed the news of the fall of the Berlin Wall and later the dissolution of the Soviet Union. I'd say, though, that we weren't much involved.

For me, however, "the end of the Cold War" didn't provide any sense of release. If the Cold War was the long conflict with the Soviet Union, then it ended in 1991. Over the years, however, I had absorbed a more expansive notion -- that we were engaged in a Cold War with Communism. Yes, the Soviet Union had collapsed, but we still faced Communism in Asia -- China, Vietnam, and North Korea. My personal sense of things was that the Cold War had not ended. That was just me, however.

I was standing next to the Korean Ambassador to Taiwan at the reception given by Germany to celebrate its reunification. I still remember that the salmon at the reception was the biggest I had ever seen, as big as a white shark, I thought. When the band played the Haydn tune I knew as "Deutschland, Deutschland Uber Alles," I noticed that the singing by the Germans at the reception -- who had grown up in West Germany and East Germany -- was pretty ragged. Apparently none of them knew the new words.

I turned to the Korean Ambassador with my glass of champagne and offered a toast to Korea's reunification. We clicked our glasses with some emotion. We were marking one turn in history, Germany's reunification, and hoped there might be another, Korea's. I asked him, "how many years will it be, do you think?" He thought a moment and answered, "maybe five." History has not confirmed his hopeful estimate.

Q: Tiananmen Square?

BISHOP: I remember it was Jane Chen of the Taiwan Times that called me at home to ask for the U.S. reaction to killing of students in the square. Of course I deferred to Washington.

We had all watched news clips of the demonstrations at the Square, and the Goddess of Liberty. No doubt David Dean and DCM Scott Hallford were right up to date, but over in CIS we didn't regularly read classified cables. In the days and weeks before the crackdown, I remember thinking that it would be out of character for the PRC government to peacefully resolve the impasse, meaning that the demonstrations would be put down with force. Even so, I was startled by the eventual violence.

Q: The Gulf War – Desert Shield, Desert Storm – took place while you were in Taiwan.

BISHOP: Oh, yes. When the Gulf War began, I geared up the Information Section – really geared it up – to provide information on the war and its justification in Taiwan.

I was still in the Air Force Reserve with “Public Affairs Officer” as my specialty, and I admit to being tortured over whether I should ask to be recalled. For a number of reasons I didn't do so. When you've been to war once, you can never let go of your feeling of solidarity with your service. I didn't go, but I compensated by being particularly zealous about giving the war first priority in the Information Unit.

As U.S. Forces staged in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in “Desert Shield,” the guidance that I was given by the DCM from David Dean was this: the best thing that we can do in Taiwan to support the war effort in the Gulf is ... to do nothing.

The reasoning? We needed the PRC not to interfere with any of our UN diplomacy or the movement of forces to the theater. The DCM told me we want a period of smooth relations with China so that they not interfere with the buildup in the Gulf. His guidance was -- let's assure there are zero frictions with China over Taiwan at this time. Nothing should happen in U.S.-Taiwan relations that would irritate the Chinese, lest that irritation rise to a level that might provoke them to poke us in the eye with a veto in the Security Council.

So, so one hand I was doing everything to keep the local media informed about the progress of the war and our position, but at the same time to say nothing whatsoever about the U.S.-China relationship or the U.S.-Taiwan relationship that might conceivably upset U.S.-China relations at the time. This was sort of an odd position to be in.

Recalling the first Gulf War, the Central Intelligence Agency owes me. As the war approached, a group calling itself Historians Against the Gulf War intended to offer a resolution at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association. If passed, the CIA would not be allowed to set up recruiting booths at the annual AHA meeting, which provided an opportunity for job networking. I read this in the AHA newsletter.

I immediately sent a letter to the Professional Division of the AHA opposing the proposal. A while later I happened to meet Ambassador Samuel Gammon who, in retirement, was Executive Director of the AHA. He said my letter had arrived just before the meeting of the Professional Division, and its reasoning caused the committee to take no action on the proposal.

Q: Two places from the past ... Quemoy and Matsu. Did you visit?

BISHOP: I never had the chance. AIT people were not allowed to travel to the islands. Fast forwarding a little bit, when I got to China I visited Xiamen, “Amoy” in the old days, and looked across toward Jinmen (Quemoy in the old days). There’s Big Quemoy and Little Quemoy. I was surprised how close Little Quemoy is from the PRC shore. You could take a boat out and row around the Taiwan garrison. The short answer to your question, though, is that even though I wanted to visit, I was never permitted to go. The closest I got, I suppose, was to drink the fiery liquor that comes from the island.

Q: As we close out your tour in Taiwan, can you tell us a little more about life at this somewhat unique post?

BISHOP: As I mentioned, we lived in one of the 1950s cinder block houses in the “Big H” block on Yangmingshan. The houses did not have central heating, and every autumn AIT arranged for each family to receive a cord of firewood for the fireplaces. The sulphurous air on the mountain meant that in a three- or four-year tour, many of our household electronic devices were ruined as the air corroded the circuit boards.

Getting there from the CIS building on Nan Hai Road included a drive of several miles on a winding two-lane road that ran up the mountain. The Lin Yutang Library was about halfway. In our neighborhood on the mountain, there was China Culture University, the steam table village, a Seven-Eleven, and a small open-air market.

I hear that the area is now crowded and trendy. Then, though, the Seven-Eleven parking lot was also where a sausage seller sold his wares from a pushcart with a gas burner. When you bought one of those delicious sweet fatty sausages as a snack, he would point to a bowl with some dice and ask if you'd like to go for “double or nothing.” Have the sausage free or pay twice the price. I'll confess I never learned the rules, but I always rolled the dice. A circle of onlookers always gathered when an American played for a free sausage, and their cries -- a deflated “ahhh” or a triumphant “AHHH” told you whether you had won or not.

If one drove up the mountain a few more miles, you came to the gate of Yangmingshan National Park, with its own wonders -- the terrain, the extinct volcano, the tropical vegetation, and fissures in the ground releasing sulphurous steam from the earth below. To go down the mountain, there was also a winding back road through the park that ended up in Tien Mu, the road hugging the cliffs. When I wasn't pressed for time, I would drive that back road just for its tropical thrill.

Taipei is a great city for Chinese food. People had come from all over China in 1949, and you could eat any Chinese cuisine there. The food was simply sensational. The movie *Eat, Drink, Man, Woman* gave a nice view of that side of Taiwan society. We had our share of banquet meals, but the simple food was sensational too. On Sunday mornings we would walk down a street to find the man with a steam pushcart who sold steamed buns and dim sum with warm soy milk. Whew!

Besides AIT, the other important American institution in Taipei was the Taipei American School. It originally had been a Department of Defense Overseas School, but in 1979 it became a private school. Our sons attended. TAS is one of the great high horsepower foreign schools in Asia, and our boys got a first class education. It's one of the great schools in the world.

Another feature of Taiwan was that there was no English language television broadcasting. There was English radio, ICRT, International Community Radio Taipei. This was the old AFN station, privatized. In any case, there was no English television for the family to watch, unlike in Hong Kong, where British had two English channels, or in Korea, where we could watch AFKN.

We had shipped our television and a VHS videotape player. Taiwan was the home of the pirated videotape, which you could rent for a dollar a week. In the course of four years our family watched hundreds of movies. We started with the movies of the '80s, then the movies of the '70s, and the '60s, and the '50s, and the '40s, and the 30s. As we left Taiwan, our boys were beginning to watch silents. It was in Taiwan that we all became keen on movies, so much so that number 3 son Edward is now a film editor.

The AIT Management chief, Mike Hinton, lived across the street from us on the mountain, and his son Jamie came in one day while we were watching the silent movie from 1927, "Wings." Jamie walked up to the television set and said, "There's something wrong with your TV! There's no color!" He whacked it on the side. "There's no sound!" He whacked it on the side again. He'd never seen a silent movie, never seen a black and white movie.

We attended mass at a chapel on Yangmingshan. Father Zhai was the pastor. He was a member of the Congregation of the Disciples of the Lord, CDD, Congregatio Discipulorum Domini. The order served Chinese Catholics in Taiwan and China's Asian diaspora, and it was also focused on the evangelization of China. He always had interesting insights on the Church in China.

Many AIT families attended services at an international Christian congregation, and that group sponsored a series of film showings. It might have been in 1990. The series was "Turn Your Heart Towards Home" with James Dobson, the founder of Focus on the Family.

You'll recall I had been a Goldwater conservative in college, and I was cheered by Ronald Reagan's victory and his administration, which came to an end while I was in

Taiwan. Of course, we always mute the expression of our political leanings in the Foreign Service. I had, however, been reading *The Public Interest* and *Commentary* for some time, so I was on the path to becoming a neoconservative. It was in Taiwan that I read a book that had a strong influence on me, George Weigel's *Tranquillitas Ordinis: The Present Failure and Future Promise of American Catholic Thought on War and Peace*. I gather the book's fans include John Paul II, so I was in good company. I see George from time to time. If I mention the book, he now winces a little at the too-long and too-scholarly title.

We could talk about the taxonomy of conservatism for a long time -- social conservatives, libertarians, economic conservatives, paleoconservatives, and so on. After Jemma and I attended the screenings of the Dobson series, from then I consciously considered myself a member of what came to be known as the “religious right.”

Q: Great. OK. Today is the 14th of February, Valentine's Day, 2011 and this is an interview with Don Bishop. And Don, you've left Taiwan in ...

BISHOP: We left Taiwan in the summer of 1991.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, CAPITOL HILL, 1991-1992 Congressional Fellow

You remember that it was the usual pattern for USIA officers to have three consecutive overseas tours and only then go back to Washington. Hong Kong had been my first, South Korea the second, and Taiwan my third tour, so now I was due for the domestic assignment.

There were a number of jobs available. Looking over the USIA bid list, I thought I might first try for one of the long term training opportunities. In the early 1990s, given the austerity of the USIA budget, though, hardly any of those long term training opportunities remained available. There were only two. One was to go to the National War College. The other was to be a Congressional Fellow. I decided that I should go to the NWC to build on my military experience. I really strategized about how to become the selectee.

When I was home on leave, I visited the National War College, I networked with all my buddies, I talked it up all over USIA, and I put a great deal of care into my application that would go to the selection panel in the Personnel Division. I went ahead and outlined what the topic for the long research paper that I would write at the NWC. Since the Gulf War had just ended, I proposed to write the definitive study of how USIA had won the Gulf War – or stated more modestly, to describe the communication and Public Diplomacy side of the Gulf War.

I was not chosen. My buddy who was on the panel told me their reasoning. I was an FS-2 at the time. The panel had met and concluded that I was the most qualified candidate, but I was only a Class Two officer, like a lieutenant colonel in the armed forces. The panel's

reasoning was that they're so rank conscious over there at the War College that an FS-2 would be dissed. So they gave the slot to the number two on their list, a Class One officer. I was given the consolation prize, the Congressional Fellowship.

When I had written out my four-page proposal for the War College, I had quickly dashed off a one pager for the Congressional Fellowship, but it proved sufficient for the panel. I was given, then, this great opportunity to return to the U.S., check in at USIA, and go over to Capitol Hill. I didn't get what I wished for, but I unexpectedly got something more rewarding.

Then, as now, there are two kinds of Congressional Fellows -- Pearson Fellows and the American Political Science Association foreign affairs Congressional Fellows. Those assigned by State as Pearson Fellows were usually sent to designated positions working with the professional staffs of the House Foreign Affairs Committee or the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. USIA officers, however, went to the American Political Science Association program.

The APSA Congressional Fellow program began with about two months of study at John Hopkins SAIS -- their course on Congress and Foreign Policy. During this study phase, we could use the time to figure out what member of the Senate or the House we would like to work for. At the time the template of the Congressional Fellowship was that you would, on your own, sell yourself to a member of the House or the Senate, and then after four or five months you would switch houses. The ideal template was to switch political parties as well. If you worked for a Republican senator first, then you should then go work for a Democratic member of the House.

The months at SAIS were great. The great professor that tended the program and the course was Fred Holborn, and you had a chance to meet the other top minds at SAIS, and hear the many prominent visitors who came to speak at the School.

Altogether, there were ten foreign affairs Fellows -- three from State, three from the CIA, three from the Army, and one from USIA, me. We ten got to SAIS for the introductory coursework two or three months ahead of 50 domestic fellows -- doctors to do health care, professors to work on education policy, and so on. As foreign affairs Fellows we had a head start in getting our feet on the ground. It was a rule, however, that none of us could lay a resume on the desk of a member until all the domestic fellows had come in, so that we would have no unfair head start.

I was thinking, then, about whom to work for, whom to approach. We all sensed that our year on Capitol Hill might later be marketable. This could also be a ticket that could shape my coming assignments. I was thinking, then, about how I might bring to bear my experience to get an interview. One morning, I might get up and say, I'm going to go out and sell myself as Mr. Trade Policy. My experience in Taiwan had been at the edge of trade policy, but it was within my word power to whip up a resume that made me look like God's gift to trade policy and wing it once I was chosen for a staff. Or, I certainly had experience that could bear on defense policy, so I might be able to sell myself as a

Mr. National Security. There were quite a number of things I had some reasonable standing to be able to do. They don't call us "Foreign Service Generalists" for nothing.

I had made up my mind, because I'd been a Young Republican in college, I would try to work for a Republican first. I wanted to re-immense myself in my beliefs. The down side of that resolve was that Republicans were in the minority in the 102nd Congress, and a decision to work for a Republican, meaning Minority, member meant missing some of the real action on Capitol Hill. Republicans weren't writing bills that would pass. They couldn't really weigh in on policy. They could delay, they could amend, they could sustain vetoes by President Bush, but the Democrats were in the driver's seat.

Interestingly, of the 50 Congressional Fellows of all kinds -- I checked -- 47 went to work for Democrats, and three went to work for Republicans. Perhaps that was an indication that government people are most comfortable with Democratic policies and the Democratic vision for active government. Or that they simply looked at the correlation of forces between the two parties and followed the majority and its influence.

In the end, I was offered three jobs. Let me just mention the two that I didn't take.

One was with Representative Bill McCollum of Florida. He was interested in Afghanistan and the Afghan resistance. The Soviets were out. Najibullah was President. The U.S. didn't have an Embassy in Afghanistan, so McCollum wanted somebody to be his Afghanistan person. He talked to me face to face for almost an hour about what he thought I might be able to do. For my career, this might have been the offer to take. But he also told me that he tolerated on his staff quarreling between his chief of staff and his principal staffer for foreign policy. He was straightforward about the bitter rancor between these people, and I just said to myself, I don't need this.

The second job offer came from Representative John Kyl of Arizona.

Q: Now Senator John Kyl.

BISHOP: Yes. Perhaps for a future political career his offer would have been the best choice. It was very interesting. When they called me in, I heard that scanning the many resumes that crossed their desks, they had noticed my USIA experience. They knew USIA officers were focused on international education and exchanges, and they zeroed in on education.

His Chief of Staff talked to me and said, "Here's the score. When Democrats think about education, they want everybody to go to college, and so the focus of Democratic policy for higher education is to prepare every American student for the four-year college experience." He said, "but we all know that vocational education has an important place. There will be some young people whose talents lie in that direction, but we don't have a good national policy on vocational education. It's only Republicans that are interested in this. There are a lot of models around the world, countries that do vocational and technical education better than we do."

I piped in, “Yes, in South Korea they really have horsepower behind their Vo-Tech education.”

So he said, “OK, come on to our staff. We’ll give you a year and plane tickets anywhere you want to go. The idea is for you to become the greatest expert in the United States on vocational education policy. You can then write a bill and make vocational education part of America’s future.” I must say that was a very attractive proposition. Not because it would do me any good in the Foreign Service, but because it would do good for our country. Yes, we always need more lawyers ...

Q: For the transcriber, there’s an ironic tone --

BISHOP: But don’t you think we need more good auto mechanics and carpenters too? And don’t you believe that some young people find that kind of work rewarding? Work that uses their talents?

I was walking around Capitol Hill, thinking over these and other options when a debate on the House floor, being shown on a television monitor, caught my eye. It was one of the many debates on abortion. Henry Hyde was speaking. He was the great pro-life voice in the House, author of the Hyde Amendment, and he was delivering ... not quite a Jeremiad, but one of the most convictional speeches I had ever heard, about the total wrongness of abortion and that our government would fund it. I agreed with every word he said, and the speech made me realize, “What am I doing trying to make myself into an Afghan resistance expert? What am I doing thinking I might make a difference in trade policy? What do I know about vocational education?” So I walked into Henry Hyde’s office, and I said, “Here I am. Take me.”

I was told, “two weeks ago we just gave away our last desk. We just absolutely have no room.” So I asked, “Where can I go?”

They said, “Well, walk down the hall to see Christopher Smith of New Jersey. He’s a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He knows the Foreign Service. And he’s the Co-Chair of the Pro-Life Caucus.”

So I went and interviewed, and I signed on to work for Christopher Smith of New Jersey. In the end I spent the whole year with Representative Smith. That’s partly because I discovered that while switching houses of Congress was doable, it’s very hard to switch parties. It’s especially hard to switch parties if your member – the member you work for - is regarded as particularly partisan or outspoken on an issue.

Q: Abortion would be --

BISHOP: And abortion is such a red-hot issue.

Greatly simplifying the politics, in 2010 the Republicans are the pro-Life party, and the Democrats are the pro-Choice party. In 1991, most Republicans were pro-Life and most Democrats were pro-Choice, but there were still some pro-Choice Republicans and some pro-Life Democrats. The Co-Chair of the Pro-Life Caucus was Allen Mollohan, Democrat of West Virginia. The full polarization of the parties over abortion was underway, but it had not become as great as it is today.

Even so, when I met Democratic Congressional staff and mentioned that I worked for Chris Smith, the antennas went up. This is part of something I hadn't realized before going to Capitol Hill – the partisan character of Congressional offices. Individuals aren't hired in House or Senate offices only for their policy chops or their credentials. A qualified hopeful may not be hired unless there's a deeper or more emotional attachment to a moral or political philosophy.

At one time during my year on Capitol Hill, there was a momentary flurry about getting ready for North Korean families to immigrate. There had been a fleeting prospect that we might establish a Liaison Office in Pyongyang, and one of the concrete things that such a Liaison Office might tend would be family reunification. If a U.S. petitioner, a naturalized Korean-American, applied for a relative in North Korea to immigrate, how would it be handled? A few members of Congress were in motion, beginning to think about how to lay the legislative groundwork. Representative Barbara Boxer sent out a "Dear Colleague" letter soliciting support from other members. I was sent over to her office.

Q: She's from California.

BISHOP: Yes. I was sent over to talk to her staffer who was working the issue, to let her know that Chris Smith might be interested in helping out on this humanitarian issue. I went over to Barbara Boxer's office and told the receptionist, "Oh, I'm here from Chris Smith's office to talk about North Korean family unification."

At the mention of Chris Smith's name, it was as if someone hit the klaxon on a submarine, *ahoogah, ahoogah, ahoogah*, "Anti-Choice Republican has entered the office." It was nonverbal, but the receptionist sat straight up, the scheduler bolted out of her seat to tell the Chief of Staff, and it was clear I wasn't going to be let through the door to meet the staffer inside the office. I was told to sit where they could keep an eye on me. I was a little surprised by that partisanship, but it just is, so you deal with it.

I thought I would visit the Population Institute to take a look at their library and collected studies on population and family planning. I told the receptionist that I was working for Chris Smith. Werner Fornos came out his office like a tornado to grill me on why I was there. That was an NGO, not a Congressional Office, but I learned from the encounter that organizations are shaped by worldviews, some strident.

Q: Well, in doing these oral histories, I'm obviously focused on foreign affairs. At the same time, I like to pick up, you know, social histories too. Perhaps you could say more

about Chris Smith – his background and how he operated. And perhaps you could talk about the abortion issue as it was during the 1990s.

BISHOP: I wrote an article about my year working for Chris Smith in the USIA magazine. For the diligent oral history reader it's in *USIA World*, Volume 12, Number Two.

Q: We can append it to this interview.

BISHOP: Chris Smith of New Jersey. He went to Trenton State College. He was assistant manager at his father's sporting goods store, but he was a pretty serious Catholic and early pro-lifer, and he got it in his mind to run for Congress. He was only 26. The problem was first, he was a Republican in a Democratic district, Trenton and other areas. Second, the Member was Frank Thompson, who was a long-serving and powerful Member of the House. Chris went down to a flaming defeat on his first run. But the day after his defeat he announced his intention to run again. The local Republican leaders told him thank you for running and for volunteering to run again, but it's too early to decide.

Then, Representative Thompson was caught on videotape accepting money from an "Arab sheikh" in the Abscam scandal. He crashed and burned.

Chris said, "Look, I raised my hand first," and all the other wannabes ducked out. He ran, and at age 27 he was elected to the House. His ambition was not for himself, but for a cause.

For committee assignments, he eventually drew Foreign Affairs and Veterans Affairs. He became very diligent in his Committee and subcommittee work. He had never been in the armed forces, so he was not himself a veteran, but he really dug into the issues on the Veterans Affairs Committee. He took on one issue many people just wanted to go away -- to get the soldiers who had observed the nuclear tests, in the Pacific and some out in the American west, who then years later had certain rare and unexplainable forms of cancer, to be authorized VA medical care.

If we get ahead of our story, Chris was the Chairman of the Veteran's Committee in the first years of the war in Iraq. He admirably proposed increased appropriations for the VA hospitals, the GI Bill and other veterans benefits. He understood earlier than many others that soldiers were returning to the U.S. with terrible wounds, many from IEDs, improvised explosive devices. In past wars, these soldiers would have died, but now more wounded soldiers got to the hospitals, more soldiers survived against terrible odds, more soldiers now lived with the effects of terrible wounds, amputations, one or two or three limbs, than ever before. The current level of VA appropriations, Chris said, wouldn't be able to cover all the increased needs for care. He said Congress needs to begin appropriating more money, anticipating the VA's increased needs, right away.

Tom Delay told him “that’s not in our plan,” and they tossed him from the committee. Chris saw a public problem, spoke out forthrightly against it, and earned an unfair sanction, but if we measure men by honor, he stands with the best.

That was the Veterans Committee side of his work. On the House Foreign Affairs Committee, he soon carved out a reputation as being particularly zealous on human rights. The things that he keeps on the walls of his office are things he received from Soviet and Chinese dissidents. He was one of the first Congressional critics of the one-child policy in China. So he has quite an admirable record in human rights. The human rights community knows him as a man who has done really good work.

I was perhaps more conservative than Chris was, but I do not hesitate to say that he is a model of what a Member of Congress should be. He too is one of the great men in my life.

Chris’s long-term foreign policy staffer, Dorothy Taft, had the desk next to mine. She and I shared international issues on the staff. Doing the work of a legislative assistant (“LA”) in the office, however, I had to do anything. I got tossed the environment and education portfolios too. Letters poured in from the district, and every letter had to be answered. It surprised me how many issues were of interest to people in the Fourth District of New Jersey. As an LA, I had to gather information on any proposal so that Chris could determine his own position.

Lobbying Congress was reaching new levels of sophistication. I recall one letter from a New Jersey firm urging that Mr. Smith support a bill on shipbuilding subsidies. No ships were produced in Chris’s district, but the letter came from a local company that produced one part that was used in ships built elsewhere. That U.S. yards were no longer competitive in building ships was even in 1991 a very old story, but someone had fixed on the subsidies that other shipbuilding nations offered their shipbuilders as unfair competition. South Korea was an example.

The bill proposed to create a new office in the Department of Commerce that would calculate the amount of subsidy that went in the building of each new foreign ship. When that ship made its first entrance to a U.S. harbor, it should pay the amount of the subsidy to the U.S. This hit me as hopelessly naïve, creating a new bureaucracy that would calculate subsidies on its own when foreign shippers would refuse to provide a neat figure on new vessels. I could foresee years of rancor and headaches at Embassies. The bill went nowhere, but I mention it to illustrate how companies and interest groups could use contractors or subcontractors to put pressure on members with no influence on a piece of legislation.

From time to time, New Jersey educators would visit Chris's office in Washington to lobby for or against this or that bill. In Civics 101 we learn that education is a state and local matter under the Ninth Amendment because the body of the Constitution doesn't include a single word about education. The framers thought of education as local, and it didn't occur to them that education should become an enumerated power of the federal

government. Over the decades, however, the federal government enacted different education programs and provided funding that went to states and school districts. By the 1990s, the federal role was large enough that Congress was an important player in education policy.

From my vantage point in a House office, I was surprised by the intensity of the arguments over education, funding, content, and curriculum. Looking down to the intellectual premises that undergirded proposals, I could see organizations and individuals seeking to use the levers of federal funding and federal education policy to advance their worldviews. And rather than let these issues be worked through locally, they hoped to federalize (and thus standardize, nationalize, and sanction) them.

Seeing this strengthened my belief in federalism, expressing what Catholics would call “subsidiarity,” letting issues be resolved as close to home as possible. The way I saw it, if Congress were to become the nation's school board, it would melt down from the heat. Not to mention that debates over education would crowd out many other issues that come before the House and Senate. Let legislatures and school boards diffuse the heat.

Q: Could you talk about the abortion issue as you saw it? Over the years there have been shifts over the issue. Now there doesn't seem to be much room for maneuver.

BISHOP: Whew! We would need three or four sessions just to talk about this big issue in American politics. Indulge me if I go back a little bit. Forgive me if I skip a nuance or two.

All fifty states had laws against abortion up until 1973. My own recollection of the late 1960s and early 1970s is that there was a slow but steady, state by state, trend toward liberalization. Different states were changing and tweaking their laws in a direction that gave more sway for abortion. This process was going on in fifty different state houses at different paces. The representatives of the people of New York were of a different mind than the representatives of the people of Mississippi, of course, so there was a great patchwork of different state laws. Still, I believe it is accurate to say that while there was incremental liberalization, no state legislature had adopted a legal regime that allowed elective abortion, “abortion on demand” if you will, as a legal right.

The court case of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 and the parallel case of *Doe v. Bolton* decided the same day established -- I can barely bring myself to say the phrase -- a constitutional right to an abortion. The Court found the right not anywhere in the black print of our fundamental law, but derived it from earlier rulings that relied on the Constitution's “penumbras and emanations.”

The two rulings struck down the laws of fifty states. There was a gesture toward a trimester framework, but in fact the two rulings allowed abortions to be performed at any time before the child's birth. The number of abortions performed in the United States began its rapid rise.

The thunderclap of a ruling coming down from on high, interrupting the process of debate and deliberation in the states – which, as I said, was trending in a pro-choice direction – establishing the abortion right by judicial fiat, not following the deliberation of state legislatures -- had consequences far beyond what anyone intended. The bitterness and rancor in our politics, so much of left versus right, liberal against conservative, stemmed from that intrusion of the Court into the process of democratic deliberations, and from the deeply held conviction of ordinary people that killing unborn children is wrong.

I thought President Reagan explained things pretty well. If someone dies and siblings are to divide an inheritance, a child in the womb is due a share. The law recognizes that the unborn child is a person with standing for inheritance purposes. If a criminal kills an expectant mother, in many states he will be charged for two murders. If the mother of a child decides to have an abortion, though, the state now does nothing to protect the child's most fundamental right, the right to live.

It's so wrong that no one speaks of it plainly. None dare utter the word "abortion," so they speak of "choice" or "reproductive health." What every expectant mother calls, in ordinary conversation, "my baby," became a "fetus," to use medical language to leach the growing child of its humanity and its legal standing. And "abortion" became "termination" or a "procedure." Both are disgusting euphemisms.

This happened while I was in the Air Force in Korea, so I was quite uninvolved. It was not touching me much, but I certainly knew that I was pro-life, and in the 1970s and 1980s I was noticing how contentious abortion had become, and how abortion was debated in Congress. I knew that my mother had resigned from the League of Women Voters in Westfield when the national organization declared its support for abortion rights.

Congress had yearly debates on federal funding of abortion – as part of Medicaid, or in armed forces hospitals, or in federal health insurance plans. Every one of these areas subject to federal jurisdiction became a trench on the Western Front, bitterly fought over, and re-fought over, as the strength of the two sides shifted in each election. Some of those advocating abortion even felt that doctors and nurses who opposed abortion must be required to perform them, or not be eligible to work at public hospitals, and it took the Hyde Amendment to protect their rights of conscience.

Every Congressional law and every administration's federal regulations were fought over in the courts, so all three branches of government became involved. Abortion became the most divisive issue in the "culture wars." It soon became a "litmus test" for Members of Congress. People like Al Gore and Jesse Jackson, once pro-life, moved to the other side when they succumbed to national ambitions. Let me say it bluntly, they sold their souls.

It became a divisive issue with each nomination for the Supreme Court. Edward Kennedy's calumny directed at Robert Bork in 1987 still stands as one of the most low, most base, most hateful, most irresponsible, most vicious slanders in modern American

politics, utterly and thoroughly dishonorable. Abortion became part of the poison in our politics, a major force in the development of the partisanship we so decry today.

Chris was Co-Chair of the Pro-Life Caucus. I wasn't directly involved in the debates on the domestic abortion issues, but I learned quite a lot about legislative tactics, in committee and on the floor. In the 102nd Congress, the Democrats had such a large majority that they could push through just about anything they wanted to, so much of the legislative maneuvering I saw was defensive. The last line of defense was the President's veto, and the Republicans had just enough members in the House to prevent an override.

After I had been in the office a while, Chris called me in and asked if I could begin to develop an expertise on U.S. funding of abortion activities overseas and the groups that promoted them. I agreed, and I was given time to begin a crash program of study and reading, to catch up, so to speak, on a complex policy issue. One great thing about working on a Congressional staff is that the Library of Congress will deliver books and articles to your desk. I began to give the librarians a real workout.

The fundamental question was should the American taxpayers finance, through USAID grants to NGOs, abortions overseas? Should USAID implementing partners be able to advocate – and organize for – changing foreign laws that restricted abortion, so that women in other countries could have the same “rights” and access to abortion as American women?

Whether women, in America or overseas, should have the right to make a decision to have an abortion was one line of debate. In the 1970s and 1980s, this was wrapped into a concern for “overpopulation.”

Of course, Thomas Malthus warned of too many people in the early 19th century, and the simple notion of “overpopulation” has had a surprising longevity. If you read Margaret Sanger, you can find gestures to the problems of “overpopulation,” or more precisely, too many of the wrong kind of people. But the modern concern for “overpopulation” was really launched by Paul Ehrlich when he wrote *The Population Bomb* in 1968, followed later by a sequel, *The Population Explosion*, in 1990.

I read *The Population Bomb*. It begins with Ehrlich's first impressions of Calcutta when he visited. He was overwhelmed by the press of people, the crush of the city, the sights, the poverty, and the smells. It's clear that it was a bad cultural experience for him, and he went on to make the most common schoolboy error about culture shock. Thinking to himself, “This place makes me feel uncomfortable,” he concluded “whatever it is that's making me feel uncomfortable is bad,” and he latched on to the fact that Calcutta was crowded, too crowded. So the whole population movement stemmed from a bad intercultural experience.

In the 1970s, USAID very much boarded the “population bomb” train and shoveled more coal into the firebox. Reimert T. Ravenholt is the name associated with their forceful, take-no-prisoners approach on family planning. If you look at the literature from the

1970s and the 1980s on population policy, population planning, and population control -- if you look at the international debates that took place in the United Nations through different conferences on population -- you'd see that the United States, or at least those who were in charge of these policies and those in USAID, plainly felt that "overpopulation" was a looming threat to mankind. The two famous brothers in the Foreign Service, Paul and William Paddock, wrote a book that said it all in the title -- *Famine, 1975!* Interventions were required.

USAID and the other donors tried them all, whether the interventions were to provide condoms, teach condom usage, provide chemical forms of contraception, promote intrauterine devices, encourage vasectomies, change foreign laws against abortion, or dismantle religious sanctions against contraception and abortion. There was a strong policy imperative to expand "family planning" programs and a lot of money behind it.

Even when USAID only promoted contraception, not abortion, there was a dynamic at work. The mantra became "when contraception fails, abortion must be a backup." So the same people who advocated vigorous population control or population planning or population policy programs -- programs that initially provided contraception only -- also believed that foreign governments should change their policies and liberalize the same way as we had, so that laws against abortion should be repealed and abortion should become a right. They even wanted to use Uncle Sam's money to promote these changes.

I found U.S. advocacy to change laws barring or restricting abortion in foreign countries especially offensive. On one hand, a look at the list of countries that had adopted formal population policies to reduce population growth -- remember, the United States has never had such a policy -- no American Congress would ever enact one -- were most often authoritarian or military governments. They naturally warmed to the idea of "control," and reducing population growth made it easier for them to prolong their hold on power even when they failed to deliver jobs and prosperity. Second, the idea that the International Planned Parenthood Federation would have free rein, using Uncle Sam's dollars, to overwhelm the legislative processes of small countries was disturbing.

Whatever the population control groups, or USAID, wanted to do was, however, subject to Congressional review and appropriation, and the Congressional hearings were caught up in the same bitter debate as abortion. Much of this came to focus on the Mexico City Policy, instituted by President Reagan for the 1984 International Conference on Population held in Mexico City. The policy is often called the "global gag rule" by those who opposed it. The Mexico City Policy provided that any organization that provided family planning or reproductive health services using Uncle Sam's money should not perform abortions, not provide counseling for abortions, and not seek to change any foreign law that barred abortion.

In those legislative struggles, Chris Smith and Henry Hyde, on committee or on the floor, were always at the center of those debates.

Q: I understand that Smith and Hyde were opposed to abortion. Did they take the Catholic Church's stand that contraceptives are also banned? How did they stand on that?

BISHOP: Various pro-life people have had and have different attitudes on that basic question of contraception. In terms of international public health policy, even those who opposed contraception for doctrinal reasons said, let's just focus on abortion for now. I'd say there wasn't a direct frontal challenge to the provision of contraception.

That didn't mean that there weren't issues to raise about programs to provide or promote contraception. For instance, different forms of contraception, say Norplant or Depo-Provera or oral cycles, were often tested by the drug companies in well-nourished European societies. And then they were promoted in very poor societies where women are not well nourished. Early intra-uterine devices had bad side effects. So there was a proper caution about which means of contraception would be authorized for use by USAID, and certainly a reluctance to provide methods of contraception that had not been approved for use in the U.S., as USAID wanted to do.

Not to mention that if USAID's goal was to improve "health" in an underdeveloped country, which is the best use of American funding? Vitamins and nourishment? Provision of pure water? A stronger local health service? Malaria control? Access to antibiotics? Or population control?

As I read through the literature on population policy, I soon realized that USAID, its implementing partners, and the big foundations dedicated to population control were subsidizing a torrent, a Mississippi, of journal articles and studies on fertility and fertility control. Many of the papers and theses and dissertations and handbooks and peer-reviewed articles -- presented at conferences, symposia, workshops, and seminars in agreeable places -- were, ultimately, funded by taxpayers through grants and projects.

I don't mean that USAID funded it all, for the European development agencies were doing so too, along with Rockefeller and Ford and other foundations. But much of the pressure for population control and for its parallel goal of "reproductive rights" was financed by the American taxpayers. Indeed, it seemed to me that the academic discipline of demography had become a wholly owned subsidiary of the population control movement.

Those opposed to population control had no such access to big bucks, but a few brave souls were saying "no" and "stop." In my readings, I discerned three main lines of intellectual challenge to Malthus, Ehrlich, and the population control movement.

Some scholars, mostly economists, challenged Malthusianism directly, denying that "overpopulation" had any economic meaning. Julian Simon of the University of Maryland had done more than anyone else to demolish the mistaken economic thinking. I heard Julian give a talk on his book, which was scorned by establishment economists and by demographers, discouraging him, until a small letter of congratulations on thin blue

airletter tissue came to him from Frederick Hayek. Lord Peter Bauer, David Osterfeld, and Jacqueline Kasun had written strong books of economic analysis too. They were critical of the efficacy of fertility control as an economic intervention that would lead to development and prosperity. All of these scholars were also appalled by the element of coercion in population programs, whether it was mandatory sterilizations in Indira Gandhi's India or China's one-child policy.

Population control had also been challenged by a small group of feminists. They challenged population control just as fiercely as they believed in access to abortion. They wondered why the objects of population control programs were always women. They argued against the promotion of chemical forms of contraception by undernourished women in the Third World; they worried about side effects on women's health; they questioned whether illiterate women had ever really consented to trials; they wondered why development agencies funded population programs, when Third World women needed instead pure water, access to health care, and so on. Betsy Hartmann at Hampshire College represented this group.

The third group were those animated by pro-Life principles. They challenged the movement's reliance on abortion, either as a direct method of population control or as a "backup to contraception." They wondered why the population control movement counted the various chemical forms of contraception and condoms as "modern," while dismissing the Billings Ovulation Method as just a "rhythm method." If I may editorialize, my deconstruction of those who refer to the "rhythm method," always in scorn, is that they hold religion and especially Catholicism in contempt. Not to mention that thinking about how to space or limit births based on accurate scientific understanding of a woman's monthly cycle, natural family planning, had gone way beyond the early thinking on "rhythm" to the Billings Ovulation Method.

If Betsy Hartmann was a pure feminist in the second group, and Julian Simon a pure economist in the first group, there were other opponents of population control who combined two or three of the concerns. Professor Jacquelyn Kasun, for instance, brought all three streams into one powerful challenge to the conventional wisdom on "overpopulation."

Q: I can't imagine just your position in the 1990s, I mean watching TV and seeing by this time the number of congressional interns, aides, and all, women were certainly very well represented. And most of them were rather probably pro-choice.

BISHOP: Well, I mentioned how the klaxon went off when I went into Barbara Boxer's office.

But I want to challenge your premise. It might be that in the 1970s, the first public faces of the pro-Life movement were men, but that was partly because women were yet to take their share of American leadership. I would say, however, that women are very much the leaders of the pro-Life movement now, and it was evident even when I was working for Chris Smith. A pro-Life organization, the Concerned Women for America, had far more

members than the National Organization for Women, but somehow NOW was taken to be the representative of American womanhood. Phyllis Schlafly, Judy Brown, Nellie Gray, Helen Alvare, Maggie Wynne, Jean Garton, Marjorie Dannenfelser, Jacqueline Kasun, Jean Guilfoyle, Connie Marshner, Frederica Matthews-Green ... none of them will agree that women are by default pro-Choice.

And somehow in the retelling of women's history in the United States, the fact that Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Victoria Woodhull and others opposed abortion got omitted from the new story template. So, there are plenty of pro-Life women on Congressional staffs, although I suppose more work in Republican offices than for Democratic members.

The pro-life movement is made up of dozens of organizations, all with different insights, focuses, and moods, Evangelical, Catholic, Orthodox, Orthodox Jewish, agnostic, atheist. It's a messy group, not so unified. There are plenty of debates within the pro-life movement about what's right and what's not, and what's the right approach to opposing abortion, and what's not.

The word "overpopulation" now has a 1970s and 1980s ring to it, but it's still with us. The underlying justification for population control or population policies began to shift in the 1980s, however, so that it emphasized "overpopulation" less and it emphasized the environment more. The energy that had gone to UN conferences on population and demography in the 1970s and in the early 1980s started to shift over to UN conferences on the environment. The Earth Summit of 1992, held in Rio de Janeiro, was held while I was on Capitol Hill. Some talking points on population and the environment I had prepared made their way to the U.S. delegation, and Boyden Gray, the White House Chief of Staff, had them in his pocket when he went to Rio. It wasn't likely that population issues were going to come up, but it was possible. The major point was let's focus on the earth, not on population control.

I should mention one more thing. I was on Capitol Hill while George H. W. Bush was President. Both houses of Congress were held by the Democrats, giving the pro-choice side the advantage in the Legislative branch. Perhaps we could say that the Capitol Hill atmospherics were pro-Choice, and so were the majorities. The President, however, was pro-Life, and he had signed the Mexico City Policy. It changed when President Clinton revoked it with his own executive order, but the Bush administration opposed abortion in international family planning programs. I was one of the only Foreign Service Officers on Capitol Hill working for a Republican. I was, then, defending the Administration's position while I was working on the Hill.

Q: Before we move on, what about China and the one-child policy?

BISHOP: To Chris Smith – and to Don Bishop -- China's one-child policy represents one of the greatest of human rights violations against both women and children.

You can take the view from the human rights angle. Set aside religion. Any government that tells couples how many children they can have is contemptible, indeed tyrannical.

The phrase used for “family planning” in Chinese is *shengyu jihua*, “birth planning.” In English all but the hard core population controllers genuflect to the idea that contraception and abortion are to help couples plan their families. Of course, the intention is that the number of children will be limited, but the talk, at least, is that family planning helps a couple freely plan the number and timing of children in their family.

The “plan” in the Chinese phrase is the state's plan's, the government's plan, the Party's plan. The desires of the couple don't have any role in things. So the party told gullible international groups that it had “family planning,” using a phrase familiar in English. It wasn't a family's plan at all. When I explained this to Chinese, they were surprised, often visibly distressed.

You can oppose the one-child policy from the pro-Life angle. The policy is actually implemented by abortion, and rough forms of abortion, the forcing of abortion on Chinese women, all blandly described by the Chinese as “measures,” another appalling euphemism. That appalled Chris too. It appalls me. “Appalls” is too calm a word.

It would be interesting to trace the history of House resolutions on China's one-child policy. It was before I got to Capitol Hill, but the House once passed a resolution that said the one-child policy was a crime against humanity. This naturally drove the Chinese crazy.

Chris was eager to have the latest and most accurate information on the one-child policy and how China implemented its “family planning” program. The greatest expert on China's population policies in the United States worked for the Census Bureau, John Aird. I met him many times for long talks. We became good friends. John was pro-Choice, but he saw the one-child policy for what it was.

Chris Smith's and John Aird's efforts in the U.S. to condemn China's one-child policy were paralleled by advocacy in the Australian Parliament by Senator Brian Harradine. We exchanged studies and material. The best readable summary of coercion in China's population policy was written by John Aird, but it was published as an Australian Senate document.

Q: Well then --

BISHOP: For more about my year on Capitol Hill, read my great article in *USIA World* for all its deep incisive insights on work in Congress in the '90s.

I will admit that I loved this assignment. Every day I went right to the Hill and attacked the piles of letters, wrote out drafts and papers for Chris, wandered the halls, listened to debates, and stayed late to know whether the pro-Life Caucus had managed to defend the President's vetoes, and I was having a great time.

I delayed my departure from Congress as long as was possible, but finally a whole year passed, and I had been assigned to Washington for three years. I finished up on Capitol Hill in August, 1992.

TRAINING DIVISION, U.S. INFORMATION AGENCY, 1992-1994
Course Director for Incoming Foreign Service Officers

Q: Did you find that coming to USIA in Washington was somewhat -- I mean considerably --different than being a member of a country team?

BISHOP: Yes.

Q: It has struck me from many interviews that, for most USIA people, a Washington tour was usually a nuts and bolts assignment. Things had to be done, but there wasn't much policy content.

BISHOP: That's a fair enough generalization. Remember that USIA officers were not allowed to bid on State jobs.

The usual alternatives were to go into the old P (Programs) Bureau, a little like the current Bureau of International Information Programs, to go to a position in the E Bureau working educational and cultural affairs, or to work for one of USIA's geographic "Areas." A Foreign Service Officer in E might be given a small Fulbright region or asked to toil on organizing International Visitor programs in the U.S. In the area office, a usual position for a first-time Washington assignee was to be a desk officer for one or two countries. They were largely focused on administrative support rather than policy. None of these alternatives were of much interest to me.

Your question touches on how much USIA was integrated into foreign policymaking. I wasn't able to observe the relations between USIA's eighth floor and State's seventh floor, but my impression from below is that there wasn't much serious linkup.

I dodged the usual bullets. After moving from the heady atmosphere in the House of Representatives to the weather-beaten hallways of USIA, I became the course director for the training of incoming FSO's for USIA -- in the Training Division of the M Bureau, M for Management.

I lobbied hard for the job. The Director of Foreign Service Personnel in USIA always took great care with the assignment of the officer who would oversee the training of new officers, and there had to be other nods in the building. It was a vote of confidence to be selected. My direct boss in the new position was Sigrid Maitrejean.

State had its A-100 class for new FSOs. USIA had its own training sequence and its own basic course. Over the years, joint training waxed and waned. When I got to the Training Division, M/PT, there wasn't much linkup with State.

Q: There have been times when they have been integrated.

BISHOP: Yes, there were. When I came into USICA as a new officer in 1979, we were members of the Fourth USICA Class and concurrently members of the 144th A-100 Class. Although we spent 80 percent of our time by ourselves, we were over at State with the 144th Class often enough, and we're all together in the photo that's on the wall.

I ran the training for new USIA Foreign Service Officers for four and a half classes. The "half" class was the 102nd class. I designed the whole course, but I was sent overseas to meet an immediate need before the members of the class arrived.

At the time, USIA was bringing in two classes a year, and each class tended to be between 20 and 30 new officers.

A few of my courses ran 13 weeks, but I finally settled on an eleven-week sequence.

It happened that I was the first person to greet these new members of the Foreign Service on their first day. Many were as wide-eyed as Jimmy Stewart in "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington." They found the building, they found the classroom, they sat in front of me at 9 a.m., and they would be sworn in at 10. I gave them the first pep talk.

On one of those days greeting the new class, I told them they were beginning a fabulous career. One reason was they were going to use everything they had ever learned. Had they ever taken a course in art? Well, there would be some times when they would have to draw from what they learned in that art course. Had they ever taken a course in world religions? There would be a day when they would have to talk knowledgeably about faiths, and they would draw on their coursework.

As I spoke about art and world religion, I could see them smiling in satisfaction. They had taken art, and they had taken religion, and they saw the point. They were congratulating themselves.

And then I said, "And did you take any courses in economics?" And at that point all the smug, self-satisfied smiles turned to expressions of distress. Oh, economics! And I said, "However much you took, you're going to wish you took more." They looked stricken.

The Cold War had ended, and the United States was moving into the end of history, so the Foreign Service was undergoing a great shift – to more focus on economic and trade issues. During my assignment in Taiwan, I had already seen that new focus on trade.

As I designed the courses, I tried to think through in a systematic way what the new officers needed to know. Yes, they needed the traditional thorough introduction to USIA, its bureaus, divisions, areas, activities, exchanges, education, magazines, Worldnet, English teaching, the Foreign Press Centers, and so on. I also included a lot on DOD because I knew that our Foreign Service Officers were not going out with enough

knowledge about Defense and the armed forces. I put in a lot about management because they were going to be supervising people and spending money, unlike their State colleagues. I wanted them to know about international public affairs in the private sector. In foreign capitals, American companies and the American Chamber of Commerce might be in motion to influence a government's policies on trade, for instance, so I had them visit Hill and Knowlton or Burson Marsteller.

And I added sessions on major foreign policy issues. State principals talked to the classes. My goal was that from the beginning the new USIA officers would see themselves as part of a larger foreign policy enterprise. I wanted to give them the idea that they were full participants and contributors. I was inspired by having been with Jim Lilley in Korea, who so respected my knowledge of the country and had seen me in action in Taegu. In Taiwan I'd had the chance to sit at the table during trade negotiations. I had had the chance to be a little closer to State than many USIA officers.

It was customary for each class to attend one of the State Department's noon briefings. I added visits to the Pentagon and to the White House for their briefings. The visit to the White House had the added bonus of giving our JOT's a look at some celebrities like Helen Thomas and Brit Hume and Andrea Mitchell.

On one of the appointed days at the White House, we arrived at the gate and were told the day's press briefing had been cancelled, how come we hadn't heard? I learned, though, that there was to be a large gathering in the East Room, with both President Clinton and Vice President Gore greeting a group of top businessmen who were expressing their support for the President's latest economic initiative. This was better, and the White House folks agreed that our class members could stand in the back of the East Room to observe.

The businessmen provided the backdrop behind the podium, the Vice President gave a good introduction of the President, and President Clinton began his remarks on the economic initiative. I had not seen the President in person before, and I could sense the magnetism that he famously communicated.

As the President was speaking, Dee Dee Myers and George Stephanopoulos entered the room from a side door and stood just a few feet from our group. What I remember most about that moment is that one of our young women officers was totally distracted looking at George Stephanopoulos – then considered one of Washington's most eligible bachelors – from behind. Her hand moved up so that she could touch his famously disheveled hair – almost – before she realized what she was doing! Whew! Chemistry!

I knew some of the tasks that junior officers were likely to be handed at post. I had each of them write a July 4 speech for an Ambassador, for instance. I told them that frequent reference to purple mountains majesty and amber waves of grain was authorized.

One class was in session during the 1992 election campaign, so we organized the kind of "election central" reception that is common at Embassies and Consulates. The members

of the class read all the USIA election publications, set up the TV monitors, and invited people from USIA offices as guests. One scene has stayed with me. When the networks declared that Bill Clinton had won the election, several members of the class broke out in big smiles and gave each other high fives. I guess I know whom they had voted for! I had to introduce them to the concept of Foreign Service neutrality -- that FSOs don't let foreigners know their personal political affiliations, nor express emotion when an officer's favored candidate wins or loses.

I organized the training for the 98th, 99th, 100th, and 101st USIA classes, and I was preparing for the 102nd class when I was pulled out early. Sig Maitrejean had told me, between the 101st and 102nd classes, that consolidation with the State Department seemed a sure prospect, so she asked me to increase the amount of class time with the parallel State class. John Limbert was in charge of A-100 at FSI. We had many talks and wrote out the plan to stream the two classes together during several sequences. We always joined the A-100 class at its final "offsite," either in a hotel at Harper's Ferry or at a place called "the FEMA compound," a distant reservation that had been set up during the Cold War for the continuation of government functions had there been a nuclear attack.

Q: Was there a cloud of foreboding about USIA's future?

BISHOP: Yes. That's why Sig Maitrejean had me redesign the training for new officers to run parallel with State's A-100 course, but the prospect of consolidation then seemed to go away.

Q: Well, you were in the Training Division how long?

BISHOP: I got back into the USIA building in August of 1992, and I left for Bangladesh in March of 1994.

DHAKA, BANGLADESH, 1994-1997 **Country Public Affairs Officer**

BISHOP: FSO's always look ahead to the next assignment, and the next. I had been an AIO, a BPAO, and an IO and Spokesman. I'd seen enough that I didn't want to be anything but a PAO. I have a strong need for autonomy, so being the boss of a USIA outpost was important to me. I only lobbied for PAO jobs.

One of the benefits of the job as training director is you were in contact with all of the bureaus and with the area directors who were the barons of the USIA assignment system. They all knew me, and I was known in the Personnel Division.

I was walking through the Personnel Division one day, tending something related to junior officer assignments, and Kathleen Rochester told me, "Oh, there's a new PAOship available." I asked where. She said "Bangladesh."

I said, "You can do better than that! Bangladesh! It's a basket case!"

She suggested, however, that I go see a colleague who had recently been in Dhaka on a TDY. He told me, “The PAO house, it’s got a spiral staircase!” I said, “Hey, I’ll go read the post report.”

The job was exactly what I needed, but it was for an immediate fill because the previous PAO had to leave unexpectedly. They needed someone yesterday. In any case, I took the job and I went out, without the family, ahead of time, in March of 1994. Jemma came out as soon as the school year ended. We were there from 1994 to 1997. Both my wife and I say it was one of our great assignments.

I remember my first day on the job. The Embassy, an Inman embassy, the “Red Fort,” is in a suburb at the edge of town, but USIS was still in a downtown office right on the main traffic circle, near the Purbani Hotel, opposite the Jute Ministry. It was about a 40-minute drive for me to go to the office. It happened that two other Embassy people were with me in the car, one a newcomer also making her first trip, and one woman officer who had been at post for some time. Driving from Gulshan to the downtown, we were getting into what’s a pretty teeming city. Each time our car paused at an intersection, beggars would tap on the window of the car asking for money.

There was one beggar, a man about 30 years old, who regularly worked a crossroads. He had had one leg amputated very high, so he moved on the other leg. In the heat and traffic, all he wore was a loincloth. His physique was almost like Michelangelo’s David, beautifully formed, but missing a leg. As traffic stopped, he hopped on this one leg from car to car. I saw him twice every workday for three years.

As he and other beggars tapped the window of the car, the newcomer in the seat next to me was coming unglued. Some beggars who had lost their hands would tap on the window with the stump, hard to watch. I was being more pokerfaced, even though the overall picture was a little grim. She was ready to open the window to give some money to one of the men on the street. The other, more experienced woman said, “Don’t you dare give him a dime! All the beggars will remember this car with its diplomatic plates. You give the dime today, and tomorrow there’ll be a dozen knocking at the car, and the day after there will be a hundred.”

The poverty, so up close and personal, meant that psychologically you had to establish some barriers. It sounds coldhearted. You needed to find other ways to be helpful. Just giving money to the unfortunate people on the street was not the way. Helping a local church or organization was better, and having confidence that our development and Public Diplomacy programs would in time help create prosperity was another.

Let me take a few moments to describe neighborhood in the southern area of “Gulshan Model Town,” full of nice brick and concrete homes walled off from one another. Most of the buildings had been painted white, but in the heat and humidity the white paint was always flecked with gray mold.

There was a small city park a short distance from our home. On my first walks by the park, I noticed that there was a row of small bamboo and woven mat dwellings along one of the walls. These were what the Bangladeshis called “squatters.” You could see that the occupants had tapped into the city's electricity by running wires from the nearest telephone pole to their row of lean-tos. Over the three years we were in Dhaka, that row of makeshift dwellings expanded. When we left three years later they filled up half the park. This squatter village had electricity, a grid of alleys, a mosque, and its own governance committee which I presume paid bribes to the police and the park authorities not to clear them out or cut the wires to the telephone poles. Such was the pressure of urbanization.

Our quarters, “Shahnaz Villa,” was only a few dozen yards from the shore of Gulshan Lake, a lake that was slowly growing smaller. As the shore extended a few yards more into the water, the government arranged for the new land to be given to favored clients. So again, within a short distance of our home you could see in miniature many of the nation's problems -- urbanization on one hand, corruption on the other.

Every street in Dhaka was crowded with three-wheeled tricycle rickshaws. There were passenger rickshaws and flatbed cargo rickshaws. The first thought that occurred to every foreign newcomer waiting in traffic was “they've got to get rid of these rickshaws!” I remember someone telling that to the DCM, Jim Nach, who responded, “that's how these people get around. What's the alternative, them walking and carrying things on their backs so that we can move faster on the streets in our cars?” A large fraction of the GDP that derived from transportation was provided by rickshaws. Not to mention that pulling a rickshaw was a common niche occupation for rural newcomers to Dhaka while they gained experience with city life and developed the new social ties and skills that could lead to more permanent city employment.

As the months and years passed, I developed more and more respect for the humble rickshaw and the rickshaw pullers. Besides the rickshaws themselves, there was, for instance, a rickshaw spare parts industry, rickshaw repairmen, and a small industry of artists who painted colorful designs on the vehicles. Kathleen and Chris Rochester, the new IO and CAO, went with their children to a rickshaw art center and had a family portrait painted on a rickshaw rear panel, which they took home. They showed me the painting, real folk art, so to speak, now a family heirloom, no doubt. I thought the artist had a real gift for making the Americans look like Bollywood movie stars!

Rickshaws, traffic, dignity in the midst of poverty ... these were some of my early impressions of society.

There was a local holiday a few weeks after I arrived, and I decided to get in a brisk morning walk through our neighborhood. As I left the gate of our house, I could see four men in long white gowns, wearing the close-fitting white Muslim caps, walking in my direction. Each of them was carrying a long and bloody sword. All the Hollywood stereotypes ran through my mind.

On a second look, they didn't seem to be paying me any attention. Then I remembered it was the Eid holiday, and families often purchased a cow to be slaughtered and divided three ways -- one third for the family, one third for relatives and friends, and one third to the poor. These men went from home to home to properly slaughter the animals. I greeted them as they passed, and they greeted me back. Sure enough, as I continued my walk, I could see blood from animals flowing out from under the gates of local houses -- the car park inside the gate was where an animal would be killed.

Yes, the PAO residence had a spiral staircase and a grand piano too. It was the grandest of our residences during the Foreign Service. The first floor was mostly representational, and we once fit 130 guests at a reception.

When you have a “villa” in Bangladesh, it means you have to have a household staff. We had a cook, a bearer, and a gardener who was also our gatekeeper. This was considered a rather trim household establishment. With flowers, mango trees, and hanging orchids outside, and a mongoose in our yard, this was as close as we ever got to the “old” Foreign Service.

When Jemma negotiated the pay of the staff members, the cook asked, “and that includes tea, bread, and jam, of course, M'am?” These, we discovered, were regular perks for household staff. About nine in the morning the three men sat down in the kitchen for their tea (mixing in large amounts of sugar and condensed milk) with a full loaf of bread and a jar of strawberry preserves. The three of them ate all the bread, and they went through a full jar of jam every few days.

Q: Stepping up from your neighborhood, could you describe Bangladesh at that time, in terms of ...

BISHOP: (*groans*) Stu, you always are asking these large questions!

It had the reputation, of course, as the basket case, using that phrase from Henry Kissinger.

Gosh, Bangladesh was poor. The cities were crowded. If you were inclined to think about the threat of “overpopulation,” Dhaka might come to mind.

I had served in three of the Four Tigers – in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea. I'd seen their rapid development. In Bangladesh, I saw a country that – alas -- was not going anywhere in terms of its economic development, with all the human unhappiness that results.

The South Koreans had visited Bangladesh in the early 1950s because Korea's GNP was behind East Pakistan's. They wanted to learn what they could from East Pakistan's success. Now, of course, South Korea is wonderfully prosperous and Bangladesh still ranks toward the bottom on the development indicators.

There was a small urban elite, educated, with the older members speaking good English. They were on top, economically, politically, socially. Indeed, the forebears of many of the prominent families had been the Zamindars placed in office by the British under their system of indirect rule.

Then there were the great numbers of people still in the countryside, or who had flocked to the cities where there wasn't enough employment.

A plug for a Fulbrighter here -- the best book ever written on the country is *Bangladesh: Reflections on the Water*. The author, Jim Novak (Michael Novak's brother) came out as a Fulbrighter when I was there. To really know about Bangladesh you have to read Jim Novak's book. Certainly Bangladeshis read and respected it.

Living in our high status neighborhood, comfortable in our home with the garden, Jemma and I could have organized our life around our work at the Embassy, relaxing at the American Club, joining the active social scene among the expats, and enjoying the salons with Dhaka's rich and powerful. We could have comfortably lived in an intellectual bubble too, content with our outsiders' views of what Bangladeshis needed.

Whether it was because I had seen the poor parts of the American south in the time of segregation, or because I had walked through Vietnamese villages, seen the lepers of Korea, visited crowded housing estates in Hong Kong and the Kowloon Walled City, and spent time in the fishing villages on Korea's southwestern coast, I couldn't be content with an isolated life in Gulshan.

As a Catholic I could easily tap into the network of Catholic missionaries like I did in Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. The missionaries can be valuable intermediaries, a shortcut to learning about local society.

American missionaries had been there a long time, particularly the Holy Cross Fathers, the same order that runs Notre Dame University in Indiana. After I arrived, I soon got in touch. They run the most famous high school in Bangladesh, Notre Dame College. I was there quite frequently.

When I went into the countryside, I always found out who was the priest in that neck of the woods, and I might check in. Normally, diplomats meet members of a society's elite -- members of Parliament, professors at the university, leading business people, NGO types, editors and publishers, and so on. You're not really out there in the urban slums, getting that kind of feel for things. With the missionaries, my wife and I were not meeting elites. You could join them as they met ordinary people up close and personal in their ordinary circumstances.

We got to be friends with the members of an order of French nuns, the sisters of Charles de Foucauld, "the Blue Sisters." They lived and worked in the most terrible sections of Dhaka, just doing small works of mercy. Visiting them, my wife and I went into corners

of the city that that I would not have otherwise seen. It gave you a chance to see the circumstances of the very poor in Bangladesh.

Q: When one thinks of Bengal, you sense that the Bengali culture is very rich. What did you see?

BISHOP: I was amazed to see that women cooking on open fires under polyethylene lean-tos in the slums sang Tagore songs. Yes, both West and East Bengal are deeply cultured places.

A piano tuner was at our house, and I asked him how many pianos there were in Dhaka. His answer surprised me – “only 200” – even though there were thousands of households that could afford one.

That there are only 200 pianos in the capital told me that Bangladesh’s own cultural traditions were so powerful, had such a hold, an attraction for people, that they never embraced Western music. Compare this to Japan.

Q: Both India and Pakistan played large historical roles in what became Bangladesh. I imagine both were rivals, in a way, for influence after independence. What did you see in the 1990s?

BISHOP: Let me widen the frame a little. In Bangladesh, the population was probably 85 percent Muslim. The others were mostly Hindus, with a small Christian community. Bangladesh is largely Muslim, and population trends were slowly increasing the percentage of Muslims in the total population.

I sensed, though, that the Bangladeshis weren’t quite decided whether the defining characteristic of their country was that they were Bengali, which would give them a feeling of closeness with the Hindus in West Bengal, or whether they were Muslim, which would make them feel closer to Pakistan. There was a communal side to this. A “Bengali” identity could unite all the different faith groups in Bangladesh, while a “Muslim” national identity might set in motion some intercommunal stress. In any case, my take was that these two sides in the Bangladeshi mind were not fully resolved.

It was not possible to travel by land from Dhaka to Calcutta except through one very difficult border crossing. There was no direct railroad service, and though trucks lined up on the Indian side, there wasn’t much throughput at the border station. If you wanted to go to Calcutta from Dhaka, or vice versa, you had to fly.

On the northwest side of Bangladesh, if you look at a large scale map, you see that there a lot of enclaves, more than a hundred little pieces of Bangladesh that are separated from the body of the country, and several dozen little territorial islands of India that are surrounded by Bangladesh. There were frequent quarrels about these enclaves.

The waters of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra flow from India into Bangladesh, and control of the water was the source of many disputes. While I was there the Indians were reducing the flow of water into Bangladesh using a “barrage” a few miles inside India, and there was off again, on again diplomacy that finally resulted in an agreement in 1996 on sharing river waters.

Discussions of language showed some of the sensitivity of Bangladesh’s relations with India. In Spain there’s the Academia Real, which defines what is pure Spanish. And in France there’s the French Academy, which says that pure French is what we in Paris define it to be. In Dhaka, there’s the Bangla Academy, which works diligently to assure that the way Bengali is spoken in Bangladesh is THE true language, free of both English infusions and Hindi corruptions.

That said, there were many cultural and family ties between the Bengalis on both sides of the India-Bangladesh border, and it's interesting to note that Rabindranath Tagore wrote the national anthems of both countries.

As for the formal relations with India, I sensed, but with no real proof, that while I was there the Bangladeshis felt emotionally closer to the Pakistanis than the Indians.

Q: You know, the Pakistanis had been pretty nasty.

BISHOP: You’re speaking of the Independence War in 1971. Yes, it seems curious. It was India – more specifically, the Indian Army – that tipped the scales in the Independence War so that Bangladesh became independent. Even so, the Muslim side of the Bangladesh mind seemed to have the upper hand.

Q: Do they have tribal problems there?

BISHOP: Yes. When you think of India, you think Hindu. Hinduism is the dominant religion in the parts of India we see in *National Geographic* magazine, the big body of India.

There are, though, Indian states that swing north and east of Bangladesh, the “Seven Sisters.” Those are largely tribal. There are Hindus in their populations, but most of the inhabitants are not Hindus. Many have become Christians. Some of the tribals aspire to independence no matter how improbable the odds, and for many years the Indian Army has managed to contain small insurgencies.

On a demographic map, you would see that some of those tribal peoples live across the border in Bangladesh. In the southeast of Bangladesh, the Chittagong Hill Tracts are also populated by tribal peoples, and the Bangladesh Army also confronted unrest that threatened to become an insurgency.

Q: There are minorities in Burma too. Don’t people move across the border from Burma to Bangladesh?

BISHOP: Yes, in Burma the majority of the people are Burmese, but there are many tribal peoples like the Kachins and Karens in the north. The country is firmly ruled – very firmly ruled – by the uniformed thugs of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), all Burmese.

Living inside Burma, along the border with Bangladesh, are Indo-European Bengali-speaking people who just spilled over the border centuries ago. They're called Rohingyas. If they were on the western side of the border, they would just be Bangladeshis. In Burma, though, they were a minority. They're dumped on by the Burmese, impressed for highway labor, and so on. When the SLORC gets in a bad mood they harsh on the Rohingyas more, and then many Rohingyas flee across the border into Bangladesh.

I visited the border between Burma and Bangladesh and the refugee camps that housed the Rohingyas. So here's the question. Rohingyas who fled SLORC for probably temporary refuge in Bangladesh -- are they to be recognized as refugees by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), so that the Bangladeshis need to treat them as refugees in international law, or are they merely economic migrants?

The Bangladesh government, and the officers in the refugee camps, would say, "out of our generosity we're providing a temporary haven for these economic migrants who come from Burma for the better life in Bangladesh. We'll return them as quickly as we can."

It's the role of a diplomat to be pokerfaced. We listen to whatever we hear and take it in. But visiting the camps, we were hearing that the Rohingyas were all "economic migrants" from Burma to Bangladesh? This did not add up. Life is no bed of roses in Bangladesh. The Rohingyas must have come for political reasons, because of persecution. Visiting the refugee camps is quite a memory.

Q: Focusing now on the U.S. Mission, who was the ambassador?

BISHOP: David Merrill. We had parallel tours for three years, so I worked with only one Chief of Mission. He was one of the few USAID ambassadors. He'd been USAID director in Indonesia, running one of their biggest programs. I think of him highly. Ambassadors need to have rapport with members of their team, but they have to be a little distant too. He balanced this as well as anyone I've worked with. In retrospect, having seen other ambassadors less gifted than he was, I liked the way he ran things. He was an effective organizer.

It was while I was in Dhaka that I first participated in the new Mission Program Plan (MPP) process – now it's called the Mission Strategy and Resources Plan (MSRP). In my career, Dhaka was where the process worked best. Looking back, it was because of Ambassador Merrill. He took a personal interest in the plan, and he attended many of the planning sessions.

In many Embassies, when the yearly cable requesting the MPP arrives, Ambassadors say, “DCM, make it happen. Everybody get together and give me a plan. I’ll read it then.” Ambassador Merrill, on the other hand, sat in on many of the key meetings. His presence really made USAID think about how it could use support from Public Affairs. He made the Economic Section think about how it could mesh with the development program. The Political Section thought about all the ramifications and what everybody needed to do to support them. I think of Bangladesh as a place where the mission’s strategic plan process worked very well, thanks to Ambassador Merrill.

Ambassador Merrill ran a very good Embassy in terms of its meetings. Meetings? What’s all this boring bureaucratic stuff? But a meeting is a very important management tool in an Embassy. Good embassies have good meetings. In Dhaka, we had the regular weekly Country Team meeting, which Ambassador Merrill chaired well. We also had “small” or “tight” Country Team meetings two or three days a week – POL, ECON, DATT, PAS, USAID, and the RSO. Consular and Management attended as needed. It was a tight group, sitting in a small circle with the Ambassador in his office. When you left the Embassy in the morning, with the cables read, with a fillup in the tight Country Team, you were humming. You were right up close to what was going on in the Mission. That worked better in Bangladesh than any other place I’ve been.

We had two DCM’s during my tour, Jim Nach and Nancy Powell. Jim was a quiet manager, quite excellent and effective. He and I remain the best of friends – he was very good, always steady, a value I prize highly. When Jim finished his tour, Nancy Powell became DCM. Of course, she’s now Director General of the Foreign Service, three times an Ambassador, so I was lucky to work for two great DCMs.

Dhaka was an Embassy where we had enough room to get things done. We had a new Embassy building, “the Red Fort,” an Inman embassy built to the new at the time security standards. There was plenty of office space. I’ve never had as much space since. Although the main USIS office was downtown in the heart of Dhaka, I had a small office room in the Red Fort as well. One of the benefits of this room in the Embassy was that I could read every day’s classified cables before I rode the 40 minutes to the office. For a Public Affairs program to work well, you really had to be able to read the classified cables every day.

Q: I might point out here, for any reader who’s not familiar with the setup of Embassies, at most Embassies the classified cables are kept in a separate, limited access room. I ran Consular sections, and Consular officers normally wouldn’t see them -- not that they couldn’t, but they really didn’t have time.

BISHOP: That’s right.

Q: But obviously we would encourage them to go up and read the classified cables, because that’s where the meat of the diplomacy business is carried on.

BISHOP: That's right. And not always reading the classified cables is still a consistent weakness in Public Affairs Sections around the world. Many PAOs, IOs, and CAOs can't find time to read the classified cables because to do so they've got to go to a different building, and go through the cipher locks to a separate room. It sounds like a small burden, but it does in reality makes things more difficult. If a Public Affairs Section is separated from that regular stream of reporting and policy, it becomes unresponsive to our nation's goals. That said, things worked really well in Bangladesh.

Being "read in" was a big plus in my making the Public Affairs Section responsive. If I were in a meeting with Bangladeshi professors or journalists, say, I could offer comments that were exactly relevant to what was on their mind, responsive to today's or this week's political news, international or domestic.

Or, when I read testimonies on South Asia policy given by the Assistant Secretary on Capitol Hill, I could pull out the Bangladesh-specific paragraphs, or the policy-relevant parts of the statement and reformat them into an op-ed. We were humming.

Q: OK. Public Diplomacy. What were you up to?

BISHOP: USIS Dhaka was a four officer post – PAO, IO, CAO, and an American Executive Officer. With Barbara McCarthy – and later Elizabeth Cemal – as Executive Officer, I had expert administrative support that allowed me to focus on policy, not paperwork. We had 39 local staff, some FSNs and some PSCs. My local OMS was Farida Kausar, who had been USIA's FSN of the Year just a few years earlier.

In Dhaka we had a good, model USIS program in the 1990s. The Cold War was now in the past. We were in a poor country. What did USIS contribute?

I had a good-sized staff. Although we were participating in the new MPP process, we were still writing a Country Public Affairs Plan according to the USIA template that identified bilateral communications tensions. Then the idea was you would shape your programs to address those tensions.

Bangladesh was the place where I was most successfully able to implement what I call the three-step process of programming that I'd learned in USICA and taught the JOTs when I was in the Training Division. First, you decide what you want to talk about, what are the issues. Second, you identify who are the audiences that need to be addressed. And third, you decide how you will reach them, with a speech by the ambassador, or a seminar, or with Fulbrighters, or with exchanges, and so on.

Q: In terms of foreign policy, what did we want to do in Bangladesh?

BISHOP: Answering that question broadly, among Muslim countries and the members of the Organization of Islamic Conference, Bangladesh seemed like -- and indeed is -- a model "moderate" Islamic country. Perhaps 85 percent of the people were Muslim. There were still many Hindus and a few Christians, and generally the Bangladeshis had worked

out their own system of religious accommodation. But it was “moderate” in other ways too.

There was the hope that perhaps Bangladesh could be the first Muslim country to recognize Israel. Bangladesh could be a Muslim nation committed to peacekeeping. There was the hope that Bangladesh, geographically situated on the periphery of the Muslim world, but part of it, would become a partner that would begin pulling the Islamic nations into a closer relationship with the United States and doing things that were helpful in the world.

The Mission also had development goals. The USAID program in Bangladesh was a large one, and we wanted that to go forward. At the Embassy, the Red Fort, fully half the office space belonged to USAID. Public Affairs was a small operation compared to theirs. If my memory is right, the USAID budget for Bangladesh was a little under \$100 million. Probably about 60 percent of the money was allocated for family planning. During the Zia and Ershad periods, the generals had signed Bangladesh on for population programs even though many Bangladeshis had religious misgivings.

The USAID Mission also had many economic programs, to strengthen the stock market, to end government controls on fertilizer, and so on. Whether American goals were altruistic or self-interested, we hoped that the health programs (mostly family planning) and the disaster relief programs and the other projects that USAID was funding, say, banking reform, would continue and would help Bangladesh lift itself out of poverty.

For a PAO, this is a meaty mix of interesting issues.

Q: Let's talk a bit about Bangladesh politics and society. They've had assassinations, they've had ...

BISHOP: I was in Bangladesh in the era of the Two Ladies. Khaleda Zia, who was Prime Minister when I arrived, was the widow of General Zia who had been president. She was the leader of the BNP, the Bangladesh National Party.

There was, after a long period of wrangling, an election and Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of the Founder of the Nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won. Her party was her father's Awami League.

I never witnessed them tearing each other's hair out, but the rancor between the Two Ladies was so deep that it affected all of Bangladesh politics. I believe Sheikh Hasina was persuaded that Khaleda Zia's husband was among those who killed her father. Mrs. Zia thought that her husband had met his end because of Sheikh Hasina's machinations. Both may have thought that the U.S. -- by commission or omission -- had been in on the plots.

Elections were due in 1995. It naturally fell to the sitting government and the ruling party to organize the elections. In a unitary system of government, it's always a possibility that

a ruling party can rig an election. The Awami League did not trust the BNP government to allow a fair election, so as the election approached there was a long political struggle. Both sides in Bangladesh kept an eye on the U.S. to see if we favored one party or the other.

In the pre-electoral tumult and jockeying in 1995, the Defense Attaché Office staff began to hear rumors that the armed forces might seize power, and a few times the movement of armored vehicles from the cantonments added to the anxieties. Jim Dunn had attended the Bangladesh staff college, and he kept up his warm connections with his classmates in commands all over the country. He and his Operations NCO, Sergeant First Class Kevin Bremer, were keeping Ambassador Merrill up to date on every movement and rumor.

A military coup would have been distinctly unhelpful for Bangladesh's future, not to mention that U.S. law requires the termination of all foreign assistance if an elected government is overthrown. Jim Dunn's well practiced mantra with Army leaders was "I love you like a brother, but I will be the first guy to recommend that we cut off all aid if a coup takes place."

Ambassador Merrill must have credited the rumors enough to ask me to prepare a USIS press release that quoted the provisions of U.S. law that barred assistance after any military takeover. He told me to prepare it; he looked over the wording; and he told me to hold it for possible future use, if needed.

One day while I was downtown, he called me. I asked him about the press release. I can't remember the exact words of our exchange, but he thought he was telling me to keep it on ice, while I thought he was telling me to release. USIS sent it to the media that afternoon. No doubt when the rather blunt release hit the news rooms and the Foreign and Defense ministries, it raised some eyebrows! I'm a little embarrassed at my misunderstanding the Ambassador's intent, but there weren't any adverse consequences, and the threat of a coup seemed to pass. Whether the release played any role at all is something for the historians to figure out.

Eventually the two sides – the Awami League and the BNP -- agreed on a rather unique solution. Three months before the elections, the ruling party would step down, and the reins of government would be handed over to a "caretaker government" that would organize the elections. The caretaker government had only ten ministers rather than the normal 30-plus. The two parties batted heads in the Parliament, but the caretaker system was enacted, and the 1995 election did result in a change in party, a peaceful transfer of government. Sheikh Hasina became Prime Minister. So it was an interesting political environment.

I'm boiling down what must have been the contents of a hundred or two hundred cables from the Embassy to the Department, chronicling every difficult step along the way. I'm skipping the effects of "hartals," general strikes, on the city. I know this is way too brief a synopsis of some very intense domestic political wrangling and diplomatic reporting. The Embassy was behind the scenes trying to get the Bangladeshis to get through the crisis.

Q: Well, it sounds like a time when the U.S. had to be very careful – when you have two parties really disliking each other. But we didn't have a dog in that particular fight.

BISHOP: No.

Q: But we had to make sure that we weren't dragged in.

BISHOP: That's right. I suppose that both the BNP and Awami League platforms – they called them “manifestos” there – had some things we liked and some things we didn't like. My take was that the BNP leaned more toward a markets and enterprise economy, while the Awami League carried on more of the socialist vision of its founding. Our U.S. interest was that we wanted the Bangladeshis to have a free and fair election so that people could focus on the issues, not the bitterness of politics.

Q: Were you able to travel and meet people? How was your access to the leadership class?

BISHOP: As PAO I got a chance to get to know the country more than many other places. I traveled to the different regions -- there they call their provinces or states “divisions.” I went from Dhaka to Chittagong to the Chittagong Hill Tracts to Cox's Bazar and the border with Burma. I went northwest to Rajshahi, down to the Sundarbans, and the southwest to Jessore. I went by rail from Dhaka to Sylhet, and we drove to India. I feel I really got to know the country. I looked for audiences to speak to when I traveled. At Bangladesh's universities, large crowds would turn out to hear the American Embassy's Counselor for Public Affairs.

The post had an interesting weakness. In the entire Embassy there was only one officer designated to speak Bangla, Dan Perrone. Except for this one officer, the Embassy did all its business in English. This was, I realize, a factor that distanced us from ordinary people in Bangladesh. When we went out, we had to meet people who spoke English. There are many English speakers around, but on the whole they were members of the educated elite. Also, English teaching had weakened as the Bangladesh education system weakened, so the good English speakers were from the older generation.

We certainly had good access to the elite of Bangladesh society, politics, economics, culture and the arts, and so on. Bangladeshis are very social, and we were regularly invited to their salons. Even junior officers had full dance cards, a full week of invitations to these gatherings of literati and political leaders and so on. You could go to one nearly every day.

When you received an invitation from an editor or a Member of Parliament, it said the time was 7:30. I made the mistake of showing up for my first one at 7:30, and I was the only guest for nearly two hours. There's a plus and a minus to that. You feel awfully awkward, but on the other hand you had the full and undivided attention of the host. So it was great for being able to learn things. I always felt I was in tune on all the issues. Most

guests arrived around 9:30. You ate at 10:15 or 10:30, and then it broke up by 11:00. These were great talk fests with the elites, the very elites, the editors, the parliamentarians, the ministers, and so on.

These were, of course, people who benefited from the current social order. Our talking was with those who possessed, not with the dispossessed. And in retrospect I can see how not having much language in the mission inhibited contact.

Q: What were you doing in the areas of education, exchanges, culture?

BISHOP: On the Cultural Affairs side, we had all the line exchange programs – Fulbright, International Visitors, speakers. Another FSN of the year for USIA, Selim Shahabuddin, was the senior local employee in the section, and I particularly valued his counsel and advice.

We also hosted some cultural performance programs. We had the Oregon Ballet perform at the National Theatre, and they made a very positive impression with their interpretations of the dances of the Northwest Indians. And golly, we hosted the first overseas performance of Edward Albee's play, *Three Tall Women*, also to a packed house at the National Theatre.

After the performance, we of course declared victory in our cables to Washington. I would say, however, that *Three Tall Women* was too complex a play (three actresses were on stage at one time, portraying the same woman at three different ages – hard to follow, especially if English was not your first language) and too distant in its social outlook from what Bangladeshis were thinking about. I'll never forget the utter silence from the thousand people in the seats when the curtain fell after the last line, "And the final victory is death!" They were so baffled they forgot to applaud for an uncomfortable amount of time.

The Information Unit was one of the best ever. Our translators kept hard at work both ways. They were translating articles and editorials from the local newspapers into English, so we were all right up to date on local policy and public thinking. The local newspapers had an insatiable thirst for our press releases and the op-eds, so the translators were hard at work translating our materials into Bengali. We had an extraordinary record of placements. We had our own print shop, and we were pouring out the materials. On the information side, then, I inherited a well-oiled machine. In the USIA days we talked a lot about placements, the ability to put the Washington File article or the President's or the Secretary's op-ed into the media. We were surely one of the most active and most effective posts, worldwide, in this regard.

Q: Tell me about the media in Bangladesh.

BISHOP: They had newspapers, they had radio, they had television -- government television. Radio was very important. There were newspapers of all kinds, a lot of newspapers, but they were pretty thin. I read six newspapers in English at the beginning

of every day, but they ran only four to eight pages. Many newspapers were controlled by powerful political figures.

Both the BBC and the Voice of America had Bangla services. One of the interesting side effects was that the Voice of America had generated 600-some Voice of America Fan Clubs. The Clubs were doing service projects in their communities. I often thought that the VOA Fan Clubs showed the reach of the Voice, yes, but the size of the clubs network also showed, on one hand, the poverty of civil society in Bangladesh, and, on the other hand, the desire for civic participation.

It was a positive movement, but at USIS we couldn't deal with so many Clubs. They all wanted Embassy people to join their ceremonies and events, but it was impossible to do much with so many. Eventually the Voice came up with \$200 per month to give to one of our retired FSNs to tend the Clubs.

I can't mention the VOA Fan Clubs without telling a story. A previous PAO had decided that one way to recognize the Clubs and their good work was to have a reception at the Embassy for the president of each club. USIS organized a big representational space in the Red Fort's atrium. It was large enough so that if half of the Club presidents came, there was enough room. They sent out the invitations. All over Bangladesh, young men in small towns and far villages got the Ambassador's invitation. They got on the boats and buses and headed for Dhaka. The reception was for 8 p.m. in the evening, but some of them missed the "p" in p.m. and showed up at 8 a.m. They had to come back later.

There had been a long debate, I heard, about whether there should be any liquor served. This would violate Muslim sensibilities, but it was well known that many Bangladeshis violated the precepts against alcohol. The decision was to serve beer, available unobtrusively in a corner. So our young village boy, President of the VOA Fan Club, showed up at 8 p.m., met the Ambassador in the reception line, felt overwhelmed by the event, and then went over and had his first glass of beer. They weren't "in training." When I arrived in Dhaka, the FSNs were still talking about the woozy young men wandering around the Embassy atrium. The Embassy and PAS got through the event, but it did not go down on the list of "best practices."

Q: How about economic issues?

BISHOP: You are talking to a Milton Friedman markets-and-enterprise man, a guy who believes that jobs, livelihoods, and trade underlie progress and human happiness. You're talking to a Leonard Reid man who believes that the economic order of exchange and trade joins the tea producers of Bangladesh with the tea drinkers of London, Abu Dhabi, and Moscow. So we placed hundreds of articles on trade and economic policy in the local media; USIS supported every trade show and exhibit; I ramped up our output of stories on USAID programs; and we had a great relationship with the AmCham.

In the area of economic policy and trade, a lot of our programming was to shift local elite thinking toward markets and enterprise. By the way, it was in Bangladesh that I stopped

using the word “capitalism” to describe our economic system. Yes, the Latin root of “capitalism” is “caput,” meaning head, indicating that the key ingredient in a free economy is creative minds. However, “capitalism” was usually a curse word in the common economic discourse in the People’s Republic of Bangladesh – as in “capitalism equals laissez faire, and laissez faire means dog eat dog.” The word “capitalism” had been tainted by decades of socialist and communist propaganda. Rather than fight the inaccurate understanding, I stopped saying “capitalism” – the word carried too much baggage -- and always referred to the “markets and enterprise system.”

Like India after independence, Bangladesh had a preference for socialism and the system of “license raj.” To begin to dent that approach, to challenge the reflexive socialism, was important for future economic development.

Our downtown USIS office was on a large traffic circle across the street from the Jute Ministry. Jute for burlap bags had once been the great export product of Bengal, and when the world’s produce was loaded on freighters in burlap bags, Bengal had been a prosperous place. Jute, however, had been declining for decades.

When you met the Minister of Jute or anyone from the Ministry, they handed you a name card made of jute. They had teams experimenting with new uses for jute, and a kind of fiber cardboard was one idea they had come up with. That’s what they used for their name cards. They were trying to do for jute what George Washington Carver had done for peanuts, I suppose, but they were never very successful.

To prop up the jute farmers, they established a government marketing board that would buy the crop, organize the marketing, and so on. This concept was fifteen or thirty years out of date, but the Jute Ministry went on and on; the control went on and on; and the market regulation and the state purchasing went on and on. Naturally a side effect of these efforts, a happy side effect from the Ministry’s point of view, was that it allowed a large number of civil servants to continue to have jobs. Looking out the window of my office at the Jute Ministry was a constant reminder of how we in USIS had to help change local economic thinking.

Q: How did those discussions about socialism and capitalism – excuse me, the markets and enterprise system – go?

BISHOP: The socialist mindset was dominant and powerful. The elites knew that a heavy government role in the economy helped them as a class, since government people came from their ranks. I was amazed that socialist ideas were still alive there, but they were.

Before I left for Bangladesh I had read in the newspapers that Michael Novak of the American Enterprise Institute had won the 1994 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion. Michael Novak is a Catholic thinker whose great work has been to establish the moral legitimacy of business and enterprise. From the articles about his winning the prize, I learned that he was going to give a share of the money to Notre Dame College in Dhaka. That’s what got my attention. Why was Michael Novak interested in Bangladesh?

The reason was that his older brother, Father Richard Novak, had been a Holy Cross missionary to Bangladesh. He had been killed in 1964 in a disturbance called the Prophet's Hair riots. It was because of this family connection to Bangladesh that Michael decided to give Notre Dame College some of his money.

I wrote Michael and suggested that if he came to Bangladesh in connection with the donation, he should give me a week of his time – to do some things together. About a year later, he and his wife Karen did come to Bangladesh, and he remembered my request for a week of his time. We set up “Dialog with Islam” programs and markets and enterprise programs. All his presentations reflected his thinking on the moral legitimacy of capitalism.

This was, perhaps, the best and richest program of my career in the Foreign Service. Part of the reason is that we had time to prepare, and I knew that we needed to do things by the numbers, very thoroughly. For instance, we translated his most important articles into Bangla before his arrival. For instance, whenever he gave an interview to the press, we transcribed the whole interview, translated it into Bangla, and then we later published them all in a book. We didn't just rely on the reporter's summary of the interview that appeared in the newspaper. His visit had a lasting impact.

The solid impact of Michael Novak's program illustrated, to my mind, that it's better to concentrate on a few things, and do them thoroughly, than to scatter Public Diplomacy around on many different issues and programs. Don't do lots of things, do a few things well! In Bangladesh, we had short term Public Diplomacy goals on, say, the elections, but the great long term need was to discredit socialism and license raj. That would have economic effects, development effects, and political effects. The second was to begin easing the assumed tension between Islam and the West. It happened that Michael Novak's visit addressed both.

His visit had a lasting effect on me, too. I mentioned that in Taiwan I had begun to consider myself a neoconservative and member of the “religious right.” In May of 1994 the Ramsey Forum had published the first of its declarations, “Evangelicals and Catholics Together.” I read it in Dhaka in *First Things* and I was so filled with happy and amazed agreement that I rose up out of my chair and did a little dance of excitement. I don't think that's ever happened to me, before or afterwards. Michael Novak was one of the declaration's signers, and a week with him allowed me to talk things over with one of our nation's great minds.

Q: Do I remember that child labor in garment factories was an issue while you were in Dhaka?

BISHOP: You have a good memory. Yes.

Ambassador Merrill was, in many ways, a broken field runner, or a many ball juggler. He had election issues, trade issues, business promotion, development issues, population and

family planning issues, energy issues, gas field contracts, and a dozen other matters on his mind at any one time. For most of these issues, he was implementing Washington's policies in energetic ways. I sensed, however, he wanted to leave behind a personal legacy, a focus on one issue where he himself made a real difference. That issue became child labor in Bangladesh's garment factories.

I've mentioned rural poverty, which "pushed" Bangladeshis out of their villages. I've mentioned the "pull" factor -- an expectation of a better life in the cities. I've mentioned the inertia and corruption of the Bangladesh government, and the desire to the elites to maintain their place at the top of society. These frustrated the hopes of the Bangladeshis that flocked to the cities, some living in polyethylene lean-tos just a few blocks from our residence.

One of the few opportunities for work was in new garment factories set up by Korean and Taiwan firms with Bangladeshi partners. Some were only a few blocks from our house. You could see a parade of women walking to their jobs early each morning. In the mid-1990s as in the mid-1890s, work at the looms and with the sewing machines was better performed by women.

There's no doubt many of the factories were sweatshops, and Joseph Riis would have recognized them. There was a fire in one garment factory while I was there, and the women couldn't escape because the doors had been locked -- just like the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in New York in 1911 though the loss of life was smaller.

A labor organizer could easily condemn the garment factories in Dhaka and other cities, but in spite of all the long hours, hardship, and danger, the wages -- perhaps only \$20 per month at the time -- were improving the lives of tens of thousands of women. Life in Dhaka working at the sweatshop was better than life in the village working the fields.

Those alert to the status of women began to notice that the garment ladies were using their small wages to send their sons -- and their daughters -- to school. Moreover, the wife's steady income from the garment factory became an important family income stream, especially if the husband had only been able to find irregular work, or was pulling a rickshaw. Without a word being spoken between husband and wife, without the intervention of an awareness workshop, the balance of power in the family shifted. There were reports of less violence by husbands, for instance.

In the 1990s, as in the 1890s, however, there were children working in the factories too, for all the same reasons -- higher dexterity, lower wages, malleability. This violated international standards and Bangladeshi law too, but all recognized that for some desperate families, the child's income kept the whole family above water.

Actually, the matter of child labor in the garment factories provided an interesting case study in social justice. Rigid enforcement of child labor laws could result in real hardship, as happened after 1992, when the U.S. first banned imports of goods using child labor. At

that time, the companies let tens of thousands of children go rather than risk U.S. sanctions. What could they do to earn money? You could see children on the roadsides begging, or breaking bricks at construction sites. You couldn't see that some of the girls may have been forced into prostitution.

A few years later, a survey revealed, more than ten thousand children were still in the factories. Ambassador Merrill wanted to do something to change the equation. Yes, he had the potential “stick” of bringing international opinion, or harsh words in the Human Rights Report, or boycotts of brands, or import bans to bear on offending companies. He understood, however, that the response by the companies would be to turn the children out on the street. He wanted a voluntary effort by the companies that would preserve income for the children's families and allow the children to go to school.

Anyone who examines the subject in a future dissertation will need to read dozens and dozens of cables and conduct some interviews to retrace the Ambassador's personal diplomacy, which combined appeals to sweet reasonableness with some jawboning and threats. The final 1995 agreement that phased out child labor was between the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturing and Export Association, the government, UNICEF, and the International Labor Organization's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).

The companies let go the children under the age of 14 but agreed to employ another, adult member of the family. UNICEF paid for schooling, and the children's families received a small stipend, about \$7 per month as I recall, to compensate for lost income. IPEC monitored compliance in the factories. Even though this was an “international” agreement, none of this would have happened without Ambassador Merrill's focus and persistence.

I'd be pleased if PAS could take credit for some of this, but because so much of the agreement was due to the Ambassador's personal diplomacy, out of public view, the Public Affairs role was modest.

Q: Tell me more about the focus on peacekeeping ...

BISHOP: The peacekeeping part of the agenda was pretty far advanced by the time I got there, with Bangladesh Army battalions serving in trouble spots all over the world. There was a happy congruence between the world's desperate need for peacekeeping troops and the cash-strapped circumstances of the Bangladesh Army and its soldiers. Officers who earned \$150 per month at home could earn the U.N. minimum rate of \$980 on peacekeeping service. My Army friends told me that officers and men got to keep their \$980 without having to kick back to anyone. The U.N. money was corruption free. If you were a young officer or an NCO in the Bangladesh Army, the idea of going to the Balkans or Cambodia or other places for a year or two was very attractive.

They had deployed peacekeepers to Iraq, Namibia, Cambodia, Somalia, Mozambique, and Bosnia. Bangladesh sent a unit to Kuwait for Operation Desert Shield, though it did not join Operation Desert Storm.

Deployment of Bangladeshi troops and police to Haiti occurred while I was in Dhaka. Haiti is a long way from Bangladesh, and there was some domestic controversy over the decision. Our DATT worked overtime to arrange the airlift of the Bangladeshi soldiers and police halfway around the world. I asked myself what USIS could do to help sustain the commitment of Bangladesh to the peacekeeping mission in Haiti. Active media coverage would be helpful.

No Bangladesh newspaper or television station was going to be able to send a journalist to Haiti to cover their boys in green. I cabled Washington to ask the Voice of America's Bangla Service to send a reporter to Haiti. They did so, with good effect since VOA had such a large listenership. We were telling the story of the Bangladesh peacekeepers in order to create and sustain support for that mission. It was, I believe, pretty successful. The Bangla Service was thrilled that anybody cared.

With troops in Bosnia, Mozambique, Kuwait, and Haiti, the Foreign Ministry had to spin itself up – to be up to date on happenings in all those countries. In USIS, we took on the task of keeping the Foreign Ministry right up to date on every speech or testimony or report about Haiti or the Balkans.

The focus on peacekeeping led me to realize that the Embassy needed to be much more in tune with military institutions in Bangladesh than was the case. The Defense Attaches in Dhaka, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Dunn, later Lieutenant Colonel Frank Rindone, had the ordinary DATT disposition – that the Embassy's attaches are in charge of relationships with the armed forces. The DAO, however, was one officer and one NCO. They could use help. I had a good relationship with Jim Dunn in particular, and he was happy to have our assistance.

The participation of the Bangladesh Army in peacekeeping and other useful missions prompted Pacific Command to have an active schedule of exercises with the Bangladeshis. Many American military training teams came in and out. Of course that matched my interests, and I always gave them first class public affairs support, which involved me going out and seeing the training, so that I could write the releases in ways that spoke to Bangladesh, something their own PAOs couldn't do.

Also, I started sending out U.S. speakers to the Defense Services Command and Staff College for their seminars and to make presentations to their students. I went and visited each one of their service academies – Military, Naval, Air Force. There my own standing as a former Academy instructor helped out.

Perhaps this is a good place to talk about using Public Diplomacy to support the Defense relationship.

I remember sitting with the Superintendent of the Bangladesh Naval Academy, located where the river meets the sea in Chittagong. It's a two-year academy. He explained to me that all their cadets lived in one dorm with two floors. First year cadets lived on the "gun deck," and second years lived on the "quarterdeck." From the time each cadet first entered the Academy grounds, he could only speak English. No Bangla could be spoken at the Bangladesh Naval Academy. The good English spoken by most Bangladesh officers was one reason they could participate so actively in peacekeeping.

The superintendent told me, "Look, many years ago we understood that the Bangladesh Navy is so small that we're never going to fight a war except with somebody. We asked ourselves, 'What country will we be fighting alongside?' We figured that we ought to prepare to fight in that language. Will we fight in Hindi? Arabic? Russian? Chinese? Or English? It was clear we must fight in English." They made an interesting strategic calculation that then determined their language policy. Once I heard that, I sent them all kinds of English teaching materials.

I was invited out to the Defense College at Mirpur to give a talk on civil-military relations in the U.S., the standard talk. There were about 200 officers in their lecture hall, mostly Bangladeshis but also some from India, Nepal, Pakistan, neighboring countries, some of the Commonwealth nations, and China.

During the Q&A, a Bangladeshi officer on the right side of the hall stood up and said, "If I understand what you've been saying, you believe that officers should disobey illegal orders." I said, "Yes. Officers should disobey illegal orders. It's not done lightly, but if an order is illegal it should be disobeyed." He sat down, without pushing back.

Then a hand went up on the left side of the auditorium, an officer from India. "Oh, Mr. Bishop, that's very interesting because I've often wondered what went on in the mind of the aircrew, your B-29 aircrew that dropped the atomic bomb. That was clearly an inhumane and illegal order. Why had they not refused?"

I'd been set up by these two. It was one of those moments when I earned my pay. I reviewed the strategic situation in the Pacific in the summer of 1945 along with the plans for Operations Olympic and Coronet. I told them about the prospect of perhaps a million more deaths, so that dropping the atomic bomb, by shocking the Japanese political system, had actually saved hundreds of thousands of lives for sure. American and British lives, yes, but Japanese lives too.

My answer caused quite a stir. I could hear the buzz. It happened that the brother of one of my FSNs worked at the Staff College. A week after my talk he told me that they were still talking about my answer. I had told them something none of them ever knew. They had never heard this view.

They had been told about American inhumanity, but they didn't have any real knowledge of the decision to use the atomic bomb. The student officers were still weighing what I had said. The Staff College was ready to invite me back to give a whole series of talks as

a result. When the new Defense Attaché heard that, however, he asserted his ownership of the Staff College. He would not pass on any other request for me to do more lectures.

Q: Was there a carryover with the Bangladeshi Army from the Indian Army? Going back to colonial times, they always had a very good military reputation.

BISHOP: Well, the Bengal Lancers of Hollywood fame came from ... Bengal, some from Bangladesh. I noticed that many regiments had a heritage from the Indian Army. Some of the predecessor units had been in the Burma campaign during World War II. On the whole, though, the Bangladeshis didn't seem eager to celebrate this heritage. Different countries have different attitudes about those colonial precursors. I think the countries of Francophone Africa well remember their *tirailleurs* in the First World War, and they're proud of that chapter in their military history. On the other hand, the South Vietnamese, who also fought with the French in many campaigns, did not cherish the memory.

As for Bangladesh, they didn't seem to repudiate their military heritage, but they didn't play it for much. There never seemed to be any reunions or public ceremonies to honor their Burma Star men.

I visited two Commonwealth war cemeteries in Bangladesh, one in Chittagong and one in Cox's Bazar. They were perfectly tended, and all Bangladeshis seemed to agree that domestic strife or riots never ought to touch the Commonwealth cemeteries.

Q: Were there visits by important people from the administration?

BISHOP: Dhaka was not a regular stop for high level people. Robin Raphel, the Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian affairs, came a few times, and USIS arranged the media coverage.

Congressman Bill Richardson became interested in the case of a young American woman, Eliadah McCord, who had been convicted of drug smuggling. She had been in prison in Dhaka for several years. Richardson traveled to Bangladesh twice in connection with the case, and he persuaded the government to pardon her. I handled all of the press events connected with his visit. He was a very agreeable individual to work with.

Otherwise, the big event was that the First Lady came to Bangladesh during my tour -- to visit Muhammad Yunus, who pioneered microfinance.

Q: He's now got trouble. But anyway he won a --

BISHOP: A great man nonetheless, and yes, he was a Nobel Prize winner. Some years before, he had stopped by Little Rock to see Governor Clinton of Arkansas. Arkansas had its own micro-enterprise fund, and Dr. Yunus became friends with Governor and Mrs. Clinton. When the Clintons went to the White House, Yunus reminded them that his

invitation for them to visit Bangladesh was still open. The President couldn't break away, but Mrs. Clinton decided to come, along with Chelsea.

Q: How did that go?

BISHOP: It went fabulously!

When the First Lady told the Secretary about wanting to visit her friend Dr. Yunus in Bangladesh, she learned you can't go to Bangladesh without going to Pakistan, and you can't go to Pakistan without going to India. And if you just go to those countries, the Nepalese will feel slighted. The trip got longer!

Naturally, there had to be an advance team for India, and an advance team for Pakistan, and an advance team for Bangladesh. The Administration had to really dig down deep into the reserve of Schedule C young people that do advances. Many were not even State Department employees. They sent the A Team to India, the B Team to Pakistan, and the C Team to Bangladesh.

I was 49, and I had to deal with young staffers in their twenties, probably on their first trip to anywhere, saying "I speak for the President." The President wasn't even coming. But "I speak for the First Lady." I was biting my tongue a lot, saying to myself "who are these children telling us what to do?" We could have managed everything on our own, and reduced the blood pressure and bile quotient all around. After dealing with these kids for several weeks, about three days ahead of the visit, they finally sent ...

Q: They sent adults.

BISHOP: They sent an adult, a prominent New Hampshire Democrat, but he was a retired Marine officer. Finally everything was organized, and all the quarreling stopped. Even now the memory of those young members of the Advance teams still rankles. I'm proud of what we did for the First Lady on the visit, which in the end was all positive, but I can't let go of my negative feelings about the way the Clinton White House ran advances.

Q: Well, the young staff on these trips usually had been very important for ringing doorbells and campaigning. They go on these trips, and they get puffed up, and get ideas, and then later on they're sort of shunted off to one side, except those that have proved themselves to be effective. Most don't.

BISHOP: I can tell you've been around this track, too.

During her visit to Bangladesh, there were things to do in Dhaka, of course, meeting the Prime Minister, being the guest at a big banquet, and so on. Focusing on U.S. help for Bangladesh's development, USAID scoured the map for a good village that would show off not only our programs, but Dr. Yunus's Grameen Bank programs as well, since that was whom she had come so far to see.

The security team vetoed a village to the northeast of Dhaka proposed by USAID. A village north of Jessore recommended by Dr. Yunus fit all the criteria. A little unusually, it was a Hindu village.

Making the movement such a long distance seemed problematic, but out of the blue, or perhaps the “wild blue,” an Air Force C-130 was to be in Bangladesh for a PACOM exercise, so it was available to fly the First Lady from Dhaka to Jessore. When I first heard this, I thought to myself that the First Lady wasn’t going to ride in a C-130 with all the noise and the grime, but she did so readily. From the airfield at Jessore we motorcaded about forty minutes to the selected village.

The first time I had visited the village with the pre-pre-Advance, I realized we were really in the middle of nowhere. It was a real hardscrabble village. We got to see the women gathering for one of the weekly meetings to talk about their Grameen Bank loans. We went over to another village, even more hardscrabble than the first, and the women of the village sang to us a cappella under the hot baking sun. It was very moving, and we knew the First Lady was going to get a real, close look at the difficulties and poverty of rural life.

But every time I went down – again for the pre-Advance, then for the Advance, and finally with the Lead – we saw some new roofs on the houses. They built a shaded shelter for the ladies in the micro-finance circle. At the poorer village they built a stage for the ladies to get them out of the sun, and rigged up a generator and microphones for the performance. Things were getting better and better in the villages on each trip as the visit approached. The Bangladeshis wanted to put a better face on things, but each time things seemed a little less authentic.

On the final visit before the First Lady’s arrival, we discovered that Dr. Yunus had built a semi-circular bamboo structure with woven reed walls and a thatched roof in the middle of what had been a bean field. In the shaded new structure were examples of all the Grameen Bank microenterprises, allowing the First Lady and Chelsea to walk with Dr. Yunus from enterprise to enterprise – ladies making handicrafts for sale, ladies making bricks, ladies milking a cow, and so on. It was quite an efficient way of showing what the Grameen Bank was doing, but you could tell the “show” was overwhelming the opportunity for a genuine look at village life.

Handling the media during the actual trip to the village, we cut openings in the woven walls of the school and Dr. Yunus's bamboo mall to allow the cameras to get close-ups of the First Lady, Chelsea, and Dr. Yunus talking with the women. The photos, the video, and the coverage were all first class, terrific. It was, moreover, a lot of fun going out to see this village – even how it was dressed up for things.

I might add that during each of our earlier visits, we had noticed that more and more local villagers were coming to the village to get a close look at us. On the day of the actual

visit, the Army deployed a battalion of men in a large circle just out of sight of the village – blocking all the local visitors.

Q: Mrs. Clinton – now she's Secretary of State. At the time, as First Lady, she really was very good at this sort of thing, wasn't she?

BISHOP: Yes, really good.

Q: She knew her brief and --

BISHOP: It was a model visit, and she was a model VIP.

Chelsea was a good visitor too. During the numerous planning meetings, we kept hearing different things about Chelsea. It wasn't fixed that she would simply join her mother at every event, which is what we wanted, if only for economy of effort in scheduling and movements. We heard, "Maybe Chelsea'll want to see the night life of Dhaka while she's here." *What?* This caused more than a little commotion at the Embassy, and somebody had to waste a day trying to figure out if Chelsea should go see the jazz quartet or the discos of Dhaka. This was a stupid waste of time, but it's the sort of stuff you do when a visit is headed your way.

In the end, she stuck with Mom, went along everywhere, asked intelligent questions, and made a great impression, both for being filial daughter and for being very attentive and interested in Bangladesh. The two of them together -- it was really positive.

Q: You were in Bangladesh during the 1966 Presidential campaign, Clinton versus Dole.

BISHOP: Yes, and we did all the normal things – an election night reception and an inaugural address dinner too.

Of course, following the unwritten rule, none of us in the Embassy revealed our personal choices for the election. Gathering at the Embassy for the returns with local contacts, I did the usual when it was known that President Clinton was re-elected. I walked up to the microphone and said "We've just witnessed a great victory," pause, "for democracy."

Because Bangladesh was headed for elections too, we were aiming for the demonstration effect. One of the characteristics of elections in Bangladesh was that unsuccessful candidates never accepted the results. Rather they ranted and raved that the election was stolen, the election of their opponent was chicanery, it was dishonesty, it was double dealing, there was a black hand, it was illegitimate. After our own election, I recall we put together a videotape of acceptance and concession speeches, to show how American candidates acted when the results became known. I recall one Member of Parliament telling me that he had never known that American candidates accepted defeat when it came.

Q: I see you have a list of topics to mention. Please continue.

BISHOP: One of the great institutions in Dhaka is the International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research Bangladesh (ICDDR-B), also called the Cholera Hospital. It was one of the legacies of SEATO, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, and cholera's still a problem in Bangladesh.

The ICDDR-B was the institution that had developed the oral rehydration packets. In the packet was a kind of dried molasses with salts, to be mixed with water and given to a person with cholera. Cholera kills a person by expelling the body's fluids. Simply drinking water won't make up for the loss of fluids because your body can't process water through the stomach fast enough to keep the whole body hydrated. Mix the water with salt and molasses and a few more sophisticated mineral salts contained in the packets, however, and a person can keep hydrated and survive a bout of cholera.

ICDDR-B was an amazing institution. Your senses were assaulted when you entered. Not only did you have the disease with all its strong odors, and the perspiration of hundreds of poor Bangladeshis, but all this was combined with the smell of disinfectant. Walking in, you were hit by the scenes of illness, but it was the physical smells of the place that overwhelmed you.

At the same time, though, when you walked in you had this enormous feeling of confidence because you were walking in to an institution which had all the benefit of western medical organization and good triage of patients. The hospital saved lives because it had ... system. At the gate, nurses quickly divided the incoming patients into groups. Babies were immediately sent to one group of nurses to begin immediate rehydration, spooning the salts mixed with water into little mouths. Bangladeshis of different ages and sexes would move through this intake step, with nurses and doctors judging how severe the cases were. One person might wait for an hour; another would be taken care of right away.

Walking through the wards, especially seeing the babies, always tugged the heart. In the wards there would be dozens and dozens and dozens of people. In the course of a season, the disease would spike in different weeks. People would walk great distances to bring in their family members. Sometimes there were enough beds, and sometimes there weren't.

To handle patient overflows, they had a large area next to the main building with only a tin roof. If they needed to, they could immediately set up more cots for the patients whose cases were a little less severe. My first visit to ICDDR-B happened to occur on one of the days when there were too many patients to be handled inside. I walked through the building and passed through the rear door that led to this overflow area. It was long rows of cots with the patients, but with family members and nurses walking up and down the rows making sure whether anyone needed immediate attention. I was momentarily overwhelmed because it was so similar to the scene in "Gone with the Wind" when Scarlett O'Hara goes out into the railroad yard --

Q: Yes, in Atlanta --

BISHOP: In Atlanta in the movie, with Sherman's army just over the horizon.

Handling a catastrophe that big was a normal day at ICDDR-B. Whatever money we spend on the Cholera Hospital is worth every cent.

Next topic: It was in Bangladesh that I had a couple of what I call Cold War moments. This is just a few years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, as you recall.

The first time, I was arranging public affairs coverage of a large medical training exercise in Jessore involving the U.S. Air Force. Someone said, "get in the helicopter" so we could fly over to another exercise area. It was an Mi-8, a former Soviet helicopter. I'd studied the images of enemy helicopters in the Air Force, and this was one. So hard had been the loss of the Cold War for the old Soviet Union, and now Russia, that they had to sell their helicopters to Bangladesh. So as I got in the helicopter I said to myself, "this is something to savor." This was a Cold War moment.

Cold War moment number two: One day I was driving through Dhanmondi, and I passed the Russian Cultural Center, the former Soviet Cultural Center. During the Cold War, no American diplomat could visit a Soviet Cultural Center. I said to myself, hey, the Cold War's over, now's the time for me to visit the Russian Cultural Center! My driver turned the car around and we pulled up to the gate of a rather large four-story building.

As I stepped through the gate into the outer courtyard, the guard was asleep. There was nobody else to be seen. They didn't seem very mindful of security.

I walked through the doors, and arrows pointed me to the first floor exhibit area. This public floor was totally empty of people. They had a permanent exhibit on the Soviet trawlers that had cleared the mines in Chittagong Harbor after the Independence War. In the main hall, the "exhibit" was the 8x10 glossies sent out from Moscow for that month, pinned on the bulletin boards. The Chairman greets the delegation from Syria. Dancers appear at the Bolshoi. Combines harvest a bumper crop. That was the exhibit – that was all they could do.

So far I hadn't met anyone. On the second floor, in the Library, the sleeping librarian jumped to his feet in startled amazement that, first, anybody had visited and, then, it was the USIS Director. I took a quick look at the collection and found the collected works of Marx and Lenin, along with some translations of Russian literature. It was not a very contemporary collection.

The Librarian then insisted that I meet the Center's senior FSN. The librarian took us up the stairs to the third floor, where all the Russians had their offices. None of them were in. Each office had a steel accordion gate with a lock on the bottom. In their own building, the Russians felt the need for steel office gates! I ran through the possibilities. Either (1) they didn't trust their FSNs, or (2) they were actually KGB even though their name card said "cultural affairs."

Finally, we reached the fourth floor. The senior FSN was having tea with a buddy from a ministry. He was totally flummoxed by the arrival of an American. We spoke for a few minutes, but as I left he asked, "Do you have any openings at the American Cultural Center?" This was so rich with irony.

Next on the list: An issue that took a higher place on the U.S. global issues agenda in the mid-1990s was woman and child trafficking. Naturally many Bangladeshis were caught up, driven there fundamentally by poverty. There were Bangladeshi boys taken to the Middle East to be jockeys in camel races. There were girls moved in the sex trade -- some to nearby India, some to the Middle East. The Embassy and international organizations began to trace and document the trade. There were also women moved into the sex trade in Bangladesh itself, and there were ugly brothels in downtown Dhaka.

As I said, trafficking was just coming up on the radar as an issue, and the donors and NGOs didn't yet have large programs. This is the kind of moment when U.S. Public Diplomacy can make a real difference.

So before speaking of addressing trafficking in Dhaka in 1997, some philosophy.

If the agenda is social change, or dealing with deeply rooted social problems, my view is that years of work will be required. Years to define the problem. Years to create awareness. Years to garner funds or to win the attention of development gatekeepers. Years for assessments and benchmarking. Seminars and workshops. Drafts of legislation. Carrots and sticks for the local government by the donors. Fending off those who profit from lack of reform. Research and studies. Pilot projects. Funding NGOs over the long run. And so on.

Public Diplomacy is too light to do this. I know that Under Secretaries and directors of Public Diplomacy programs at universities and think tanks envision Public Diplomacy as able to deliver social change, but they're wrong. Public Diplomacy programs can play a supporting role, but Public Diplomacy's resources are too small to make a long-term impact. Because the resources are scattered over too many programs and too many goals, there's never enough critical mass to make a decisive difference in any one area. Thinking that a few Fulbrighters, a few Visitors, or a few speakers can make a real dent is a form of Public Diplomacy ... hubris.

I can of course describe this in a military way. Think of the Civil War. Battles were won by masses of infantry helped by their supporting arms.

In social change, only USAID has the money and experience to work over the long term. They are the infantry. That doesn't mean there's no role for Public Diplomacy, it just means that Public Diplomacy people have to understand what we can do and what we can't.

Public Diplomacy with its light funding, its light arms, are rather the scouts and skirmishers that move ahead of the infantry. They report on the shape of the battlefield. Their fire can slow advancing enemy formations coming our way. But scouts and skirmishers only “prepare” or “soften” or “shape” the battlefield, and no infantry, no victory. Or no social change. Public Diplomacy is too light, as in “light infantry,” to effect change on its own.

I editorialize that such understanding has been scant among Under Secretaries of Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, who seem to have an unquenchable thirst for vignettes that prove how Public Diplomacy is tackling and solving the world's problems. Or, to be more cynical, how my Public Diplomacy is tackling and solving the world's problems by taking my advice, following my lead, and implementing programs I have directed.

So, to 1997. What I liked about the issue of women and child trafficking in Bangladesh is that it fell to PAS to scout and skirmish on a new issue while we waited for the infantry to arrive. This is something that Public Diplomacy can do.

We combed through the media for opinions so that we could begin to establish the kind of public appeals we would need to make an effective case among Bangladeshis. We identified the journalists and the local leaders who were focused on the issue -- pro and con. We learned a little about the flow of bribes and corruption that fended away law enforcement from the brothels.

We asked for a U.S. Speaker on trafficking to come to Dhaka. The Speaker would help raise awareness, yes, but in the course of planning for the program we would identify the people and the organizations who might later play a role in addressing the problem. Meeting people, we could identify candidates for exchange programs. Around the program we could issue press releases and op-eds that brought more awareness into public conversations. We had enough resources for a few post programs that could begin to raise the profile of the issue while buying time for USAID to develop sizable projects in its own “by the numbers” way.

This is what we were doing on woman and child trafficking in the first half of 1997. By this time, I had lost the IO, CAO, Executive Officer, and one fourth of the local staff. In a few moments I hope we can discuss this reduction in staff -- as part of the peace dividend -- as a management issue. But for now, replacing all of those trimmed from the staff was a new officer as Assistant PAO, Bob Kerr, in his first assignment. He became quite energized on the issue, and it was he who worked on bringing the speaker from Washington. The speaker program was to play an important role as we unfolded the initial moves by the Embassy in this new field.

Bob thought that the coming speaker program needed more punch. He proposed to take our USIS video camera into a red light district during the day, record conditions, and interview women. This was certainly bolder than the usual preparation for a speaker program, but “no guts, no glory,” and I gave him the go-ahead. One of the last things I did in my last few days in Dhaka was to look over his videotape.

As I say, the speaker program itself occurred a little while after I left. But I heard something quite extraordinary from Bob. A few days before the program, the Police entered the red light district that he had filmed, made some arrests, and “freed” the women, putting them in the hands of a local NGO. My guess is that they did this for show, to disarm any finger-pointing that might come their way as a result of our program. My guess is that the police action may not have permanently “freed” some of the women, who lacked the skills for other employment, and who would still be “stained” by their time in the sex trade. They might soon be back in the red light district. Still, it was a gratifying moment, to know that one of our programs had broken some specific women free and given them a new chance in life. Bob's initiative had a fine result.

Q: All right, today is Washington's birthday, February 22, 2011 with Donald Bishop. I have a question here. As you got into this, because it has pertinence to much later on. How much did the study of Islam prepare you and your officers? Tell us about the Islam factor in Bangladesh.

BISHOP: In my study of Bangladesh before I went out I sensed that Islam was a large social factor. I had studied Islam in graduate school, so I was primed to be sensitive to the Islamic dimension of Bangladesh when I got there. This is worth a longer, a much longer, discussion.

Let me frame things first. The Foreign Service characteristically tended – though maybe it's changing a little bit -- not to think about the religious dimensions of a society. And FSO's tended to think that because we keep “church” and “state” separate in the United States, it would be illegitimate of us overseas to be particularly interested in the religious dimension of society.

Q: And also I'd say the people we recruit for the Foreign Service are not particularly religious.

BISHOP: Well ... yes.

Q: They may be religious, but not, say, a fundamentalist Christian.

BISHOP: That sounds right to me.

You've gathered from previous conversations that I think of myself as a religious person, of course Catholic. I think that made me a little more sensitive to the religious dimension of foreign societies. Having a religious sensibility is important in dealing with societies that are very religious, and Bangladesh is a pretty religious place.

The historians and sociologists say that Islam in Bangladesh is a bit syncretic. Islam had come rather late to Bangladesh, in the 1300s, I believe, and one of its attractions was that once Bengalis became Muslim they set aside caste. Even if their material circumstances didn't change much when they became Muslim, they felt the internal liberation that came

from being a member of an equal brotherhood of believers, at least equal in faith or equal in Allah's eyes.

I can't count myself as a deep, deep student of Islam, although I had more book learning than most, but I was sensitive to it. And I was primed to notice the Islamic side of the country when we looked at Bangladesh as a partner of the United States, and the Bangladeshis as a people who might have different opinions of the United States and its programs based on their own cultural and historical background. I was anxious to find the religious dimension of that.

When I got to Dhaka and wrote the Country Public Affairs Plan in my first year, I had to identify the "communication tensions." Among them, I wrote that Bangladesh was Islamic, and that inevitably there'd be some lack of understanding that derived from their religious background. This might be overcome, I wrote, with more dialogue and more getting out and meeting Muslims and more demonstrating the commonality of human concerns that we might have.

Back in the day, Country Public Affairs Plans usually ended up listing four or five goals for a USIS program – areas to focus on. Usually, most plans focused on democracy, economics, and global issues. The last goal was always a throwaway about understanding American society. This last goal gave you room to do anything you wanted to in the area of culture. When I wrote the plan in Dhaka, however, I put "Dialog with Islam" as goal number four. Ambassador Merrill was really taken with it, and so it went in to Washington that way.

When my Country Public Affairs Plan got to Washington, I learned, it raised eyebrows. I don't know what the posts in the heart of the Middle East, the Arab Muslim world, had been doing all these years, but I was the first person to actually write out "Dialog with Islam" in a Country Public Affairs Plan – to say that we should be engaged with Islamic publics and we should be talking about some religious issues in order to create bonds of mutual understanding and trust.

There were some different reactions from Washington and from my colleagues at other posts in the area. One was that the United States is a country, and Islam is a religion. How can a country talk to a religion? These are two different realms of life, and the twain doesn't meet, I heard.

Another was – we talk to our friends. We reward our friends. We give them grants and make them IVs. Our friends are the secular leaders of society, or those Muslims with a liberal and cosmopolitan view of things. We don't reward those like the "fundamentalists" who are hostile to us.

Then the question became -- where in the USIA bureaucracy would a Country Plan program on religion fit? What office would provide the program support? We had programmers for economic reform, and we had programmers for GATT and trade negotiations, and we had people who did democracy and human rights and legislatures

and so on. But no one in the USIA bureaucracy had a portfolio for religion. Once again, this reflected a kind of vulgar separationism. It was a “blind spot,” if you will, in USIA’s organizational and conceptual structure, blind to religion.

Anyway, I kept at it and talked to people. Finally, they reasoned out that USIA had a section in the Bureau of Programs that dealt with “American Society.” American Society has many dimensions – an ethnic dimension, a racial dimension, and economic dimension, geographic dimensions, and so on. So OK, they could consider religion to be one more dimension of American society. In the Bureau of Programs, therefore, one person could get religion too, and that person could handle the odd requests from Bangladesh.

I mention here that “American Studies” can indeed provide a useful way for people in other countries to consider their own social arrangements. One year, when we hosted the annual American Studies conference in Dhaka, we made “Religion in the United States” the theme. It was a good academic focus, and the conversations at the conference helped Bangladeshis think through religious issues in their own society.

Q: Were your FSN’s Muslim?

The entire staff was Muslim except for one or two Hindus and one Catholic. That meant I had Muslim senior FSNs to advise me. I suppose “Dialog with Islam” was my American “bright idea,” but the great thing about bicultural Embassy staffs is that you have rapport, you have frankness, you exchange ideas. If you’re listening as well as proposing, they can provide good advice – what to do, what not to do, how to take the germ of an idea and make it better.

My FSNs rather liked the idea of “Dialog with Islam,” and we enjoyed a fine collaboration. I think that the staff were all rather excited by the possibility because we had never had much contact with Muslim leaders. The FSNs had their ordinary faith-based reasons to want to go forward.

Q: Again, pointing out to someone who’s looking at this, sometimes you find that we have embassies where we’ve recruited people sort of like us, and often the religious dimension isn’t there. Or else the FSNs might all be Protestant or Catholic, and you get a disconnect at the top level. But you didn’t ...

BISHOP: Yes, every post is different. If I had been in Calcutta and wanted to talk to Muslims, I would have to work through a largely Hindu staff. Saudi Arabia is another case. I gather there aren’t many Saudis that work at the Embassy in Riyadh. In Dhaka, however, everything lined up right. The FSNs were good to go.

Q: So, the religious leaders, mullahs? Were you able to make contact at a significant level and have a dialogue?

BISHOP: Remember that “Dialog with Islam” was only one of our goals. Remember that this is before there were social networks. Remember that we were just at the beginning of something new. We got to know many Muslim leaders, especially in Dhaka, but I'm not sure our reach extended very far into Islamic institutions and communities elsewhere. That's the kind of thing that takes some years to develop.

I thought we did pretty well. We met the university professors who either teaching Islamic subjects, or those who were serious Muslims. There were, for example, physics professors who had interesting ideas to test some Koranic passages against the physical universe. There are some passages in the Koran – my memory is not quite precise after all these years – about time stopping briefly, and they were interested in exploring these. They posed experimental questions. I've since learned that some of the world's scientists, hearing this, scoffed. My take was – let the questions that originate in faith unfold, and let Muslim scholars use their science and the experimental method to test them. The questions honored faith. The use of the scientific method honored knowledge. Let them see where the knowledge leads. What's the down side here?

We met the people from the leading mosques in Dhaka. We met Red Crescent. I told my staff that I wanted also to meet some Muslim leaders who were out of the mainstream. I met people from Jamaat-e-Islami, the religious political party, non-establishment mosque leaders, and, what can I say, Muslim evangelicals who worked among the poor. It was a very interesting mix. We didn't get as far along, however, as meeting countryside people or those from neighborhood mosques.

Of course we began the tried and true way, talking about Islam among the faiths in the United States. I remember at one roundtable at USIS, one of the religious leaders was showing signs of agitation, and he said, “You know what the problem with you Americans is?” I kind of jumped back in my chair. He said, “You have nude beaches in Denmark!”

Whoa! And everybody else in the group laughed about nude beaches in Denmark being America's fault. Thinking of his response, I realized he was eliding us with the whole West, and Europe. I said to myself, it's time to be diplomatic, even though I wanted to say, “hey, when you were in school, did you sleep through geography class?” The other participants let him know why they were laughing, gave him some gentle ribbing. He smiled too.

I remember at the same conference I mentioned that I often read a phrase used in the Arab world, “Jews and Crusaders,” to mean Israel and the United States, or Jews and Christians. I told the participants that this seemed to be a backdoor way of criticizing the United States, linking us to Islam's historic grievances. I pointed out that the Crusades ran from the 1000s to the 1200s, and this was long before anyone even knew that the American continent existed. We Americans weren't around during the Crusades. I said “there can be a lot of criticism of the United States, but let's just knock one off the list, that we're Crusaders.” They nodded, they got it. Crusaders – that's off your back, they

told me. So here and there we could chip away at things like that. That's what dialogue is about.

And I found that the most radical of the Muslim political leaders, what they wanted was to talk, they wanted to be noticed. No one from the Embassy had ever done so. What they wanted was to have a chance to meet somebody who had a basic sympathy for their alignment in life, their values in life, their hopes for a religious and moral society, their worries and apprehensions about social change, and what they had heard about the United States. They wanted to meet someone who would just talk all this through.

Perhaps I could mention here that, watching and listening to different American members of the Embassy when they met Muslim contacts, I noticed that the more religious individuals in the Embassy were better in a good dialog with serious Muslims, which is also saying, I suppose, that the Americans with firmer secular convictions were less effective. They were perhaps, to use a different metaphor, "tone deaf" when it came to discussing faith in general and religious issues in particular -- just when we needed to hear the tones in a conversation, to establish some interpersonal ties and rapport that would lead to better reporting, and to voice American policy in a way that hits the tone that is right for our Muslim interlocutors.

There's no particular way to actualize this observation, since we get FSOs of all backgrounds and give them portfolios, and their orientation toward faith has no role in an assignment. But it was my observation.

Q: Were there any issues that particularly agitated or concerned these Muslim contacts? I mean such as -- during this time we were doing Northern Watch and Southern Watch.

BISHOP: The no-fly zone and so on. Those things may have been on a long list, but they didn't seem to be prominent, and I don't recall discussing them.

There had been Bangladeshi mujahideen in Afghanistan. And some Bangladeshis were in Chechnya. I met the head of the Mujahideen veterans, who headed up a society to care for their widows and orphans.

On the whole, I thought that the concerns of most of our Muslim interlocutors were domestic. The Islamic political party, Jamaat, held a few seats in Parliament, and whether it would increase its representation was much on people's minds. The secular parties, the BNP and the Awami League, did not want Jamaat to win more seats.

All of our Muslim contacts, I would say, hoped to make Bangladesh a more Islamic place. The most conservative members of that party hoped to implement Shariah. I sensed that the politically active Imams were focused on these domestic issues rather than international causes. If I recall correctly, Jamaat actually lost seats in the 1996 elections, so concern about Jamaat's influence receded as a concern for the Embassy.

Q: Could you say something about natural disasters in Bangladesh? You must have seen some.

BISHOP: Actually, there had been a huge flood just before we got there, and there was one after we left. But during our three years there, Dhaka was not hit.

There's a lot that could be said about this. USAID spent some of its money quite well, developing Bangladesh's capacity for dealing with disasters. Driving through the countryside you would see concrete structures built on stilts, about twenty feet above the ground. They provided storage for radios and relief supplies and oral rehydration packets. If an area was flooded, people could get what they needed at a local tower until the waters went down and the Army and doctors could reach them. These towers diminished the impact of a flood or tropical storm. USAID had set up a disaster reporting system, and although tropic storms took lives every time, over the years the numbers were diminishing as the emergency preparedness improved. All of this is a major USAID success story.

There's always room for one more story. It's about our DCM Jim Nach and his wife Thuy, as they were transferring from Washington for Dhaka. As usual, two moving companies arrived at their home, one to move things into storage, and one to box up the items they would send to Bangladesh. The movers, though, mixed things up. They put the items to be shipped into the warehouse at Hagerstown, and they shipped to Dhaka all the things the Nachs intended to store.

The mistake wasn't discovered until the Nachs unpacked their shipment in Dhaka and realized the error. The department -- in a rare exception to policy -- authorized the shipment of their items, mistakenly stored in Hagerstown, to Dhaka. Their items were placed in a shipping container, and the ship entered the Bay of Bengal just as a tropical storm raged. The winds ripped many containers off the ship, and their container went to the bottom of the Bay of Bengal! Their piano swimming with the fishes! This of course sentenced Jim and Thuy to the agony of the claim, not to mention that he had his wife had to do without quite a number of needed household items.

Q: You've mentioned the role of FSNs in your programs. Sometimes we Americans talk about "our" programs and "our" initiatives, but many can't go very far without relying on our Foreign Service Nationals.

BISHOP: Yes, I certainly agree.

Because of how stressed the post had been under the previous PAO, I was particularly interested in demonstrating my care for FSNs, and to develop good rapport. They were members of an FSN Association, and one of the USIS Cultural Affairs Assistants was an officer of the Association. He often spoke with me about what the Association hoped to gain in its coming talks with the Management Section. When he ran ideas by me, I'd say, that sounds like a "maybe," or "that one will need Department approval," or "if you ask me, that won't go very far."

Similarly, I put a lot of effort into Special Immigration Visas. You know that FSNs can be considered for an SIV after fifteen years of “exceptional” service. I volunteered for the SIV Committee that would review applications and make recommendations to the Ambassador. For any applicant from USIS, I did my damndest to get the Committee to approve. That meant a lot of preparation, some politicking with other members, and then some persuasive talk in those committee meetings.

I was appalled by some of the things I heard in the Committee meetings. The first thing you notice about applications is that those for a Section Chief’s secretary are always approved. The Section Chief knows the person and becomes the advocate at the meeting. On the other hand, an application from a bricklayer in GSO is likely to be disapproved because the Section Chief sitting on the Committee doesn’t know that FSN personally.

I had seen this before in the Air Force. The major’s clerk-typist always got a Commendation Medal, but the airman turning wrenches on the flight line, enduring the heat and the cold, assuring that the aircraft will fly, was never considered for a medal because there were too many sergeants in between. I always gave the Committee members that example so that they would be ... American! To understand that everybody who had worked for us had done something valuable, and we shouldn’t be so worried about rank and standing when we reviewed applications.

We were seeing applications from FSNs with 15, 20, or 25 years of service at the Embassy. If they received the SIV (Special Immigrant Visa), it allowed their spouse and their children under the age of 21 to immigrate too. An SIV, then, was not just a ticket for them, but for their family. To be able to take a 14-year old child from Bangladesh and put her in a public school in the United States would open up a whole new life that might even include Harvard. Every SIV application, then, bore all the hopes of the family and the children. Think of all the emotion packed into a little application file by the bricklayer or the distribution clerk with seven children. I was shocked to hear members of the Committee say, “I know him and he doesn’t deserve a visa.” Or, “What kind of job will he get?” as if by refusing a visa they were saving him from failure in the U.S.

Perhaps I had had the benefit of seeing so many Korean immigrants in the U.S. Immigrants now usually have classmates and relatives already there, ready to help them in the U.S. The idea that we Americans knew better bothered me.

In any case, it was soon clear to the FSNs that I was their champion to get SIVs. That gave me standing among the FSNs in the whole Embassy. Developing that kind of rapport pays off in programs.

Alas, some applicants falsified applications, usually changing the birth dates of children who were past 21. They persuaded the FSNs in HR to overlook the original birth dates. When Ambassador Merrill learned this, he came down particularly hard. He fired some FSNs, and he refused the SIV applications of others. The Embassy’s personnel system had gotten rotten that way. For my trouble, I was burned when a USIS FSN submitted

fake birth records for his sons. Otherwise, I'm pleased to think that some FSNs received visas because of my advocacy on their behalf.

Q: Many USIS posts had to cut staff in the 1990s. What was the situation in Dhaka?

BISHOP: When I got to Bangladesh in 1994 I had 39 local employees working at USIS. This was, however, the mid-1990s, and you'll recall that much of the "peace dividend" was to come from reducing Public Diplomacy – to "pension off" USIA to use Pat Buchanan's phrase. That was just one of his policy positions that disqualified him for the Presidency.

One day I received a call from NEA Area Director Kenton Keith telling me that I must reduce the staff by five by the end of the fiscal year. That's a tough task, with a lot of things to weigh. Who was close to retirement anyway? Who did I really want to be rid of? Men or women? It was my prerogative to decide who would be dismissed and who would not, and after some thinking things over, and talking with the American officers, I settled on five to be let go.

Before I had announced any of this, I got another call. The Area Director said, "Don, it's six." I had to let go one more person, and I went ahead and figured out who that should be. So far there has been no cable, no official communication of this staff reduction. It was all being done by telephone.

In another call to Washington, I let the area office know I had settled on which six employees to let go. I was told, much to my astonishment, "no, no, when we said six, we meant six more – the first five and then six more. You have to let go eleven." This was more than one fourth of the staff.

This was hard, one of the hardest things I ever did in the Foreign Service – let go eleven people. It was a disaster for each one. Even if they could find new jobs, they were looking at substantial salary cuts and no benefits in the local economy. The older employees had no real prospects at all.

I really wrestled with this. I could distribute the separation dates over time, as long as they were all out of the Embassy by the end of the fiscal year. For one employee, I allowed him to stay a few months longer so that he had one more year's service to add to his severance or pension. For another, I delayed as long as possible so that he finished with 15 years and 3 days of service, enough to qualify him to apply for a Special Immigrant Visa. And so on.

Most were grateful, but I recall one or two employees -- very senior, with generous retirement benefits even though they had to leave a few years before they intended to retire -- who became quite bitter, and felt they had to infect other FSNs with their bitterness to get even for the injustice done them. No good deed goes unpunished, I suppose.

Another part of the contraction of USIS Dhaka was the decision, made in Washington, that we give up our Library. We eventually gave all the books to the Dhaka University library, ending a valued American presence that had lasted several decades.

The same austerity that forced me to let go eleven FSNs led USIA to reduce the number of Americans at the post. When I arrived we had a PAO, CAO, IO, and Executive Officer, but the new Area Office algorithm determined Dhaka should only have one officer. My brain short circuited, wondering how one officer was going to do the work of four, especially when we had so many good things going. The reductions would take effect by not replacing my officers as they departed.

The Deputy Area Director, Steve Dachi, made a trip to several small posts that were facing reductions. In his hip pocket, he had one loose American position that he could give to the post that could use an additional American most effectively. It came down to Dhaka or Colombo, and after his visit he allowed Dhaka to remain a two-officer post, PAO and DPAO. When our Executive Officer, Elizabeth Cemal, left Dhaka, she was not replaced. When Kathleen and Chris Rochester, IO and CAO respectively, departed, a new APAO arrived, Bob Kerr.

Q: Bangladesh gave you a good look at what we might call the development enterprise. Do you have any other comments to offer?

BISHOP: Here's one small memory that I thought told a larger tale. I recall being quite surprised at one Country Team meeting. In Dhaka, the Ambassador sat at the head of the table, and it was customary for the USAID Director to sit on his left. Ambassador Merrill had come from USAID, so he knew their programs and management from the inside. As usual at a Country Team meeting, each member was asked if he or she had anything for the group.

Over the months I learned that the USAID Director's comments were pretty much the same. On odd-numbered weeks he would say "we're waiting for our figures from Washington," meaning USAID in Dhaka was waiting to learn how much money Washington was going to give for this and that program, and in which quarter. On even-numbered weeks he would say, "Oh, we've just received figures from Washington, and we're working through them." That was the sum of what we heard at Country Team meetings about USAID programs. With his detailed knowledge of USAID procedures, and from reviews of programs with the USAID Director, that was all the Ambassador needed to know, perhaps, but nobody else knew what was going on. Was there new money for economics, or new money for banking reform, or new money for disease control, or for disaster relief, or for family planning? The rest of us on the Country Team had no idea.

One day, however, the Director got more talkative. He said that USAID had decided that American officers working on family planning should really go out and see how things were working in the field. He said he and his colleagues had just finished a week of

traveling throughout the country, meeting family planning workers and acceptors. It was most informative and valuable, he said, now we understand.

My translation of his report was that it meant they had never done this before. Their usual procedure was to give USAID money to the family planning implementing partners in Dhaka. They talked to the elites who ran the organizations, but they had not gone out and seen programs at work. Regardless of my views on family planning programs, I thought this showed that USAID Missions could be too far distant from their effects. Their role was more about pushing out money than in understanding development as it was experienced by the poor. This was another way that the Embassy was too tied in with the elites. I was learning more from the missionaries than I was from USAID.

In Bangladesh I began to be more conscious that I looked at societies -- our society, foreign societies -- differently than other FSOs. My upbringing with its focus on morals, my study of economics with Lawrence Towle pointing to moral effects, my professional exposure to culture and ideas in my previous overseas assignments, all played a role.

The word “development” elicits from us an *economic* response. Say “development” and you begin to think about *economic* interventions -- roads, banking reform, changing the shape of the demographic profile, micro-loans, and so on.

You don’t think long about development, though, without grasping that sound economic policies need parallel “good governance.” That second word, “governance,” suggests *politics*, and more interventions, this time *political*: strengthen the parliament, the independent media, transparency, civil service reform, and so on.

When we talk about developing the Third World, then, our frame of mind is that people are first *economic men*, and then *political men*. This is economic and political determinism, and I don’t think it’s too far a reach to say that the intellectual impact of Marxism -- and socialism and Communism -- had had a large effect in shaping this kind of determinism, even in the free societies.

From when I was young, I’ve sensed that this is quite insufficient. Yes, there is a political and an economic dimension to every individual and to every society. Yes, they are important. But there is another dimension, or perhaps more facets on the diamond that is man. This third dimension needs several words to describe: cultural, spiritual, ethical, moral, traditional, religious.

When it comes to “development,” we always focus on economics, and we make some tentative interventions in politics, but as Americans we are not good at focusing on this third cluster of elements. We haven’t thought much about it, especially because some Americans have a reflexive tendency to cite “separation of church and state” as an obstacle.

If we put millions or billions of dollars into economic and political interventions, we do another injustice -- shifting the target nation’s priorities to match ours. What might

happen if we funded a developing nation's cultural institutions as generously as we fund the armed forces? We might have different outcomes. Ignoring an important side of the human personality, our development assistance does not address all of mankind's needs. We'll need to pick up on this when we get to Afghanistan.

Q: I recall from our session that covered your time as a Congressional Fellow, you had developed misgivings over population programs. Some of USAID's largest family planning programs were in Bangladesh.

BISHOP: Yes, and the last thing on my list to discuss is the moral crisis I faced in Bangladesh. Yes, when I had worked on Capitol Hill for Christopher Smith of New Jersey, co-chair of the Pro-Life Caucus in the House of Representatives, he had asked me to really study population programs. In all my reading, I had been more and more convinced that the entire premises of our U.S. programs -- called "family planning" but still at their heart population control -- did not rest on sound foundations. You'll recall I talked about three challenges to family planning and population programs.

I had, then, many misgivings about population programs when I got to Bangladesh. As I recall, about two-thirds of USAID's money was going toward family planning. Over three years, programs went on, but there was never any opportunity at the Embassy, never any setting, where there was a chance to discuss the rightness or wrongness of family planning, whether this was or wasn't a good use of our taxpayers' money. The country team meetings didn't provide any opportunity. USAID existed in its own world with its own funding. The Ambassador had managed population programs during his years with USAID. My USAID colleagues were all of a single mind about family planning, believing that the reduction of population growth would be the greatest intervention that could take Bangladesh out of poverty.

When I read the newspapers each morning, I was alert for articles on family planning, and you'd notice things. USAID and the other family planning donors would brag that no place in Bangladesh was more than 100 yards, or a short distance from, a vendor that would provide condoms. Indeed you would see condom packets on sale at any roadside shop selling snacks and colas. The condoms were imported, provided by the donors. They were "socially marketed" condoms so the price at the outlet was well below the cost of manufacturing. You weren't within 100 yards of an oral rehydration packet. You weren't within 100 yards of penicillin. Yet we had thrown all this money into family planning.

Our programs had also distorted the entire medical profession and the nation's public health posture by giving jobs to people in family planning, but not to people who were, say, general practitioners. I doubt that the Bangladeshi medical community would, on its own, have placed family planning so high in their health priorities. I could go on.

Parenthetically, the phrase "social marketing" was one of many small deceptions. It gave the impression that profit-making private businesses were selling condoms to eager customers. The only "market" in "social marketing" was that the condoms were available

in markets. The so-called company was a subsidized subsidiary of the donors. Their “sales” had no relationship to profit or loss.

What was the result of subsidizing condoms? It made the cost of condoms lower in Bangladesh than in India. The result could be easily predicted. Railroad cars full of condoms would disappear over the border. Of course it couldn't be proven because no one would investigate, but in a corrupt country like Bangladesh, family planning officials who had the custody of the imported condom inventories – and other kinds of contraceptives as well – could make a profit by selling some of the supplies in an area with a higher market price – meaning across the border in India.

I attended a large family planning rally with Ambassador Merrill, held in an indoor stadium. I remember a few thousand family planning workers were there. The women working for different implementing partners wore different color saris. They were sitting together, and there were blocks of women in green, women in purple, women in pale red, women in pink, and so on. It wouldn't be far off to say the different family planning “platoons” or “battalions” wore different uniforms. The idea that these family planning workers were “employees” of the various family planning “NGOs” seemed a stretch. Every NGO was funded by a government or international organization. The only thing “non-government” about these so-called “NGOs” was that the employees' pay envelopes weren't given to them directly by Embassies.

All of this made me uneasy.

Abortion rates were climbing in Bangladesh, and there was another low deceit going on. Abortion was illegal in Bangladesh, but the incidence of abortion was rising as family planning rates increased. This was “when contraception fails, abortion must be the backup” at work. This reality was obscured by calling an early term abortion an “MR,” for “menstrual regulation.” Everybody in the family planning and medical world knows that an MR is an abortion. But by calling it an “MR,” they sidestepped Bangladesh's own ban on abortion.

One evening Bangladesh's Attorney General was at dinner in our house. In a quiet moment away from the others, I asked him why abortion rates were rising. This had not been a problem years ago, I said. What's the score?

He seemed to be surprised that I was asking a question about something everyone knew. His reply was direct. “Abortions are rising due to the increased acceptance of family planning.” It was very clear to him that more family planning led to increased rates of abortion. He was confirming one of the major pro-Life criticisms of family planning programs.

Then, one day I read a cable from Washington, a confidential cable. It was signed by the Secretary as usual, but it was from Tim Wirth's office, “Global Issues.” It talked about family planning and the administration's goals. Of course I couldn't keep a copy or write

out the paragraph because of the classification, but the cable indicated that the United States intended to establish access to abortion as a global human right.

When we come into the Foreign Service – it was the same for you as it was for me – the orals panel asks the three questions. Will you do any kind of work, even if it's outside your career track? Will you go anywhere? Will you support American policies even if you personally disagree with them? If you don't say "yes" to each of the three questions, you don't go any farther in the process.

I said yes. You said yes. And only once or twice in my career, 31 years, did I ever have serious misgivings. Over the years there were plenty of times when I thought a policy was wrongheaded, but no one had asked for my opinion. I never found any of our policies to be evil. Moreover, the Constitutional order was intact. We had laws, we had Congress, we had the President, we had checks and balances, we had separation of powers, we had oversight, we had hearings, we had elections, and our goals in the world, our foreign policies, if you will, take shape with the democratic, the constitutional, give and take. And no one had elected me. Rather my work, our work in the Foreign Service, was to implement the foreign policy of the United States that had been fully debated and openly announced. So I had not been much troubled by decisions that ran up against my personal preferences.

But this one hit me square -- to establish access to abortion as a universal human right. This was wrong, this was evil, so wrong that my hand was shaking as I held the cable.

I walked directly down to the DCM's office. I told Jim Nach, "if this happens, I will first write a dissent cable, and then I will be forced to resign. I will never do this."

The cable announced the administration's intent, but nothing had happened yet. When I told Jim this, he said, "I understand," but he also said "let's wait until you're asked to do it, or we're asked to do it." I agreed this sounded all right, since I was saying "no" to one sentence in one cable.

This was one time in my career I was tempted to leak a cable, I was so outraged. The cable did become public, but it wasn't because of me. The leak – the news that the Clinton administration intended to establish abortion as a global human right -- created quite a stir, at least in the Washington Times, and among pro-Life people. The Vice President felt the need to calm things down, and he met the press to say no, the administration had no intent to do this. In fact, he lied. The language of the cable was quite clear. The Vice President denied the administration's own desired policy.

The issue, then, never went anywhere, so great was the reaction. And I did not have to act on my convictions. I dodged a bullet on my grave moral crisis.

Soon afterwards, a team of inspectors was at post, and I thought I should mention the issue. Ambassador Dan O'Donohue was the lead inspector.

Q: Who I've interviewed.

BISHOP: I told him about my moral dilemma, but that I had taken the DCM's advice to wait for something specific to come our way. I had not sent a dissent cable. Ambassador Donohue had been on the Policy Planning staff when this had come up, and he told me that a dissent cable might have led the Department and the administration to think more clearly about the implications of that Tim Wirth routine cable.

So -- when I think about Bangladesh I have all these great feelings. I love the country. I'd go back in a minute. It was great public affairs work. It was a well-run Embassy. But then I think about all the millions we're spending on family planning there, misallocation of money, and I think about my brush with a proposed American foreign policy issue that would have been grievously wrong. And so there's always this little pang in my heart.

Q: Over the years I've heard about Bangladesh's reputation as a basket case, and the reluctance of Foreign Service people to go there. When they do go, however, they warm right up to the country and its people. This seems to have happened to you.

BISHOP: Yes. We had gone out on a two-year tour, but within a few months we asked to stay the extra year. It was a fine assignment. What a fine country. What a fine people.

Q: Were Bangladeshis as disputatious as the Indians?

BISHOP: They might have been a notch under the Indians, but only a notch. They were certainly verbal.

Q: Americans tend to lecture ...

BISHOP: Oh, yes.

Q: and Indians lecture other people --

BISHOP: Are you implying that Americans are *preachy*?

Q: (laughs)

BISHOP: Golly! Oh my, no! Certainly none of us here!

Q: There's a clash here between Indian and American --

BISHOP: It's styles of discourse, in a way.

Q: Yeah. I was wondering whether you had that --

BISHOP: Well, yes. When it came time for the Q&A after a presentation, the "questions" from Bangladeshis tended to be speeches, followed by "what's your opinion?"

So, to answer your original question, there's talkativeness and disputatiousness. When we held a program at USIS, the speaker would make his or her remarks, and then there would be a break – "tea and biscuits." Then we sat down again for the Q&A. Since everyone had some sugar inside, the Q&As might go on for an hour and a half.

I recall another early example of Bangladeshi prolixity. Just a few days after I arrived, I got an invitation to go to the opening session of the annual SAARC conclave of journalists. SAARC is the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation, an international organization that brings together the South Asian countries -- India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives, and Bangladesh.

President Khaleda Zia was due to speak as the Chief Guest. I sent my RSVP, "yes," thinking I would have a chance to meet journalists and hear the President speak. I went to the event blind. Nobody had clued me in that the Bangladeshis, like the Indians and Pakistanis and Nigerians, run programs in a fixed order. There are opening remarks by the Master of Ceremonies, then the Address of Welcome, the Address by the Special Guest and perhaps another by an Honored Guest, and only then the Chief Guest. After those most important remarks there's a Vote of Thanks before the ceremony ends. So you have all these warm-up speeches, the address of welcome, and then you finally have *the* address.

I sat in my seat and listened to each of the speakers voice their 10-15 minutes of pabulum and generalities, on and on, talk and talk and talk and more talk and talk. Finally, an hour and a half after the opening, Khaleda Zia was taken to her special chair and seated with great ceremony by her Air Force aide. She then said her 15 minutes of pabulum. When the Vote of Thanks concluded – this was at least two hours after the ceremony began -- I said to myself, "This is *finally* over. And I'm not coming to one of these again." My mind was numb.

As I began to move to the aisle to leave, the Pakistan Cultural Counselor – we had been sitting together – said, "Oh, Donald, is this your first time?"

"Yes."

He said, "Well, I guess you're learning that we South Asians have many virtues, but brevity is not one."

Once you get used to it, it's fun.

Q: Before we close out this session, can you tell us what your wife was doing?

BISHOP: Before we had gone out to Dhaka, she was able to take the long Consular Course at FSI, anticipating work in the Consular Section. There was no opening for a year, but eventually she was hired on as a Consular Associate.

These were the days when Consular Associates could do just about anything. Her main work was on the visa line, interviewing candidates and deciding whether to issue or deny. She became known as “Window Number 2” to the applicants. More specifically, the local visa agents who helped prepare applications and coach the applicants for their interviews called her “the Chinese lady at Window Number 2.”

The inspectors praised her for judging cases on their merits -- or perhaps more often on their lack of merit. But the Foreign Ministry called in Nancy Powell one day to protest the high refusal rate by “the Chinese lady at Window Number 2.” Whenever the Ministry person said “the Chinese lady,” Nancy said “you mean the American lady.” Let’s say that in our book, Nancy is one of the greats.

With a little more experience, Consular Section chief David Dreher put her on all kinds of tasks. In the early years of the Diversity Visa, the program was full of holes, and Jemma interviewed many of the “winners,” or those impersonating “winners,” or those “winners” that showed up for the interview with more children than they had listed on their application, or those “winners” presenting fake education credentials because a high school diploma was a condition of issuance.

This led her into fraud work, and she became a member of the foreign missions’ anti-fraud working group. Women from Brooklyn were coming to Bangladesh on vacation, where they were swept away by, fell in love with, local farmers from one of the char islands in the delta. The new husbands came to the Embassy to get immigration visas. This eventually became a federal case when some stateside investigation confirmed the suspicions. There was a dishonest Brooklyn lawyer arranging the travel by the American women to meet the Bangladeshi farmers.

For me, this was broadening. My generation of USIA officers had never worked in a consular section, so I learned a lot about consular work over the dinner table.

Q: OK. Well, I guess it’s a good place to stop.

BISHOP: OK.

BEIJING, CHINA, 1997-2000
Deputy Public Affairs Officer

Q: All right. Today is the 1st of March, 2011 with Don Bishop. And Don, you’re off to China. When did you go to China?

BISHOP: We got there in the summer of 1997 – for a normal tour of three years.

I went from being PAO in Bangladesh to being the Deputy Public Affairs Officer in one of our largest programs. Perhaps only ten or a dozen of our programs in the world had a DPAO, so this was a step up.

I replaced Charles Silver. For a short time after I reached post, George Beasley was PAO, but then Paul Blackburn arrived, and I spent the remainder of the three years working as his Deputy.

At the time, all Embassy people were required by the Chinese to live in one of the Beijing's three diplomatic compounds. So were all foreign journalists. We lived for a few months in the Sanlitun compound, but our permanent place was a nice-sized apartment in the Jianguomenwai Compound. The diplomatic compounds were guarded by the People's Armed Police ("PAP guards" in Embassy lingo). On one hand they provided ordinary security. On the other hand, they were assuring that we could not invite ordinary Chinese in for conversations. The RSO told us to assume that all our telephone calls were monitored.

The Jianguomenwai compound was only a few hundred yards from the Embassy's Yiban compound. Yiban ("Compound 1") included USIS, the Ambassador's residence, and the Health Unit. It was a nice walk every morning from our apartment to the office.

Q: When you arrived, the Ambassador was a political appointee?

BISHOP: Yes, James Sasser, former Senator from Tennessee, a terrific ambassador. When I say "terrific," I of course mean he had a good sense of policy. He had, though, an extra bonus. Perhaps because he'd spent his life in politics, he liked meeting people. He was good at motivating the Embassy. He and his wife always came to Embassy social events, even small hail and farewells, and always with a covered dish! Even junior officers and FSNs could feel his magic, let's say. He showed some real determination when he stayed in the Embassy during the demonstrations at the time of the Belgrade bombing. At his Embassy farewell, he was given a framed copy of a newspaper with his picture on the front page, and the whole Embassy community gave him the most heartfelt long cheer I witnessed in 31 years.

Q: What was his background?

BISHOP: He had been a Senator from Tennessee, but he was defeated in 1994 by Bill Frist. He was a prominent leader in the Democratic Party, with strong ties to Vice President Gore, and President Clinton named him to go to China.

He was succeeded by Ambassador Joseph Prueher. He had been the CINCPAC, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Command. So the Embassy transferred from a former Senator to a former Admiral.

Admiral Prueher was another great ambassador. His style of leadership was a little unusual, in Foreign Service terms, because he'd grown up in the military frame, leading in the Navy style. He was also good at policy and very good with people.

I compare both of them to the Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, who made many visits to Beijing. Whatever the brilliance of her foreign policy insights, she was a zero on

leadership. She came to China three or four times without once having gathered the staff to express her gratitude for their work. A Secretarial visit, as you know, is a very big and very taxing deal. Thanks are in order. If you miss a chance to thank people at post because you've got to rush to the next capital, that's one thing. But to have done it three times, four times, let's say it was noticed by Embassy people.

Seeing this disposition of hers, Ambassador Prueher pulled her aside and said "You need to thank the people who worked so hard." So she agreed to schedule a half hour meeting with the Embassy staff in the consular waiting room. I said to myself, OK, she's finally growing in the job. Then, at Country Team we were asked to provide jokes, amusing lines, laugh lines, for her to use at the meeting during her pep talk. I didn't think much of her effort.

Q: All right. Let's try to set the scene. First, what was the situation in China, per se?

BISHOP: It's the late 1990s. There had been the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s. There had been the opening under Deng Xiaoping in 1979, the same year the Embassy was established. When I arrived, we were well into the second decade of China's gradual opening.

Every single step along the way was stony. The Communists had fiercely implanted a suspicion of foreigners during the civil war, the establishment of the PRC, and the Korean War. The anti-Rightist campaign and the Cultural Revolution had really seared people. The result was that everything that the Embassy might do, and every approach that America would make, had to overcome Chinese misgivings or suspicions. Even in the 1990s, the usual Chinese response to our extended hand was to create bureaucratic obstacles.

The usual Embassy take on China -- and on the Foreign Ministry -- was that the government of world's most populous nation was not yet up to being a great power. They had the aspiration. They talked it. They could say that history had denied this to them. But they realized that they had not built up the institutions, nor had they the confidence, needed by a leading country to play a leading role. So China was still in an odd way a little passive in stepping forward to grasp opportunities that were presented. I'm speaking of course, of China ten to fifteen years ago.

In the 1990s, then -- we now all think of as a rather tranquil decade between the end of the Cold War and 9/11 -- the controlling idea, well expressed by a succession of presidents since President Nixon, was that the U.S. task for the relationship with China was to pull them little by little into a partnership with United States, and to become a responsible actor in the world stage. There was a trade side to that, a security side, and so on.

My sense was that our American China hands were committed to a very long slog. Step by step, little by little, the U.S. would pull China into fully joining the rest of the world. Then China would undertake the obligations and responsibilities that would bring.

I think the largest specific issue for the Embassy in the 1990s was whether China would accede to the World Trade Organization. This big issue had preoccupied the Embassy for years, and it happened while I was there.

I should mention that there was an inspection of the Embassy just after I arrived. The inspectors reported that the whole Embassy, USIS included, was coming under increasing pressure from more and more and more issues on the U.S.-China agenda, and more and more congressional visitors.

The inspectors understood, too, the reality of work in Beijing. Every time we opened the hand to China to cooperate on this or that, we faced the bureaucratic obstacles that came from China as a party state. It added enormous friction to our work.

The phrase in the inspection report that sticks in my mind ran something like “This was the Indianapolis 500 of diplomacy, and the Embassy car on the track is -- a Ford Pinto.” The report acknowledged that we did not have the resources, the people, or the money to be able to achieve what was needed in China.

Q: Let's take up a point you just made. In China, there's the government, and then there's the Communist Party. What is the relationship? And how did this effect the work of the Embassy and USIS?

BISHOP: You're right that any analysis, any take on “China” needs to recognize how the Chinese Communist Party rules. China is a “party state.” The PRC constitution acknowledges the role of the Chinese Communist Party as the vanguard. I knew this in theory before I got to China, and I'd seen some of it from my earlier vantage point in Taiwan, but China was very much a party state.

A short digression on Chinese history. Remember that the CCP and the KMT, which became the cores of the PRC and the ROC, had both been given organizational shape by the Comintern agent in Guangdong province in the 1920s, Mikhail Borodin. In a way, the CCP/PRC and the KMT/ROC mirrored each other in their party state setup. The Party determined its policies, the party line, so to speak, and the members of the Party in the state structure implemented it. Each significant organization like a university, a radio station, a business, or an association had a Party Secretary, and Party members in the organization assured that its work conformed to the Party line.

This system had been decaying in Taiwan, but it was still formally intact at the time of Chiang Ching-kuo's death in 1987, my first year there, but then it finally unraveled. In China, though, the party state had been institutionalized by the Chinese constitution in 1949, and it continued.

What this meant for us at the working level was that you might visit a town and they would introduce you to the mayor. You were a representative of a government, the Embassy, visiting the town, so your meeting the mayor was an appropriate government-

to-government contact. In fact, however, the mayor is not the most powerful person in that town. Rather the Party Secretary is. But you didn't meet the Party Secretary because they were adhering to form, that you should meet someone from the government structure.

People who deal with China come to understand this second, parallel structure there, the Communist Party. If you visit a factory you'll be introduced to the manager, say, but since there's a Party organization in the factory, which assures that the organization hones to the Party line, the guidance given by the Party congresses, the Party Secretary holds the ultimate power.

You could see this party state structure very clearly in the meetings of the National People's Congress. You know the charts we show American school children about "how a bill becomes a law." There's a different chart for China. Passage of a law by the National People's Congress is the third and final step on their chart.

The first step is the meeting of the Party Congress. The Party drafts all the laws. At the meeting the Party announces its work plan and shapes needed legislation.

Once the Party Congress approves a bill, it goes on to the second step at the CPCC, the Chinese People's Consultative Congress. This is a rump organization, and this is a meaningless step, but it's a formal step required by history. The CPCC includes representatives of the rump, the remains, the fictional representatives of the democratic parties that had existed in 1949, now completely under the thumb of the CPC. All the individual representatives of the old parties that sit in the CPCC are personally approved by the CPC as reliable. The CPCC also includes selected and approved representatives of groups, like religious bodies, so that they can give their sanction to the Party's initiatives.

The second step in the process, then, is a formal and publicized consultation with these puppet representatives. In theory the CPC might integrate some of their concerns into the legislation, but this was never evident.

So, the bill has been drafted by the Party Congress and chopped by the Consultative Congress. Then it goes to the National People's Congress, which rubber stamps the bill. The NPC put a government/democratic/legislative cloak over the decisions of the party, a chop, so to speak, a seal, and they formally became laws.

The deep China watchers who lived and breathed Party congresses could see in the 1990s that little by little the meetings of the National People's Congress did include some policy debates. Here and there a few delegates actually voted "no" on a piece of legislation. These might have significance in the future, but at the time they were shallow, almost invisible, ripples on a smooth pond.

So, when you went to China you had to get used to this unusual party state structure. If there were any democratic winds blowing in China, or perhaps we could say participatory winds, they all had to be found within the party. Chinese would tell you that, "Oh well,

yes, we don't quite have your system of democracy, but you see there's considerable democracy within the Party which represents the people." This was not convincing, but you would hear it. The notion was that the 60 million members of the CPC somehow knew all the conditions of ordinary people in China, and the Party would address the issues on the inside. Here and there the Embassy's political officers could wring out a few signs of liberalization and more permissive atmosphere for debate within the Party.

Q: Well then, what were you and your colleagues in Public Diplomacy up to?

BISHOP: In 1997 when I arrived, we had the traditional relationship between State and USIA at post.

USIS or PAS in China was called the Press and Culture Section. USIS in Beijing had a PAO, DPAO, IO and two AIOs, CAO and three ACAOs, an IRO, an OMS and some local hire Americans. The main office was in the Yiban compound, but we had several ACAOs, the IRO, the magazine editor, and the IRC in a high rise office building, the Jingguang Center, on the second ring road – the American Center for Education and Exchange (ACEE). We had branch posts at the consulates in Shenyang, Shanghai, Chengdu, and Guangzhou.

After I received word of the assignment to Beijing -- this was while I was in Dhaka -- I realized that the China assignment would test my management because the program was so large. In Dhaka I was running a full-service Public Diplomacy program, but I could be involved in everything. I could write press releases, I could organize programs, I could personally review Fulbright applications, and so on. I could still be "hands on."

In China, I realized, that would no longer be possible. I would have to delegate. I would have to lay down the general direction for our programs, and think through the times that I would review how things were going. For the International Visitor program, for instance, I needed to focus on the instructions that went out to those nominating Chinese for the program, and I should chair the selection committee, and I would myself release each nomination cable, but in between, and afterwards, I didn't need to be micromanaging.

When I arrived I found that the outgoing PAO, George Beasley, and his outgoing DPAO, Charles Silver, had worked out a novel organization of the post. At most large USIS posts, the heart of the traditional DPAO position, the everyday business, was to supervise the work of the branch posts at the consulates. For the DPAOs in Seoul or New Delhi, for instance, the primary job was to tend the field programs. In those posts, it was the PAO who supervised and rated the Information Officer and the Cultural Affairs Officer and the Executive Officer.

But George Beasley had set up a much better system. The DPAO supervised the IO, the CAO, the EO, and the PAOs at the Consulates. The PAO directly supervised and rated only two people, the DPAO and the Office Management Specialist (once upon a time called the secretary).

This organization gave the DPAO far more authority and scope than merely being the manager of the field programs who also happened to sit at the PAO desk while the PAO was away. It was more like the military system, with the DPAO acting as Chief of Staff. I was quite pleased with this. I supervised everyone in USIS in Beijing and at the Consulates (except for the PAO and the OMS). I had the whole program as a Class One officer. Perhaps you could say I was the Chief Operating Officer.

Of course, I kept the PAO informed of any problems or issues, whether they were on the IO or the CAO side, and there was the ordinary crossfeed and guidance at staff meetings, but the issues were mine to work through as the direct supervisor. The PAO who replaced George, Paul Blackburn, also liked the new organization, and he continued the arrangement. Paul and I were together for three years. It was the best collaboration of my career.

This new organization gave the PAO time to strategize and work the Front Office in ways that other PAOs, tied up with supervising the IO and CAO, could not. The inspection team, for instance, had given the Ambassador informal feedback that the relationship between USIS and other parts of the Embassy was frayed. Paul did good work in ending any tension between parts of the Embassy. The novel organization of PAS gave him the time to do so.

There are a couple of other features of the post to note. One was the local Chinese employees. At other posts, our employees were FSNs, but in China our local employees were not our own direct hires. They were employees of the Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic Services Bureau (DSB). That deal had been made back when the Embassy was established. Not a week went by without us cursing it. We wondered what the original Liaison Office people or Embassy people who had made that deal had been thinking about.

The DSB arrangement meant that FSOs in China could not really develop the kind of full rapport with local employees seen at other posts. Their salaries came to them from DSB (which, by the way, took its own cut of what we paid for their services). You knew they had their own rank and promotions within the DSB. There was anxiety that they might be reporting to the DSB, not just on programs, but also on you and your quirks – and your contacts. This arrangement impaired the kind of bicultural collaboration that you had at other posts. There was speculation among the FSOs about who among the FSNs was the real leader of the DSB cell, or what was their rank over at the Diplomatic Services Bureau.

Q: That sounds like Moscow, where the Ambassador's chauffeur was probably a colonel in the KGB and that sort of thing. You know, I mean --

BISHOP: Yes, there was that kind of talk.

All that said, I'd learned from Bangladesh that being zealous for the FSN cause is an important way to develop rapport. I tried to develop relationships with all the senior local employees, and to prepare them for the day when the DSB system would be terminated and they would become FSNs.

Q: What kept the Information Officer and his staff busy?

BISHOP: Fielding the many requests for statements, interviews, and backgrounders that came from the international media filled up most days. So did organizing the press conferences for the many top-level visitors, handling the press at visit sites, or joining a visitor's entourage as "riding press officer." There was the normal requirement for press translations. The IO supervised the local-hire editor of *Jiaoliu* magazine. We arranged for Chinese journalists to visit the U.S. as part of the TV Coop program.

Speaking for a moment about the WTO, PAS was not at the negotiating table or in the meetings that resulted in China's accession, but we were steadily providing every statement of Administration policy to the Foreign Ministry, to China's scholars and policy institute specialists, and to the Chinese and international media. It was IO Bill Palmer -- one of the very best! -- who arranged the countless backgrounders for journalists and set up the press conferences for every Administration principal that came to Beijing for the negotiations.

Q: And the Cultural Affairs Officer?

BISHOP: We had all the exchange programs, and the CAO was the major point of contact with the Ministry of Education on the Fulbright program.

One ACAO tended the Fulbright program -- arranging the selection and travel of Chinese academics to the U.S., and supporting the American Fulbrighters who were teaching at Chinese universities. The American profs, most in China for the first time, needed a lot of hand-holding, especially because Chinese universities often wanted to treat a Fulbrighter as one more Foreign Expert or one more body that could be impressed to teach English.

Another ACAO handled the International Visitor program. The IVLP program in China had a different profile than in most other countries. We sent very few of the China IVs on group programs; almost all were solo IVs who traveled on individual schedules with a dedicated escort interpreter. Planning the individualized programs took a lot of time.

Another ACAO was designated as the Director of the American Center for Education Exchange, and that officer tended speakers and seminars along with many other odds and ends. Organizing a program in China for a visiting U.S. speaker was made more difficult by the need to arrange everything through the Foreign Affairs Office (*waiban*) at a Chinese university or think tank. The Chinese had their own ideas about topics.

Q: You have spoken before about "leaning" public diplomacy programs to support goals. Were you able to do this in China?

BISHOP: To the degree that I have had sway over our Public Diplomacy programs, what I always wanted to do was push the envelope on policy. I wanted to make sure, for instance, that our U.S. Speakers all addressed, directly or tangentially, the high priority issues in the Mission's strategic plan, and spoke to influential audiences. In China you could do things, but you had to do them in ways that were smart and worked within the Chinese system. As I mentioned, we always had to work through the Foreign Affairs Offices of Chinese government departments, universities, or organizations, and sometimes it took real creativity to get our speakers in the door.

I wanted to make sure that we had a vigorous conference diplomacy. I told each Branch Public Affairs Officer that we had enough money to fund a \$15-30,000 conference in Shanghai, Shenyang, Guangzhou, and Chengdu each year. I said, "Set up a conference. My only guideline is that it be on a Country Plan or Mission Program Plan theme. You pick it out. If you love the environment, that's fine, environmental issues are in the Mission Program Plan. Go ahead and organize an environmental conference. If you're keen to advance the rule of law in China, that's also an MPP theme, so a rule of law conference would be great." In Beijing, our part would be to send a keynote speaker from the U.S. and perhaps an Embassy officer to join the deliberations, I told them. One reason I did it this way was because I so valued autonomy. I wanted the Embassy to recognize the expertise and judgment of the officer on the ground. And I wanted the Public Diplomacy officers at the consulates to feel the enthusiasm that comes from being empowered.

USIS Beijing was still publishing *Jiaoliu*, the magazine I had helped launch when I was in Hong Kong. We began to run feature issues that addressed different country plan themes, giving Chinese specialists from the top to the bottom of their system a better view of U.S. policy, in Chinese.

I worked with the ACAO to reshape the International Visitor program nomination process to align it with MPP goals. The TV Coops that we proposed to Washington were on the same set of MPP objectives.

Perhaps the best example of the "leaning" -- bringing as many programs in the Public Diplomacy toolkit to bear on our goals -- was broadening and deepening our focus on rule of law. More "rule of law" would support virtually every other U.S. goal in China -- political, economic, commercial, trade, and human rights. We could talk about this for a quite a while.

There's more to the Chinese legal system than meets the eye. We tend to think of China as having a top-down and unitary system of government. We imagined that if Jiang Zemin pounded his fists, then everyone in China, right down to the local village, would snap to. The reality was way more messy. The Party and the government issued guidelines and passed laws in the National People's Congress, but then every province's Party Congress and People's Congress had to develop its own implementing legislation and regulations. Laws were not, then, actually uniform within the whole country, so there

was room to influence local authorities. Translations of American law texts could reach down to provinces and provincial law schools. Moot courts demonstrated by visiting American law professors could familiarize Chinese law students with the jury system. And so on.

Q: Well, one has to think about the Russian legal system as it developed, or didn't develop. It's so corrupt that much of the law is based on how much they can squeeze out of people, or punish people who are opposed to the local cadre and all.

BISHOP: Well, let's talk about that.

China's party state system is thoroughly corrupted by power, and its most important goal is to protect the Communist Party's monopoly on power. Protecting the Party's monopoly isn't just an abstract notion. It means defending the party secretaries or the deputy party secretaries down at the province or municipality. Those leaders have all found ways to squeeze the system for ill-gotten gains. They want to protect their power, and they want to protect their cash flows. It means the Party and government turn a blind eye to the venality of Party members and local officials, their petty and not-so-petty oppressions, their crony deals that evict ordinary citizens so that companies can amass more money, their infidelities, and the crimes committed by family members.

The legal system is co-opted, and cooperates. Local judges check with the Party Secretary first before they issue a ruling in any sensitive case. This is an integral part of the system of control that defends the status quo, defends the corruption within it, defends the power bases, and quashes any independent social movement.

Party members would never acknowledge this reality, but they understood that it was not law that held sway at the local level, but rather the caprice of local leaders. Party members understood that big league corruption was diminishing the standing of the party among Chinese people. Party members understood they had an interest in making the Party and government more honest. They understood that it was not in China's, and not in the Party's, long term interest that local judges were often retired Army officers and NCOs who didn't know the law and asked superiors for guidance on cases. The Party members understood this, but tomorrow's need for reform and honest government ran up against today's demand for cash and power. The few Party members who retained a spark of idealism were entangled by bosses and co-workers who were focused on power and the money, rewards, perks, cars, banquets, and mistresses that flowed from the power.

Everyone knows that changing the Chinese legal system, and its culture, will be the work not of years or decades but also generations. Still, if Public Diplomacy could get law school professors talking about the law, talking about standards, learning about international best practices, understanding how Chinese law had to keep up as the stock market boomed or property was developed or China developed its own strong entertainment industries, all this could in time be transformative. We found that working on rule of law programs with the law schools gave us an entry point into these

conversations, and USIS programs, and our book translations, could have a significant effect.

China is an enormous country, but rule of law programs at the law schools gave us a leverage point in the Chinese legal system to move it in a better direction. The Chinese were interested in “rule by law” while we were speaking of “rule of law.” Still, you have to have a law first. While I was there, China was suspended somewhere on a continuum between rule by law and rule of law, closer to the former than the latter, but we found that among China's law professors there was a strong desire to move toward the latter. The intellectuals were talking about rule of law, so were businessmen, and so were citizens, though in the Chinese way all the discussions were discreet and bounded, lest the system get pushed too hard.

I sensed the system was sufficiently open to discussion, and it led me to lean as much of our Public Diplomacy as I could in the direction of rule of law. I decided that spending time and money on rule of law would have a larger ultimate payoff than in some other areas. When I left, a quarter of all the Fulbrighters -- the Americans coming to China, the Chinese going to the U.S. -- were in law. To the Fulbright program, add speakers, add conferences, add articles in *Jiaoliu*, add the translation of law books -- I was trying to take all these diverse, and too often disconnected Public Diplomacy programs and get them increasingly focused on this single high priority issue. I think we made some good headway.

Probably we did more programs with the Beijing University Law School than the others, but we were sponsoring programs at other law schools in the Capital. The BPAOs also began to develop ties at the law schools in the consulate cities.

Of course, we couldn't visit a law school and give a fireball talk on human rights. They'd have cold feet on that, indeed, the Foreign Affairs Office would bar a presentation. But you could talk about all the parts of it. You could talk about evidence, you could talk about court procedures, you could talk about court administration and administrative law. You could address the roles of judges, and prosecutors, and attorneys. You could organize moot court sessions to introduce the jury system. It was using discussion of parts of the law to get to the whole -- rule of law.

Law in China had enough attention in Washington that justices of the Supreme Court visited from time to time. One was Sandra Day O'Connor. While I was in China, the justice I programmed was Anthony Kennedy, once when I was DPAO and once as PAO, as I recall.

When he came, I joined Justice Kennedy for his entire program. When he met students at a law school, of course he could draw on his vast experience as a speaker and a teacher to put together an inspirational talk. At Peking University he was very skillful, leading with the case of *Yick Wo vs. Hopkins*. This case from 1886 involved a California law on laundries that discriminated against Chinese laundrymen. The U.S. Supreme Court overturned the law. It was the perfect case for the audience of Chinese students. It

addressed state law and Supreme Court review, it addressed how discrimination can be clothed in legal disguises, and it involved disadvantaged Chinese laundrymen getting a hearing in the highest court in the land. It counteracted the narrative that Chinese immigrants to the U.S. in the nineteenth century, the railroad workers and so on, encountered nothing but persecution by white America. It was a great talk.

Justice Kennedy of course understood that while visits and talks played a role, there needed to be long-term relationships between the law schools in Beijing and law schools in the United States. There were some ups and downs in that long-term effort. What the Chinese law departments wanted was bricks and mortar first, facilities. Their view was that facilities could house exchange professors and moot courts and so on. Interested American donors, however, didn't see it that way. They wanted to do the seminars and exchanges and courses first. Justice Kennedy didn't find so many eager donors.

That said, spending two or three days with a Supreme Court justice is a pretty rare thing, and riding across town with him, chatting, you got some inside glimpses of the Court. I didn't know, for instance, that among his colleagues Justice Scalia is called "Nino." You could tell Justice Kennedy was a great teacher when he gave his talks, and when he talked about the Constitution. One of the great things about the American Constitution, he said, is that it is so short. Since I heard him say that, I've been looking at the length of constitutions -- Nigeria's must be 150 pages long. But ours fits in a little booklet. "Because it's short, it's teachable," he said. A 150-page constitution, how can you teach kids about that?

Q: And when a country's fundamental law runs 150 pages, it means they're going to be continually changing the damn thing.

BISHOP: That's true too! The teachableness of the American Constitution -- with a short constitution, you can plant the big ideas in the mind of even a seventh-grade civics student. That's what keeps the constitution alive in ordinary citizen's hearts. For instance, when you watch "Law and Order" or one of the other police or courtroom television programs, you learn that the law of evidence is quite complicated. All the complexities are for the police and the lawyers and the judges. An ordinary viewer can understand, however, that what everyone's arguing is "searches and seizures" in the Fourth Amendment. They know it from reading the Constitution in high school.

For many years the China Book Translation Program had been run by the Deputy Public Affairs Officer. I continued it, but I made a strategic turn to focus on law, where translation and publishing could make a real impact. I thought about a goal of translating in full fifty American law textbooks into Chinese -- contracts, torts, evidence, patents, copyrights, trademarks, securities, banking, financial regulation, and so on. I worried that the goal of fifty titles was too ambitious, but Paul Blackburn said, "Let's go for 100." We set in motion our own hundred flowers blooming. We partnered with the China University of Political Science and Law, partly because they had branch bookstores in law schools all over the country. Fast forwarding some, when I left Beijing in 2006 we

had about 60 of those titles in motion. Even now, I think that the \$5000 we spent on each volume was exceedingly good value.

The arrival of a translated law book on torts or evidence or property was a pretty big publishing event in Chinese legal circles because it introduced the whole array of American legal thinking to Chinese scholars and practitioners.

Q: You were promoting legal education through Fulbrights and exchanges. Did young Chinese have opportunities for jobs in law?

BISHOP: Another large question! The basic law credential in China is a bachelor's degree in law from a Chinese university. When I was in China, China was producing not so many graduates with that basic credential, but the law departments were expanding and so were the number of graduates with degrees in law.

As in the U.S., there are primo, blue ribbon law schools and not-so-famous schools. Among Chinese law graduates, there was the ordinary stratification. The best students could pass examinations to be judges or prosecutors, the very best finding positions in Beijing and Shanghai and the other leading cities, and others spreading out to smaller places. For the students without the stellar degrees, there were jobs to be found in Chinese government departments and, increasingly, in Chinese companies that wanted people who had a legal background. Again, a favorable location in a large city was preferable to a job in a smaller or more remote locale. And there was the beginning of a trend seen in other countries -- some of the private sector jobs that drew in law grads could pay more than the traditional prestige jobs as judges and prosecutors.

The presence of American businesses in China and the growth in trade was beginning to create a need for both American lawyers in China who understood China and for Chinese lawyers who understood the American legal system. A number of stateside law firms had offices in Beijing and Shanghai. The credentials of these expat attorneys were American, so they were not formally allowed to practice law in China. The firms also needed, then, Chinese attorneys who had had some legal education in the U.S., spoke English well, and understood the Chinese and American legal systems both. Some of these Chinese attorneys with LL.M. and J.D. degrees from the U.S. had also passed bar exams in the U.S. Many young Chinese law students hoped to get on a track for these jobs. Usually an LL.M. from an American law school was the gateway degree, and the prospect of a good future and good salaries made the investment worthwhile.

The short answer to your question, then, is that there were jobs for China's law school graduates. If we have too many lawyers, China has too few, so there was work for all in an expanding field.

Parenthetically, the first young American graduated from Peking University's law department while I was there. He was a real pathbreaker, deciding in high school to earn his bachelor's degree at Peking University. At the time, an American could easily qualify

for admission -- now it's much harder. In any case, when he graduated, he could ask for any salary he wanted, and he went to work for one of the big New York law firms.

Q: In your experience, how much did leading Chinese know about the U.S.? Were they still looking at the U.S. through the same lens as Chairman Mao?

BISHOP: It's not possible to discuss this briefly, but let me give it a go.

In Chinese bureaucracies, the less creative, less energetic time servers who didn't really read or speak English -- their views of the United States had often been formed during the Cultural Revolution when they were young, and hadn't really changed. You could hear echoes of Marx and Chairman Mao when they spoke. The leading people in government departments or institutes had broader views. They were more sophisticated, though even in the 1990s they had to be careful in their language lest it appear they had been too influenced by the U.S.

I would also say that all Chinese, from the top to the bottom of their society, were watching American movies -- mostly illegal DVDs with not-so-accurate Chinese subtitles. Set aside the IPR issues for a moment. A steady diet of Hollywood gave them a sensationalized view of America -- drug abuse, car chases, corrupt cops, venal businessmen, abusive fundamentalists, gunfights on the streets.

One of the things that I noticed about the flow of communications, the exchange of knowledge, or the currents of mutual understanding between China and the U.S. was that there was an asymmetry in translation flows. If you sit in the Pentagon or the State Department, various parts of the U.S. government translate enormous amounts of material from Chinese and English. Much of it came from the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), partnered with the BBC to share translations. I didn't have a good handle on it, but Defense had its own translation activities. At USIS we were a small part of this translation flow, doing our overnight press summaries and media reactions.

No one person, no diplomat, no analyst, no Congressional staffer, could read everything, so great was the daily flow. I won't say it's a Mississippi, but there's a Hudson River of translations that goes from Chinese to English, from China to the States. U.S. policymakers are, therefore, pretty well informed.

If you looked at all the U.S. government material on China -- think of all the studies, the testimonies, the papers -- there's a vast Lake Superior of stuff about China written in the United States. But only a little trickle of that gets put into Chinese. We were investing money and skilled manpower in helping American policymakers learn about China, but we never made a parallel investment in helping Chinese learn about the U.S. That meant that Chinese were not getting a good view of what Americans think about China. This also meant they were not getting a full view of their own society, because they were unable to access the many American papers and studies that might reveal to them what their own government did not.

It's true that Xinhua published two restricted circulation newspapers, for "internal use," *neibu*, for government and Party officials. These were *Cankao Xiaoxi*, "Reference News," and *Cankao Ziliao*, "Reference Materials." People at the Embassy believed that these two newspapers were the means by which senior leaders read about the United States and were exposed to foreign criticism of China. I never saw a copy of *Cankao Ziliao*, but occasionally it was possible to pick up a copy of *Cankao Xiaoxi* at from an inattentive seller at a news stand.

My own scan of a few issues indicated that the Xinhua editors were running a kind of foreign news digest. There were articles sourced to AFP, Tass, the BBC, and American wires, yes. I was surprised to see so many articles from the Central Daily News in Taiwan, the KMT newspaper. But all of these articles were heavily abridged, and editors were pulling their punches when the foreign articles opposed Chinese policies. I have my doubts that Chinese officialdom was seeing foreign reporting and commentary on China in any depth. I'm not sure the two newspapers were presenting the full range of opinions being published on the U.S. I tried to get the Embassy to support a formal study of the papers, but I couldn't interest anyone.

Convinced, then, of the imbalance in translation flows, I went to Beijing with two goals. One was that the Embassy web page must be in Chinese as well as English. That was the easy one.

The other was to have USIA launch a Chinese language version of the Washington File (formerly the Wireless File). When the File was launched in the 1950s, they had the anchor English version, but staff were also dedicated to producing a daily Spanish file, a French file, and an Arabic file, for instance. If the Secretary gave an important speech, it was translated into French in Washington, rather than asking each Francophone post to translate it for the local French-reading public.

When the Wireless Files had been set up in the 1950s we didn't have any relationship with China, so a Wireless File in Chinese had never been organized. That meant, for instance, that each year when the President delivered his State of the Union address, a battery of translators in Washington turned out French, Spanish, and Arabic texts which were immediately sent to posts around the world. In China, Public Affairs Sections had to organize big, crash efforts at post, to have everybody drop everything and to work into the evening. Of course it was done in Taipei and Hong Kong and Beijing because no post could wait for the other to do the work, not to mention that usages in the three places had diverged after 1949.

It was mind-boggling that there was no Chinese version of the Washington File, and every time one had been proposed over the years, Washington pleaded it's too hard, or we don't have the people, or no one has given us funds, all the usual pathetic bureaucratic excuses. I couldn't stand it. With Paul Blackburn's assent, I wrote one of my best cables ever, saying a Chinese Washington File was long overdue and had to be organized NOW!

I wrote it bluntly enough that it actually got people's attention in Washington, and the new version of the File was going within a few months.

I didn't have to do the hard work of organizing the new File, finding the money, justifying the new positions, the FTE's, and hiring a team. Bob Holden had to do that in Washington. Still, I think it was my cable that galvanized Washington, and it set in motion a permanent structure in the government to increase the flow of translations out to China.

Q: I recall President Clinton made a visit to China. What was the public affairs role?

BISHOP: President Clinton came to visit China while I was there. This was the nine-day visit from June 25 to July 3, 1998.

You experienced enough visits by a President or Secretary of State in your career to know that even a three-day visit about grinds an Embassy into total incoherence.

Q: One presidential visit is equivalent to an earthquake.

BISHOP: This visit was *nine* days. The first question is what can a President do in one country for nine days?

The trip was planned for months. First, the President landed in Xi'an to be greeted. He came to meetings in Beijing, followed by a visit to Shanghai. And he went down to Guilin to take the river cruise, and he went out through Hong Kong.

The political and economic officers had their own headaches setting up the appointments with high officials -- Jiang Zemin, Zhu Rongji -- focusing on the U.S.-China agenda. Everyone else dropped everything to handle the lodging and vehicles and security and communications for two Boeing 747s of visitors. This meant tangling with the Secret Service and the scores of young people -- let me be blunt, ignorant and bossy young people -- sent by the White House for the pre-advance, the advance, the lead and so on.

One of the 747s was completely filled with traveling media. There was the sizable Beijing-based press corps, and hundreds of other journalists arranged their own travel to China from all over Asia. The Japanese and Koreans sent many dozen representatives of the pencil press and video crews. This came to about a thousand journalists, all wanting access and good coverage. Just credentialing the American press was a big hassle of its own. Parenthetically, the Chinese refused visas to two reporters from Radio Free Asia, which became the subject of cables and demarches as the trip drew near.

For USIS, in each city we had to set up all the media coverage, and we had to set up filing centers for all the members of the traveling media that accompanied the President. There wasn't wi-fi in those days. Now, journalists can write stories in their hotel rooms and send them to editors via the internet. Back then, however, we had to set up an old fashioned press center at each location -- hundreds of telephones, hundreds of desks,

hundreds of internet lines, an industrial copier, and AIOs to tend to the journalists' wishes. This had to be done in Xi'an, in Beijing, and at all the other stops.

Every Chinese-speaking Public Diplomacy officer in the Foreign Service was yanked out of whatever they were doing. Many retirees were "recalled." George Beasley, for instance, came back, and he set up everything for the Xi'an greet, and then he leapfrogged to Guilin.

As I said, the numbers were intimidating. There was a Boeing 747 that carried the President and his staff, and there was a second 747 for the traveling press. Just hauling the baggage from the aircraft to the hotel, and back, at each stop had to be done with military precision with bossy young Washington staff acting like they were Drill Instructors at Parris Island.

Q: Why Xi'an?

BISHOP: Xi'an is where the terra cotta warriors are, so in Xi'an you can see the majesty of China's ancient culture, and its history. It's a pretty interesting city. It provided good photo-ops. Had I been setting things up, though, I would not have made Xi'an the first stop because that is where northern chiefs and kings entered China on their way to pay proper obeisance to the Emperor. President Clinton's stopping in Xi'an fit too easily into a Chinese template.

Q: This is a kowtow or ...

BISHOP: Yes, there was some of that image. President Clinton of the so-called mighty superpower has come to China, through Xi'an just like the barbarians of ancient times.

Paul Blackburn, the PAO, was in his real element. Paul's experience with high level visits made him understand that the PAO needed to be with the President's spokesman the whole time. With Consulate PAOs reinforced by TDYers handling public affairs on the other stops, I was the anchor in Beijing.

The visit was quite successful. The joint press conference with Jiang Zemin and Bill Clinton was broadcast live. The President gave a speech at Peking University, and he was interviewed on a radio talk show in Shanghai.

Still, the Chinese were happy to jerk us around. We wanted the joint press conference to be broadcast live. They consistently said no, but then consented, but only an hour and a half before an event scheduled for the middle of the day. Because there was no advance announcement, no one was tuned in. As for the radio talk show in Shanghai, the reach of the program was quite limited.

At any rate, we were doing the USIA thing, trying to really allow the Chinese to hear American leaders unfiltered by how Xinhua or People's Daily would rewrite the story.

I came to understand how Xinhua reported visits by foreign leaders. Here's the simple version. Every visit included a policy speech. The speeches characteristically began with a few words like "it's good to be here in this great country." So the next day's Xinhua lead was "Visitor Calls China a Great Country." The speeches usually include boilerplate about our happy concord and greater progress and partnership and blah de dee blah blah, and then, toward the end, "we still have to make progress on this or that," or "we Americans are concerned about this and the other." These sentences are the policy heart of the speech, but of course they were never reported by Xinhua.

For domestic stories, Xinhua never admits that China has any problems until the Party has started to solve them. Xinhua's China is a kind of la la land. This is why a major Public Diplomacy goal for every visit was to allow American words to be broadcast directly, so that our messages would be heard without being subject to the intermediate editorial hand of Xinhua or the newspapers.

It was gratifying that the President and Mrs. Clinton attended the Chongwenmen Church in Beijing, and Mrs. Clinton and Secretary Albright attended a ceremony at the old synagogue in Shanghai. Our top visitors made it a point to attend worship services in China, to demonstrate the U.S. commitment to religious liberty.

Q: Haven't these visits to places of worship rankled the Chinese?

BISHOP: By the late 1990s, I'm sure, the Chinese were used to the requests. They were always to places of worship affiliated with the officially recognized Three-Self Protestant church, so that eased their anxieties. Even so, worshippers in China were cheered by the visits by high-level Americans.

While we're discussing religion, though, let me mention something more. During the 1990s, there was a lot of talk in the United States about the religious right, and in our own domestic discourse it was the dangerous religious right, or the theocratic religious right. I fess up. I'm a member of the religious right. So when Chinese began to take their lead from the U.S. critics, getting all concerned about the impact of the religious right on American politics and U.S.-China relations, it particularly got to me.

These Chinese misreadings fit into the PRC's own historical narrative. In the Party's take on the nineteenth century, the missionaries were just imperialists in disguise, talking happy Jesus talk when their real goal was to keep China down. The Chinese concerns over the religious right also gave testimony to the strict controls on religion in China.

Over the years I've observed that when religion is a topic of discussion, Foreign Service Officers who themselves are not religious have a kind of tin ear. Too often they don't know how to respond because they don't have a basic sympathy for the effect of religion on a man's or woman's heart. They're not very effective in discussing religion in American society. Say you're having a conversation with the scholars at the Chinese policy institutes, a quiet one with no journalists. They might ask, "What about this religious right in the United States? You know, they seem to be demonizing China."

It's not unlikely that there are FSOs who personally regard the "religious right" with disdain or alarm. "Ohh, religious right," and the roll of the eyes indicates they've dismissed the religious right in their own understanding of American society, and they communicate that it's illegitimate to the Chinese. Just as illegitimate as opposing abortion, say, or gun control. The Chinese have their own tin ears, since all members of the Party have to abjure belief in God when they take their oaths as new members of the Party.

I noticed, then, that questions about "the religious right" indicated that the Chinese lack of understanding about religion was an obstacle to mutual understanding. Our human rights policy certainly draws on religious views, or on views of justice grounded on religious values, and we weren't communicating this well to the Chinese.

So what do you do? The Chinese are very sensitive about religion. They consistently refused to allow us to program speakers in this area. I was looking for an article that I could run in our magazine, *Jiaoliu*, explaining religion in the United States -- a straightforward, scholarly, non-religious article, but one which acknowledged the important role of religion in American society. Once it was translated into Chinese, we could reprint it, we could refer to it, we could put it on our web page, we could do things with it. Alas, I could never find one. Many articles that addressed the topic were not good for Chinese readers because they presumed too much cultural knowledge.

I finally decided there was nothing for me to do but to write an article myself. I spent a month, I suppose, writing out a primer on the place of religion in American society in a strictly factual way. At the end it gave some introduction to religion as a factor in American politics and foreign policy.

I was thinking that it would be published in *Jiaoliu*, but quite to my surprise, when I showed the article to scholars at the Institute of American Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, they liked it. They published it in their own journal. I think I may have been the first Embassy officer to have been published by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. My friends at the Academy told me that there was enough buzz about the religious right among senior Chinese leaders that my article "went to the top." I suppose they prepared a cover letter and sent it up the chain. I don't know if Jiang Zemin read it, but it circulated among senior leaders.

The article was published in their journal, *Meiguo Yanjiu*, "American Studies," and it also went on their website. Their imprimatur was a chop saying it is OK to read and cite.

We took the same article and published it in *Jiaoliu* as we originally planned. Of the things I've published in my life -- and I still consider myself an active historian, though in the minor leagues, of course -- that is my most cited article. It's been loaded onto dozens of Chinese websites. The Director of the Institute of American Studies told me on my second tour that it is the most cited article in Chinese social science literature on religion in the United States. I really think I did a good turn for Uncle Sam when I wrote it.

Q: I assume it was written initially in English.

BISHOP: Yes, and the Institute of American Studies translated it into Chinese, and our own magazine's translator tweaked it some for the *Jiaoliu* version.

Q: Can you append it to this interview?

BISHOP: I think I could, yes.

Q: Well, this brings up the question of religion and how the Chinese have shown themselves to be extremely sensitive to --

BISHOP: The Falun Gong.

Q: Yes. Was that an issue when you were there?

BISHOP: I have a hard time distinguishing between my first and second tours, but let's talk about religion in general.

Religion looks to a higher authority than government, something higher than the ordinary political order. The Chinese Communist Party established itself as the top of the political, economic, and social order in 1949. Religion's appeal to higher principles is something that Party can't endorse, and indeed regards as inherently subversive, so there's a permanent state of tension between the Party and religion.

At different times believers in China have undergone persecutions. The Chinese constitution, when it was written in 1949, did include a sentence about freedom of religion, just as the Soviet Union's constitution had. But like all Communist constitutions, freedom of religion is one of those things subject to law.

When the People's Republic stood up, the Communist Party and the PRC government established organizations to handle religion, or perhaps to contain it. On the government side, there's a State Administration of Religious Affairs. On the Party side, the United Front Work Department tends religious issues. There are five authorized religious bodies -- the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association, the Three Self Protestant Association, a Daoist Association, a Buddhist association, and a Muslim association. The Party assures that the leaders of these associations do not allow religion to threaten the basic order, the leadership of the Party, and the fundamental atheism of the state.

So there's a small licit place for religion in Chinese society. If you're a member of any of those religious bodies, though, you forfeit your opportunity to become a Party member because of the oath that Party members have to take. So yes, there's freedom of religion to join one of those five religious organizations, but there are what Jefferson would have called temporal burdens and civil incapacitations that follow from that. A believer knows his worldly advancement will be capped.

It's worth noting that the list of five faiths has some striking omissions. There's no Jewish association even though there have been Jews in China for a thousand years. There's no association for Mormons. The Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints has long hoped to become an open religion in China. Notice, too, that all the Protestants got grouped together.

By the way, the meaning of “Three Self” is that Protestants in China should be, first, self-propagating. That means there should be no foreign teachers or missionaries. Only Chinese can talk to Chinese about religion. Second, Protestants should be self-supporting, meaning that no foreign money can help build churches or buy Bibles. The third is “self-governing.” There can't be any foreigners in religious bodies.

The same principles apply to the other official groups. There can't be a Jesuit university in China. There can't be bishops named by the Pope because that would mean the Holy Father is governing the Church in China. For all the faiths, there can't be subordination to any hierarchy that is not Chinese, which means the Pope or the Dalai Lama or the LDS Quorum of the Twelve.

The system, then, does allow a small and circumscribed place for religion in China, but it is a place subject to extreme vigilance by government and Party.

As the years have gone by, that place has become a little more open, and there's more toleration of these five groups, depending on decade and place. The system has had, however, an unintended side effect.

The five religions – Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Daoism, and Islam -- are what I call “mature” religions. All are religions with centuries of meditation on the great moral issues, and also meditation on the relationship between church -- what we would call “church” -- and society. All of them have centuries of experience in dealing with different forms of government.

The desire for values and guidance to help a person through life is written in the human heart. Religions are one way that people find meaning, indeed, the way most people find meaning. This desire for meaning is very intense. Any Chinese will tell you that's a major problem for China in the twenty-first century -- the lack of meaning beyond a richer material life, the lack of a code of morality that supports justice. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Party tried to make China's brand of socialism, socialist rectitude, and the teachings of Chairman Mao the new moral reference point. We can be diplomatically understated and say it didn't work out well, and the Party is now entirely discredited in this role.

Where I'm going is that when the mature religions don't have an opportunity to engage a person, the heart still has the longing. Without religious teaching, or moral teaching at the least, the longing can go off into crazy directions, like money and fame.

The mature religions can provide all of this, but the door to their revelations, their meditation, their reasoning and to the consolations of faith is only open a crack. Chinese yearnings for faith are as powerful as anywhere in the world, but the Party cannot allow Chinese to embrace faith in something higher than itself. When the mature faiths are not allowed to meet the yearning, immature religions may take their place. One sign is the sway of relatively unlettered Protestant pastors in some rural areas, pastors with a few months of seminary and self-taught Bible study, who can gather some followers. In the Catholic mythology of my youth, you'd hear talk of ignorant country preachers, Protestants of course, derided as "snake handlers." Some of these Chinese countryside preachers remind one a little of that old stereotype.

And then you get new religions, like Falun Gong, which meets the desire for meaning, for solace, for all the things that religion provides. It started from breathing exercises, *qigong*, meditation, and getting your heart to calm down and all of that, but it grew and became a new religion. The Chinese Government's response to it has been ugly.

The meaning of all this for U.S. Public Diplomacy is that there's a constant tension between an America dedicated to religious liberty because of our founding principles, and China, where the government is more or less -- sometimes more, sometimes less, some places more, some places less -- trying to keep the lid on religion.

Q: As the Embassy's Public Diplomacy person, were you feeling pressure from religious communities in the United States to do something?

BISHOP: No doubt religious leaders in the U.S. from many faiths spoke to the State Department on Chinese persecution and the need for religious liberty in China, but I never got any calls from Catholics or Protestants or the Mormons to do this. They may have been coming in through other channels, perhaps reaching the Political Section each year when the Human Rights Report was prepared, but I wasn't feeling it. I did it because my conscience demanded it.

This demand met the Public Diplomacy need to figure out China and the communication asymmetries between our two nations, to understand where there was no meeting of the minds, and to help China better understand the U.S. Our posture on religious liberty, and the tension with China that derived from it, didn't come out of nowhere. It wasn't suddenly invented by Jimmy Carter or Ronald Reagan or the "religious right" just to give China a hard time. I wanted them to understand what it was our history and our social order that moved us in this area.

Q: OK, what about the academic side? I remember, growing up, meeting people who had been in the Yale in China program. Tell us about academic connections between China and the United States.

BISHOP: Certainly the academic ties between China and the U.S. were growing -- during both my Beijing tours. This is a rather large topic, and we only have time to discuss the wave tops.

One current in the stream was individual students going to study in the other country. The Chinese were limited in the early years after 1979 by lack of English, some; for lack of visas, some more; but mostly because education at American universities was so expensive by their standards. Still, each year there were more Chinese students in the U.S., mostly in graduate programs. And there were more American scholars -- faculty and students -- in China, though the numbers were fewer and their stays were shorter.

Both sides wanted to set up something more permanent than the flow of individual scholars -- longer-term relationships and programs. This dovetailed with the belief that long term educational relationships could help avoid conflict between China and the United States in the future.

Before I came, the Hopkins-Nanjing program had been established. The American students go to Nanjing University where they bunk with Chinese roommates. The Americans take classes in Chinese, and the Chinese take classes in English. But there were beginning to be other programs -- law school programs, language programs, even undergraduate programs. The growth, however, was not symmetric. Far more Chinese were studying in the U.S. than Americans in China. The Chinese went to the U.S. for full degree programs; the Americans came for shorter periods, sometimes for only a few weeks. The Americans in China faced obstacles and sensitivities that Chinese in the U.S. did not encounter.

The asymmetry in numbers was partly a function of language. Chinese, when they applied to study in the United States, had been studying English for years. They will all confess that no matter how long they studied English, they were still shocked when they actually got to the United States and realized how poorly they had been prepared. Still, they were far better prepared than American students going to China. Chinese is taught in few American high schools, so American students start later. And they could only study Chinese at large comprehensive universities. So Americans are way behind in Chinese language study.

Q: Was there a solid cadre of Chinese students majoring in Americana? American history and so on?

BISHOP: Every year there were, and there are, more Chinese students who are serious about studying English, and the opportunities to learn English in China are now good enough that there are many university students whose English is quite good even though they had never been to the States. There's some understanding of American society and culture that naturally flows out of learning the language. There's also fascination with, or interest in, America's popular culture. Movies, illegal DVDs, and just the buzz about the United States -- our cultural presence all over the world -- drew people more to us than to the British.

I think, though, that most of the interest in English was not in the first case driven by curiosity or good will or a desire to understand America. Rather it was driven by the

desire for good jobs. A young Chinese who could land a job with the Price Waterhouse office in Beijing was on his or her way to success. This is especially true for Chinese women, who have opportunities for advancement in foreign companies that they don't have in their own.

This is where I think the economic opening was ramifying. The opening didn't have just economic effects or trade effects. It also had larger cultural effects by creating incentives for people to study English, and as we've always known, when you study the language, understanding the culture follows.

All that said, I think your question was about American Studies. There's no doubt that Chinese scholars -- from the real experts at the policy institutes to undergraduates writing papers -- were trying to understand America's economy, history, law, society, and so on. Individual students and faculty members were doing so without formal majors or programs in American Studies, and there wasn't an American studies movement or an American Studies society.

There was demand for a movement or a society, but it ran up against the controls established by the Party. A proposal to establish an American studies track at a university, or hold an American studies conference, or recognize a local American studies organization would surely go up the chain and need approval by the Party Secretary. The Party defaulted to a general distrust of the United States, so such approvals were rare.

About the only platform for American Studies at the time was the American Studies Center at Fudan University in Shanghai, which had been set up in the 1980s with the approval of the university's President Xie Xide, who had studied at Smith College in the class of 1949. During the Cultural Revolution she had been barred from teaching and was locked inside a lab for ten months. She cleaned lavatories and swept floors in the Physics Department.

As far as a society was concerned, the Institute for American Studies at CASS had an American Studies Society as one of its affiliates, and the rule was that no local American Studies society could be organized except in concert with CASS. The Party had made this arrangement to crowd out any independent organizing. This wasn't just true of American Studies. No independent women's organization could exist outside the purview of the All China Women's Federation, a Party organization, for instance.

All over the world, USIS posts supported American Studies societies and conferences. In China, we couldn't do so directly. It required some indirection, sponsoring conferences and activities that focused on specific issues rather than on America, and the Party working through the Foreign Affairs Offices of universities and policy institutes could turn the spigot on or off as needed.

Q: Do I recall that the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade happened while you were in Beijing? That caused major demonstrations, as I recall.

BISHOP: Yes, a NATO aircraft bombed the Chinese Embassy, killing three, and the NATO aircraft was an American B-2 bomber from Missouri. The circumstances of the mission and the intelligence error that caused the bombs to be dropped on the Chinese Embassy are in the public record, so I don't need to go through them here. I can give one man's view of things from the Embassy, though.

I first heard of the deadly mishap from a journalist on Saturday morning of May 8, 1999. I must not have had enough coffee that morning, because I didn't anticipate the sharpness of the Chinese reaction to the news. I went to the office in mid-morning to work on efficiency reports. I went home for lunch and went back to my office in the Embassy's Yiban compound afterwards. At about 3 p.m. I received a call from the Marines -- they were calling every office -- to tell me I should leave the Embassy. The word was that the demonstrations were coming.

The outrage in China was quite palpable. My office was at Yiban, and as evening approached angry students and citizens began to protest at Erban and Sanban, the two other Embassy buildings separated by a street between. I was following events from my apartment in the Jianguomenwai Compound a few blocks away, watching it live on CNN. If you ever have a chance to see the television footage, it's quite dramatic.

Where there were entrances, gates, to our two compounds, the People's Armed Police had three rows of men with interlocked arms blocking access. The physical pressure on those policemen was high, and from time to time two young policemen in the front row might lose contact with one another, but the lines held. There was screaming and shouting. Students were climbing the trees on the street to see if they could get over the wall. Hundreds of people were throwing rocks over the walls at the buildings -- many were substantial paving stones. Here and there a Korean-style Molotov cocktail would sail over the wall and burn between the wall and the building.

It was very dangerous. Most everyone had been evacuated from the three Embassy buildings, but not everyone. The Ambassador's residence was behind our USIS offices in the Yiban compound, and Ambassador Sasser's family was hunkered down inside. They moved to the safe haven for the compound, which was the old vault next to my office. Our IO, Bill Palmer, was there with the Ambassador's family members.

Bill had gone through the police lines into our Yiban building to fax the Ambassador's condolences to the Chinese media, but then he couldn't leave. You may recall that President Clinton had done also expressed condolences, but he did it rather off-handedly on the tarmac at Andrews AFB. The optics -- too casual, informal -- were not good and angered the Chinese. Bill Palmer told me that the most tense moments followed the end of a soccer game at People's Stadium. Departing fans poured into the neighborhood and bombarded our Yiban building and the Ambassador's residence with paving stones and rocks.

Still inside the two main buildings were the Marines and about five others including the Ambassador. Things were so dangerous that they began to destroy the Embassy's files in

accordance with the destruction plan, going from safe to safe and tossing everything into the shredders.

I digress here and say -- it's very interesting what happens in an Embassy when all the documents have been destroyed. Six months later, a pesky request comes in from Washington for information -- Washington is famous for asking Embassies to search files that could as easily be accessed in the Department, but they like to dump the work on posts. After the records had been shredded, Beijing could reply, "gosh, we don't know. We don't have any records from then." It considerably lightens the burden of work.

Anyway, the documents were being destroyed, and the Ambassador was one of the five Foreign Service people in the building while infuriated people are rioting outside. Once in a while, a Chinese would manage to get over the wall, but would be pulled out by other Chinese or by the People's Armed Police before doing any damage or getting hurt.

The Marines were safely inside the building too. There were no breaches of the doors or windows, and if there had been a penetration all would have retreated into the safe haven. If, in the charged atmosphere, the confusion, the rage, anyone would have been killed -- this is a "what if," it didn't happen -- I think the Embassy would have been razed to the ground. It was, in any case, very touch and go.

The demonstrations continued a second night and a third. The fourth night was calmer.

I have photos of the piles of rubble outside the Embassy from all the paving stones. The walls were stained with eggs and burst bottles of ink. It was the same over at our Yiban building. That was the event.

Paul Blackburn and I would go to our compound each morning -- the streets were calm for a few hours after the night's demonstrations. The compound was full of stones and rocks, all the windows were broken, the offices were strewn with broken glass inside, air conditioners were damaged.

Q: Where could you go? Could you go home?

BISHOP: Except for the Ambassador and his family in The Residence, everyone in the Embassy lived in one of the diplomatic compounds. Our apartment was only a few blocks away in the Jianguomenwai compound. We were safe there. Nobody was going to go in and bust their way past the PAP guards and the Brazilians and the Nigerians and the Euros in order to get to us. It was our office buildings that were damaged.

I hope you will have a chance to interview our BPAO in Chengdu, Joe Bookbinder. He has quite a tale of the assault on the Consulate compound and the burning of the Consul General's residence there.

When the crisis passed and the Ambassador was able to leave the compound, he held an impromptu press conference in the parking lot of the Jianguomenwai Diplomatic

Compound. I was the one to set it up, and my sister emailed me from Connecticut to say that she saw me in the background. Perhaps five seconds of international exposure! I'm still owed fourteen minutes and 55 seconds of fame.

The Ambassador was calm and reassuring, and in the course of his brief comments he mentioned how steady the Marines had been. A while later, this resulted in a telephone call from Jamie Rubin to Bill Palmer -- to pass the word that the White House didn't want to see any comments from the Embassy that might imply that the Embassy had been the Alamo.

After the bombing and the demonstrations, we in USIS were looking at a wreckage of all the patient work we had been doing -- in rule of law, and trade, and building mutual understanding and trust. I'm sure our colleagues in DAO were facing even greater wreckage to the mil-to-mil relationship. Paul Blackburn and I realized that the bombing was a real setback. Even though it would take years to repair, we had to do something to restore communication and dialog between the Chinese and U.S. scholars who best understood the long-term challenge of bringing our two nations closer together. It had to be done sooner not later.

Paul came up with the idea of immediately organizing videoconferences between scholars at key Chinese foreign policy institutions and their American counterparts. Getting the Chinese to participate in the videoconferences was the first challenge. The next step was to persuade the Chinese to host quiet, face-to-face gatherings of Chinese and Americans to talk through all the issues that the bombing called forth.

We spent some money on this, generously covering the Chinese institutes for costs -- lodging, meals, honoraria, and so on. Chinese hosts always tried to make some money whenever we hosted an event, charging the foreigners high room and meal rates in hotels their Ministry owned, higher than the rack rates, for instance, and we always tried to trim these costs. After the bombing, however, we paid what they asked -- in order to get things going.

I believe we were successful in getting the Chinese university and policy institute scholars -- all of whom were advisors to ministries -- together with Americans faster than they would have on their own. Fortunately, we could do so from post funding, so that we could make things happen without depending on Washington to dither over money. Paul's idea of jumping right into this was a very good one.

Q: Well, it does, you know, something that struck me about that and then later the plane collision and al. The Chinese seem to be a very touchy people, and these demonstrations can get going. You kind of wonder, can you really have good relations with such a touchy people?

BISHOP: Here's my short take on what's a very large question. Dealing with the Chinese on anything, even in calm and ordinary times, you run into some unique features of the

Chinese personality – “face,” for instance. Every time you negotiate a deal, or work with the Chinese, there's a chance of unknowingly running up against a Chinese sensitivity.

You might say or do something with the French or the Germans that hit them wrong, but there's enough cultural overlap so that they would understand your intentions and overlook the intercultural faux pas. The Chinese are more distant culturally, and they have their own cultural and behavioral characteristics. When you deal with them, you need to be careful not to do anything that pushes them far enough to get a face-driven negative reaction. You must know these general features of the Chinese personality that have been thousands of years, I suppose, in the making.

Then, there's another factor to deal with -- the narrative, the Chinese understanding of their own history. The Party's and the PRC's narrative of Chinese modern history is that in 1500s, 1600s, and 1700s, China was the most advanced, the most humane, the most prosperous society in the world. Then the Europeans came and made China submit. China's centuries of shame began with the First Opium War in 1842. And, according to the narrative, the whole history of the 19th and early 20th century was the West keeping China down, denying China its rightful place in the world, taking advantage of China. This narrative was expressed early in the 20th century by those who founded the old Republic, and the Communists sharpened it. It had, and has, the advantage of pointing to others as the cause of China's woes.

The narrative is deeply seared into the Chinese mind, and there are ripple effects. When the Communists took over in 1949, they liked the narrative, gave it Marxist, Communist, and revolutionary characteristics. They built on the narrative that described foreigners as imperialists whose predations were motivated by the aim of keeping China down. In the late 1940s, members of the PLA were taught by their political officers that the U.S. was as great an enemy as Chiang Kai-Shek.

The narrative is taught in the schools. The Party assures that museums, or television dramas, or anniversary celebrations, repeat the narrative. All the versions of the narrative in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s were strongly anti-American. The Chinese took to heart many of the Soviet Union's criticisms of the U.S. and capitalism. I noticed this from looking at PRC magazines from that time before the Sino-Soviet split. The PRC magazine *Manhua* drew on all the same visual tropes as the Soviet Union's *Krokodil*.

Even after 1979 when China turned direction with Deng Xiaoping's policy of opening, the features of that narrative never changed. It takes a party decision to allow the narrative to be changed. Individual Chinese scholars might come to understand that the outcome of the Opium Wars were as much China's fault as they were the West's. They might understand that the Dowager Empress did more to diminish China's standing in the late 19th century when she crushed China's own self-strengthening movement than did the foreign powers. Scholars might understand that the Boxer Rebellion was not what Party historians said it was. You could talk with individual scholars here and there and help them see a new view of things. But to get the Party to change what is taught in the schools -- that was something we could not accomplish.

Nanjing was where the first treaty between the United States and China was signed. Inside a park there's a pavilion where the documents were signed and exchanged. The park is one of Nanjing's "patriotic bases." Every school child in the city, sometime during their education, will tour the patriotic base stations. At the park where the treaty with the U.S. was signed, the Party tour leaders talk about the unequal treaties. The "unequal treaty" with the U.S. was far less unequal than those with other Western powers. It offered more opportunities and partnership to China in the 19th century than the treaties signed with the other imperial powers. Still, at the patriotic base, the United States is grouped with all of them. This is all part of the problem of "narrative" that U.S. Public Diplomacy encounters.

When I wrote the paper on religion in the U.S., I was trying to challenge the Chinese narrative on religion. When you organize American studies conferences, you're trying to challenge or perhaps chip away at the narrative. The narrative is so strong, and it has been taught so thoroughly, however, that whatever headway you make in the face of the narrative is highly vulnerable to any shock in U.S.-China relations. The bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade provided that kind of shock, and all the old feelings of distrust re-emerged, multiplied by the outrage and anger.

In the aftermath of the bombing, Chinese scholars that I knew appeared on television to help explain what was going on to viewers. Even though I knew these scholars to be thoughtful, knowledgeable, friends of the United States, and perhaps even "liberal" in the Chinese context, when they were faced by outraged Chinese opinion, they said things that conformed to the Party's narrative instead of what they knew in their own mind to be the circumstances.

Q: There was a scandal involving the President while you were in China.

BISHOP: Yes. Paul Blackburn and I both happened to be working in our two offices in Yiban one Saturday morning when the Monica Lewinski news first broke.

Q: As embarrassing as it comes.

BISHOP: Yes! We realized even at the time of the first report that this might become Watergate all over again -- a major crisis that would engulf the Presidency. As things unfolded over the weeks and months, our worst prognosis alas proved justified.

Q: Actually it boiled down to a congressional coup.

BISHOP: That's one way to look at it ...

Q: The president --

BISHOP: Well, it was possible that it would go away, but at the same time we realized this could be really big, really big. I remember that on the following Monday we had our

regular tight staff meeting of PAS Americans. One of our AIOs had been hiking in the woods that weekend and hadn't heard the news. She asked, "What's this? What are you talking about?" And Paul said, "We may be on the edge of a major constitutional crisis."

When Paul and I talked about it on Saturday, though, we sensed that it could have an effect not just in Washington but also on the Embassy. I told Paul, "OK, here's the only solution for the President." This is a joke, a public affairs strategy joke, you understand. "He should drive immediately to Lynchburg. He should go to Sunday services at Jerry Falwell's congregation."

Q: A very conservative Christian ...

BISHOP: Yes, head of the Moral Majority. "Go to Jerry Falwell's church, and when in an Evangelical way Falwell asks, 'anyone who would like to repent should come forward,' the President should walk down the aisle, fall on his knees, and confess." That would clear the air of any denials. And it would also split the religious right into two groups -- the group that wouldn't forgive him, and the group that would say "oh, he's seen the light. If he can repent, we must be Christian and forgive him." End of joke.

Still, as things turned out, it would have been good advice -- good from the public affairs angle (admit wrongdoing right away, don't think you can hide something), and good from the political angle!

Q: Before we leave Monica Lewinski, what did you do? I mean, how did you play it?

BISHOP: As the crisis unfolded, Chinese officialdom was completely nonplussed. What on earth was going on? So much ado about nothing! Don't these Americans have odd hangups?

Of course, some Embassy officers were also nonplussed, and I'd say the reactions at the Embassy paralleled what Americans were thinking at home. Those Americans at the Embassy who were more politically liberal downplayed the crisis and the President's infidelity, and those who were more conservative were dismayed. In China, however, those among us who were critical of the President's behavior could hardly say so. This is because the Foreign Service always defaults to supporting an administration, and defaults to downplaying political earthquakes.

As the scandal unfolded, I came to a conclusion about Public Diplomacy. When an individual officer is convinced, on any issue, he or she argues and advocates. When an officer doubts, or lacks conviction, she just explains.

There was plenty to explain without taking sides in the U.S. domestic battle. As in, here are the provisions in the Constitution about impeachment. Here's the precedent of Andrew Johnson. Here is how hearings work. A special prosecutor can do this, and can't do that. Did you know the House impeaches, the Senate tries? Here's what the managers

do. And so on. It was a good opportunity to acquaint the Chinese with parts of American governance they weren't familiar with.

Said again, when Americans are overseas as diplomats, we don't show our own Democrat or Republican preferences to foreigners. We always speak on behalf of the administration. If you have personal misgivings about a policy, the way you get around them is to say, well, let me explain: this side says this; that side says that. In this way you don't play your own hand.

Another example: If the Chinese asked you about the many Americans who criticized the religious right – saying it had run amok in criticizing the President – the right way to handle the question is to explain -- that there's economic America, political America, and there's religious America as well. So in many ways I think our response was simply to explain.

I recall explaining the impeachment process to one Chinese contact, who had picked up on the idea that impeachment was way disproportionate to the events. I still remember using a phrase I had heard in the U.S. commentary -- that the President's transgressions "hadn't risen to the level of impeachment." As soon as the words were out of my mouth, I felt a twinge of disgust at what I had just said. I felt like a shill from the easy temporizing.

You asked a short question. I'm afraid the answer was too long. I'd say we just explained what was happening.

Q: I think you wanted to mention consolidation.

BISHOP: Yes, the consolidation between USIA and State happened during my first tour in Beijing.

It had been talked about for years and years, but every time the talk waxed, it waned, it seemed to go away. I sense that most USIA people overseas had heard "wolf" cried so many times, we didn't think it was going to happen. But indeed it did.

My view of it -- an uninformed view because I was overseas, not seeing the inside game in Washington -- is that Jesse Helms had some burrs under his saddle about foreign policy and foreign aid. There were three independent federal agencies that were also involved in foreign policy -- USIA, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA), and USAID. His deepest rancor was for USAID. That's the scalp he wanted. But USAID was blessed at that time with a very vigorous and outspoken director, Brian Atwood. And USIA was in the hands of Joe Duffey. I don't think he understood the stakes.

First, ACDA was tossed into State. That was the first play. And then it came down to USIA or USAID. I still think that Jesse Helms wanted USAID, but the administration

tossed the USIA bone to the howling pack. That's why USIA was folded into State, and USAID remained an independent agency.

Q: I've talked to people who served under Duffey in Washington.

BISHOP: And ...

Q: And first place, said one, he was weak. And two, that he really wasn't very interested in the job or anything. I mean, you know, I mean he comes across as --

BISHOP: I can't say that I have any insight into Director Duffey's thinking, but I've heard the same. He didn't grasp the threat to USIA, and many thought he was too passive as it unfolded.

Q: Well then, how did this affect you in Beijing?

BISHOP: On September 30, 1999, we were USIA employees. On October 1, we belonged to State.

One effect was on a PAO's annual evaluations. In USIA, each PAO received two ER's, one from the Ambassador, and one from the USIA area director.

Q: ER -- efficiency report.

BISHOP: Efficiency report? Evaluation report? A PAO had two reports in the file every year, one from the Ambassador about how you were achieving the Mission's goals, and one from the USIA area director saying how you were managing the post (the area director was in a position to be able to compare posts) and working on the administration's objectives.

After consolidation, there was no longer an area director. The Public Diplomacy Office Directors who inherited the rump of the old area offices no longer had any input to evaluations, and they had no standing when promotion panels convened.

In the new dispensation, the PAO's single reporting official was at post, and it was no longer the Ambassador. The annual evaluation was signed by the DCM with the Ambassador as reviewer. The effect of this was that PAO's came much more firmly under the Ambassador's guidance as communicated by the DCM. PAO's also had less direct access to the Ambassador than before.

Similarly, a Branch Public Affairs Officer just became a Consulate's Public Affairs Officer. Their evaluations were now written by their Consul General instead of by the Deputy Public Affairs Officer. This weakened the ability of a Country PAO to organize a unified countrywide Public Diplomacy program.

My own observation was that when they gained direct supervision of the PAO and Public Diplomacy programs, DCMs and Ambassadors got way more interested and more controlling. They wanted, for instance, to approve every U.S. speaker that came to China. In general, their preference was that no one could be invited who was not a 100 percent advocate of the administration's policy. They felt they could name individual contacts to be International Visitors. They were much more explicit about it than they had been earlier.

On September 30, we had a USIA Executive Officer for USIS China. Our Executive Officer in China was Vince Raimondi, one of the best. September 30 was his last day in our building. He was immediately moved over to the Embassy's Management section in the Erban compound. We no longer had our own dedicated management person. In the Management section, Vince was given three portfolios. He was additionally given, as I recall, oversight of communications and the medical unit. On October 1, then, we had one third of Vince's time, not full time.

And ... though it wasn't an issue in Beijing, all over the world DCMs who had small cars were happy to take over the PAO's larger cars. That transfer of the cars became such an issue -- things were a little crazy.

So, consolidation affected our daily operations in many ways. As I said, Paul Blackburn had one third of an Executive Officer available to help us from the Management Section, but there was no real diminishment of the administrative burden on a PAO. Several of our "admin" FSNs were "crosswalked" into the Management Section. The work still needed to be done, and the nearest officer with some management experience was the Deputy Public Affairs Officer, meaning me. I know from talking to my counterparts in New Delhi and Seoul and Tokyo -- we DPAOs felt like we had been hit by a train as consolidation wrenched us into assuming so much administrative work.

The consolidation had another particular effect on me. Looking ahead to my transfer in the summer of 2000, the last USIA assignment panel, meeting in July of 1999, named me to be the Country PAO in Kuala Lumpur. That was considered to be the real plum among PAO assignments for a Class One officer in the East Asia and Pacific area. Kuala Lumpur was often described as a country club assignment.

Then, about three weeks later, the last USIA promotion panel promoted six officers to the Senior Foreign Service, and I was one. I went from being an FS-1 to be an FE-OC, a Counselor. This eventually set in motion my next assignment in Nigeria.

Q: OK, so we'll pick this up the next time when you're off to Nigeria.

BISHOP: Nigeria, 2000 to 2002.

Q: Today is the March 8, 2011, with Don Bishop. As you left, whither China?

BISHOP: Oh, whither China?

The Chinese are a wonderfully likeable people. We often focus on differences between Americans and others, but I found there are some deep symmetries between our culture and theirs. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, much of the fellow feeling, the mutual attraction, had been communicated, both ways, by the missionaries and by the early exchanges. It was given additional impetus by the Second World War.

They are direct and frank, even more than we are. They value education like we do. They work hard, like Americans do. So I believe that the cultural compatibility of China and the United States can provide a good basis for the relationship. However, that cultural attraction ran up against the views of the new PRC Government in 1949, and during the Korean War we became bitter enemies. During the Korean War the PRC government was fighting us, and at the same time they were vilifying us among China's people, going on and on about American imperialism, and cooking up falsehoods about germ warfare.

After 1979, when Deng Xiaoping decided on the opening policy, there was potentially an opportunity to restore the cooperation and friendship between China and the United States. There's a magnetic attraction between the two cultures. Our two economies complement one another. The huge volume of trade shows there's an economic attraction as well. But the Chinese Communist Party, is ever anxious to sustain its power. Party leaders understood well enough that the Party's corruption and its many other shortcomings undermine its standing among ordinary Chinese. The CCP always finds it useful to keep stoking Chinese nationalism. The Party's brand of Chinese nationalism still draws heavily on the historical narrative of Chinese victimization and the role of the predatory Yankees that the party developed and propagated before and after 1949.

All this means that a closer long term relationship between China and the United States depends on allowing the cultural and economic attraction to get us through the political differences. The obstacle to that is the Communist Party.

Among Chinese institutions, moreover, the institution that is most heavily ideologized, and the most isolated from the rest of Chinese society and from the world, is the People's Liberation Army, the PLA.

Remember that, formally, the PLA is not China's army, it's the Chinese Communist Party's army.

Remember too that the PLA is the Chinese institution that has been receiving budget increases of 10 percent or more every year. Remember that it's a black box, meaning we don't know much about its internal dynamics. The PLA's political officers keep it ideologically pure. And the PLA holds in its heart the desire to make China a power that can challenge the United States. And anyone who has served in the Defense Attaché Office in Beijing will testify that the Chinese refuse, or slow down, or strangle every confidence-building initiative that DOD proposes -- refuse the open hand, so to speak.

So who knows where China's future will go? Its direction depends in large part on more liberalization in knowledge and culture, more room for faith to give Chinese a moral anchor, and it depends on the eventual unraveling of that Party narrative of Chinese history.

Q: Well, one thinks of how the Japanese Military got Japan into deep trouble --

BISHOP: Yes, it certainly did. That's right, though you've understated it. Militarized Japan brutalized and agonized half the world.

Q: Well, you know, I've talked to people who served in Poland before the system there collapsed. And they said that, you know, for the last 10 years of communist rule they felt that there are probably maybe three, maybe four dedicated Marxists in Poland. How stands Marxism in China? We're talking about when you left there.

BISHOP: Whether it was my first or my second tour, you could find officials who were pretty well schooled in Marxism. They knew their doctrines because they had received pretty hard line Marxist-Leninist-Maoist indoctrination early in their careers. They could still recite it.

For China's ordinary people, though, the hold of that ideology had long since disappeared. There were legacy attitudes that remained -- a nostalgia for the equality Chairman Mao espoused, the distrust of foreigners, the feeling of victimization. There was legacy disinformation, of which the charge of germ warfare in Korea was one. But ordinary people no longer cited socialism and communism as motivating principles.

The Party -- that's five percent of the Chinese population -- has made a deal with the rest of the Chinese people. It's an unwritten deal, an unspoken deal. It's that so long as we, the Party, deliver economic development, better jobs, more money, a better life, then don't challenge us. So far they're still able to deliver.

Underlying that crude deal is a judgment about human nature -- that people respond to economic stimuli. This is, of course, economic determinism, which we can say is another legacy of Marxism. The Party and the Chinese people agree on a system of governance based on economic self-interest.

The first thing to say is that I'm signed on with Michael Novak, George W. Bush, and increasingly President Obama that the desire for democracy and self-government is in the human heart. This means that China, in the long run, has to somehow, like Taiwan did in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, let go of the commanding Party-State system. There must be more room for China's people to feel the sense of empowerment and dignity that comes with self-government, with democratization.

And there's another thing to say about the economic determinism that underlies the Party's deal with the Chinese people. My view of human nature is that while economics is an important factor in any society, and people indeed have economic needs that have a

certain priority in life, there are other yearnings in the human heart beyond economics, beyond materialism, beyond consumerism, beyond money. There are yearnings for justice, and for knowledge of God, and for meaning in life. The Party is not providing these nonmaterial goods.

Thanks for giving me some time to assert some convictions.

Q: Well, we'll check on this in a decade's time.

LAGOS, NIGERIA, 2000-2001
Country Public Affairs Officer

Q: On to Nigeria. How did you get the assignment?

BISHOP: I mentioned earlier that the last USIA assignment panel had chosen me to be PAO in Kuala Lumpur, the country club job. I was getting excited about it. After the aggravations of Beijing, they owed me. A month later, though, the last USIA promotion panel pushed me into the Senior Foreign Service. And a month or so later we folded into State. It occurred to me that as a new Counselor, going to an FS-1 job in Kuala Lumpur might not be the best career move. Remember that none of us knew how Public Diplomacy would fit in the Department and its promotion system.

I raised this with the career development people in the Department, but I found they hadn't begun to work out all the HR consequences of consolidation. I received no answer. It wasn't until December or so that the personnel system woke up to my request for guidance. I finally heard that I should break the assignment to Malaysia and bid on Senior Foreign Service jobs.

When I asked what overseas Counselor-level positions there were in Public Diplomacy for 2000, I learned there were only three open positions for a PAO. My choice came down to the Ukraine, Turkey, or Nigeria.

Clearly, the most attractive job was to be PAO in Turkey. Assignment to Ankara, or to Kiev, however, required a year of language training, in Turkish or Ukrainian, languages which I would never use again. So I decided to go the easy route and take the job in Nigeria, even though it was in some ways the least attractive of the three positions. They spoke English there, however.

It has occurred to me that had I taken that job in Turkey, I would have been the PAO tasked to sell the movement of the Fourth Infantry Division through Turkey to allow the Army to invade Iraq from the north as well as the south. That would have been a tough nut to crack.

We got to Lagos in September of 2000, the tail end of the assignment season, and we stayed there until August of 2002. I replaced Jim Callahan, who had spent five years there. Nancy Serpa was Consul General, and because she outranked the senior officer in

Abuja, she was Charge d'Affaires. We initially settled into Consulate General housing on Cooper Road on Ikoyi Island.

We arrived in Lagos right after President Clinton had visited Nigeria and signed the order to move the American Embassy to Abuja from Lagos. The post at Lagos became a Consulate General, and the former Embassy Office in Abuja became the Embassy.

Thinking of those first months in Lagos, since Jemma and I had been in Bangladesh there wasn't much Third World shock for us. Lagos is a very intense place! We'd seen Dhaka, though, so Lagos we could take in stride.

I was walking around Ikoyi Island one day, and I came across a street, Lugard Avenue. The name rang a bell. The road around the Peak in Hong Kong is Lugard Road. I looked it up, and yes, Sir Frederick Lugard had been British Governor of Hong Kong, and he'd been of course the great Governor General of Nigeria. There was this bit of the British colonial legacy still there.

There were some unusual features to serving in Nigeria. For instance, you could never use a credit card because of identity theft. This meant you had to use cash for everything. That was OK when going to the market, but if you had to make a trip and were going to pay hotel bills, you had to take big bundles of money, bricks of naira bills wrapped tightly in bank wrappers and rubber bands. Usually a hotel wanted you to pay ahead two days for one day's stay just in case you ran up the bill for meals and telephone calls. When you checked out, they would refund any additional amount.

The largest bill was 100 naira, about 70 cents. There were no larger bills in circulation because of a popular belief that if the government printed bills of larger denominations, prices would automatically rise. Because of corruption and inefficiency, the government hadn't printed any new bills, even in the lower denominations, in a long time, so the old bills were being recycled and recycled and recycled. There was quite an article in an issue of *State* magazine a little after we left. Our med tech in Abuja took a Q-tip to a 50-naira bill that he got at the market and then put it in the Petri dish. All kinds of ugly looking stuff grew. The dirty currency was a hazard to your health!

Q: Well, we've got you at the beginning, what was the government like? What was the country like?

BISHOP: Famously, all Nigeria is divided into three parts. The Yorubas live in the southwest, the Igbos in the southeast, and the Hausas are in the north. The tribal divisions were also geographic divisions, and, a little less neatly, religious divisions. The Igbos are Catholics. Yorubas tend to be Protestants, though there were some Catholics and Muslims among them. And in the north, the Hausas are Muslim. This division into three zones is too simple, of course, for there are many other tribes and ethnicities, and traditional religions have many adherents.

You remember Samuel Huntington's book, so controversial, about the clash of civilizations. One of the useful takeaways from that book was that where the great civilizations meet, that's where there's likely to be conflict. Nigeria is situated astride one of the civilizational fault lines. Islam spread down across the Sahara to northern Nigeria, and the Hausas were Muslim. The Yorubas and Igbos were part of a Christianized, and a bit more Westernized, Africa in the south of the country that looked toward the sea rather than the Sahara. So Nigeria had outbreaks of confessional conflict. There were ugly incidents of violence, even massacres, between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria's Middle Belt.

In Lagos, we were very much in the tropics -- palm trees, muggy weather, storms from the sea. If you flew up to Abuja you were in what Nigerians called the Middle Belt, geographically described as woodland and tall grass savannah. By the time you got up to Nigeria's northern border with Niger you were in the short grass savannah, very dry.

Nigeria's resources, meaning the oil, are all down in the Igbo country.

The Nigeria we know, the Nigeria that's marked on the map, was put together by the British, by Sir Frederick Lugard. It was a single colony that had these three large and many smaller ethnic groups within it. Looking ahead to eventual independence, "Nigeria" didn't quite make sense because there wasn't any real national glue between these three groups. The duct tape that kept all the parts together was British colonial rule.

After independence, the constitution attempted to compensate for these ethnic divisions by establishing a federal principle -- that all inhabitants of the land are "Nigerians" regardless of background -- and any Nigerian can reside and work anywhere in the country. Nigerian federal departments and agencies are mindful of the need for diversity, to demonstrate the "federal character" of the nation, so different jobs go to members of different groups. There was a notion that the Presidency should rotate among the three major ethnicities -- that one's not quite working out as planned, though. All three major languages were taught in schools. An individual student would study her own language, elect to study one of the other national languages, and study English too.

Another way that the government intended to institutionalize the federal character was by moving the capital from Lagos, in Yoruba country, to Abuja, situated in the center of the nation.

This federal principle was very important, but they did not extend that federal principle to the state governments. There is an ambiguous phrase in the constitution that said they could prefer "indigenes." This was a new word for me. The closest meaning might be "native." It meant you could only have a job in the Ohio government if you're from Ohio, not just a resident, but a born and bred Ohioan. So one characteristic of the country was these federal stresses.

During his rule, Sani Abacha had looted and trashed all the major institutions. He had come to power in 1993. When I went to university libraries in Nigeria, I found that they

had no journals after 1992's. Money for university libraries was low hanging fruit that was immediately plucked away by the Abacha government.

When oil had been discovered in Nigeria in the 1960s, the then-President told the Nigerian people that the “national cake” would feed everybody. He meant that there was going to be so much bounty from the wells that all of Nigeria’s fondest economic hopes could all be achieved. This was, I suppose, the Nigerian way of saying there would be a chicken in every pot. Everyone would be assured a prosperous life.

It didn't happen. Yes, the wells produced -- and produce -- wealth beyond the dream of avarice. The oil companies certainly paid the royalties, directly to the federal treasury. But somewhere between the treasury and the schools, the roads, the health clinics, the libraries, or the post office, the money all disappeared. This corruption touched everything in Nigerian life.

At an event in Kano, I happened to sit next to a former minister of transportation. I mentioned to him that I’d noticed something about the drive from Lagos to Ibadan. When you came to the tollgate, you could pay the full toll of 20 naira and get a receipt, or you could pay 10 naira and they would just let you pass through. Embassy drivers always paid 20 naira because they needed a receipt in order to be reimbursed by the Embassy for their out-of-pocket payment of the toll. But other cars that had no reason to need a receipt could go through for 10 naira. Those payments of 10 naira weren't receipted, so the money could go into the pocket of the toll taker, presumably with a cut going to the supervisor of the toll takers, and to the local head of the highway district, and, who knows, to the local police commander so that he would never notice.

I asked the former minister how the Ministry had tried to get a handle on this, so that the government properly received the toll revenue. This was nickel and dime corruption, but it surely added up to a lot. He looked at me and he said, “Is there a toll on the highway from Lagos to Ibadan?”

Q: Well, Nigerians have a world-class reputation for corruption.

BISHOP: That’s true too. We all know of Nigerian advanced fee fraud -- the email purportedly from a Nigerian widow, saying my late husband was a member of the Abacha Government. He had received \$100,000, and all I need to receive the money is your bank account number. I'll share the proceeds with you, good-hearted American. That’s called 419 fraud in Nigeria, after the provision in the Nigerian legal code that criminalizes the fraud.

My wife worked in the Consular Sections in Lagos and Abuja both. She often received the telephone calls from Americans, some of them asking for information before they gave the money, but some of them saying, “Well, you know, I’ve already paid the \$5,000 initial fee. Now they’re asking for another \$20,000. Is this is all square?” She had to tell them on the telephone to kiss their \$5,000 or \$20,000 goodbye. So again, corruption and fraud were major forces in Nigeria. It wasn’t just crooked Nigerians reaching out to the

rest of the world. It wasn't just Nigerians stealing from each other. It was elites in the Nigerian government diverting funds that had come from the poor.

Let me mention one more story on corruption. I heard it at second hand. The United Nations planned to help Nigeria improve its education system. They reasoned that before they could plan a proper, comprehensive education reform strategy for Nigeria, they needed to know the number of students in the system, the exact numbers by state, by grade, by gender, and so on. The UN people were a little surprised that the Ministry of Education hemmed and hawed and only gave them round figures. You can go into the Maryland Department of Education, and they can tell you the exact number of students were in school last week, but the Nigerians couldn't provide numbers.

When the UN commissioned its own census of the students, they discovered some things. Individual principals were submitting false numbers up the chain. They might report the school had 120 students when there were only 85. This was so the school could be funded for 120 students and the number of teachers needed by 120, and for 120 textbooks and 120 pencils and 120 desks and so on. One hundred and twenty reported students minus 85 boys and girls “on seat,” meant that there were 35 “ghost students” and a few “ghost teachers.” A principal pocketing the salary of a “ghost teacher” came to a lot more than the amount allocated for 35 pencils, I imagine.

When the UN got a little deeper into this, they found that there were more than ghost students and ghost teachers. They found that perhaps one fifth of all the retired teachers, collecting annuities, were “ghost pensioners.” In one area, the UN people decided to take a look at every school. They got the list of schools from the state government. They drove to a village and asked for directions to the school. And the villagers said, “The school? School? There’s no school here.” So the Nigerian Ministry of Education was carrying entire ghost schools on the roster, and in the appropriation lines. This is quite extraordinary to my mind.

I've mentioned Abacha and his legacy, the centrifugal forces of ethnicity, insecurity, and the problem of corruption. All of these complicated economic reporting, colored whatever the political section heard, made consular work hell, and raised the blood pressure of management officers. Add the episodic kidnapping of oil workers in the Delta, the shift of people from the Consulate in Lagos to the Embassy in Abuja, and planning for a new Embassy building in Abuja, this was a lot of pressure on an Embassy that was too small for the revival of U.S.-Nigerian relations after the assassination of President Abacha.

Q: Well, when you got there, how stood relations between Nigeria and the United States?

BISHOP: The dictator and true thug Sani Abacha had died in 1998, and I heard several versions of what happened on his final night with the Indian prostitutes from Dubai.

During the Abacha years, the U.S. had put the diplomatic relationship with Nigeria on minimize, and the Embassy had grown smaller as programs were cut. After President

Obasanjo was elected, the relationship began to grow back. This meant that during my tour the Mission faced two parallel problems -- one, to grow, with all the work of justifying new positions, recruiting and assigning people, finding housing, and garnering the funds to support more people at two greater hardship posts. The second was to move the Embassy to Abuja.

Two years into what Nigerians called “the democratic dispensation,” relations with the U.S. were positive. Even so, there were some “only in Nigeria” tensions, some odds and ends.

There was a section of learned opinion in Nigeria, or let’s say the opinion-forming classes in Nigeria, that still regarded us as one of the imperialist powers. They were outspokenly suspicious of every U.S. initiative. Every landing of a U.S. military aircraft, for instance, gave them evidence that we wanted to establish bases in Nigeria.

Q: Well, was that or was it still the London School of Economic whims and --

BISHOP: A lot of it, yes, though I thought that was a little more pronounced in Bangladesh than it was in Nigeria. Nonetheless it was something I had to factor into Public Diplomacy.

I once took a drive on the highway from Lagos west toward Cotonou, and I was amazed to see so many closed factories and industrial parks. These were the infrastructural remains of previous “investments” by former Nigerian governments. Regime after regime had embraced this or that new insight in industrial or economic development, and they had funded or subsidized the white elephant projects.

Even when they initially attracted foreign corporate partners, they all failed for various reasons -- lack of local demand for the products; corruption at every level from the enterprise zone, to the local government, to the national capital; lack of qualified local workers and managers; and so on.

Not all the failures were local. Some stemmed from development theories that had gone bad in practice. When I look at the billions of dollars spent by the international donors on foreign assistance, I try to look underneath a project to see the intellectual, social, and political premises it rests on. I’m not enough of an expert, but there are two or three new intellectual fads that break over the development community, and their legislative funders in the donor nations, each decade. In the constant search for magic bullets that will jump start economic development, donors fix on interventions: “Population control,” “Good governance,” “civil society,” “microfinance,” “women as the key to development,” “bridge the digital divide” are just a few. When a fad captured the development community, a lack of proof, or metrics, or other hard evidence of effectiveness was no bar to the money sloshing in.

Q: Public Diplomacy in Lagos? Tell me about it.

BISHOP: The post at Lagos had a mid-sized Public Affairs Section -- PAO, IO, AIO, CAO, ACAO, IRO. Heading the Information Unit was Steve Lauterbach, a very good press officer, calm and steady, just the kind of man needed in an excitable place. Shirley Lisenby was CAO, tending a full spectrum program with all the exchanges. Other officers came to Lagos under the Entry Level program -- Nicole Theriot, Kristin Kane, and Stephanie Wickes. Our Information Resources Officer was the energetic Steve Perry. There was a strong and experienced staff of FSNs.

In Lagos, I spent a lot of time on the radio. Any talk show host would take a guest from the Embassy. After answering one question on foreign policy posed by the program's host, the rest of the program was given over to call-ins, who had only one topic, that is, questions about visas, or rather why didn't the Embassy give more visas (in general) or give one to me (in particular). Embassy people generally avoided radio interviews for just this reason. If you don't go on the air and talk about these things openly, however, the problem only gets worse, so I was on the radio frequently.

Of course, even in Lagos I was the Country Public Affairs Officer, responsible for Public Diplomacy from Abuja, too. I made an early trip to see the new Embassy. The PAO in Abuja was Tim Smith, ably assisted by APAO Jeff Daigle. It happened that there were durbars planned in Katsina and Kano soon after my arrival in Lagos. With my wife and two of our sons, we traveled from Lagos to Kano, took in the two durbars, and then visited the post at Abuja.

The durbars were "right out of Hollywood," you might say, vassal horsemen parading before their lord, so to speak. The fire of muzzle-loaders added to the spectacle. It provided a look at how the government interacts with "traditional leaders" like the emirs and sultans. I got to meet the Governor of Katsina, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, in a call right after the durbar. He later became President of Nigeria.

Q: There was a change in administration while you were in Nigeria.

BISHOP: Yes, I arrived in Lagos as the 2000 election campaign in the U.S. was coming to a close -- Vice President Gore vs. Governor Bush. As usual, we organized a big election happening at the American Center on Bank Street, a party to gather senior movers and shakers and opinion leaders. We set up "ballot boxes" for our guests to express their own preference. I seem to recall that our Nigerian guests cast 165 votes for Gore and 17 for Bush.

I didn't particularly need to rehearse what I would say after the networks announced the winner. I had said the tried-and-true lines, "we have just witnessed a great victory (pause) for democracy," many times before. We were six hours ahead of Eastern time, though, so we knew that it was likely to be well after midnight when we would know who the next President would be. Everyone partied with an eye on the TV monitors. As the TV anchors announced that a state's electoral votes would be for the Vice President, there were loud cheers. There weren't cheers for states that were declared for Governor Bush.

You remember the confusion as the networks called certain states for Gore, and then retracted their calls as more votes came in. For a few moments, it looked like the Vice President had won. I don't mind admitting here that I was personally crushed, devastated by the Gore victory, which would so damage the cause of life, and in those early morning hours I was quite tired. I left the party for about a half hour, depressed, catching about 20 minutes of sleep in my office so that I could return to the party and engage in the best nonpartisan way, the Foreign Service way. When I returned, I found that the networks had retracted their calls. The outcome was unknown because of the need to count or recount close votes in a number of states. About 4 a.m. I gathered the confused parties and told them to go home, for it looked like it would take some time to sort out all the ballot issues and recounts.

You remember the national suspense. I saw it play out in Nigeria. It was a little more than a month of uncertainty. Many trees were felled to print all the columns and essays and rants by voluble and excitable Nigerian opinion writers. Nigerians were used to contest and division in American politics, but they never had doubted the integrity of vote counting and election processes. America's standing as an exemplar of democracy was a little tarnished. In the last two months of 2000, we spent some time responding.

Q: How did you respond to it?

BISHOP: Following the USIA practice, the new Bureau of International Information Programs had updated its publication on the Presidential elections, which we had received a few months ahead of Election Day. When it arrived, I paged through it and noticed a new section on what happens if there are unclear results. Hadn't there been an election that had to be decided by the House of Representatives back in 1820-something? It was 1824. I'd read that new chapter more to review my American history than anything else.

I think I was the only person at the post who'd read it. The day after Election Day, I was fresh and ready for the explanations -- how elections are in state, not federal, hands, so the question of Florida election results would have to be determined in Florida, with the Florida Supreme Court eventually involved. And yes, some districts use electronic voting, some still use the old mechanical voting machines, some use paper ballots, some votes are counted by optical scanners, some using computer cards, some by hand. Again, just explaining things was the major part of our response.

The Embassy had no stake in the election, not favoring either candidate, so we were under no pressure to "spin" anything. The spin happened in Washington and Florida, and contentious interpretations were communicated by the wires and CNN to Nigerians, who processed and filtered them in the light of their own experience, with some interpretations going off the rails, so to speak. But in Lagos and Abuja, we met this by explaining things as they unfolded.

It is true, I think, that all over the world people had no doubts whatsoever about the integrity of American elections before the 2000 election. People overseas had the

Norman Rockwell view of Americans lined up to vote in small neighborly precincts. And we can be candid and admit that even though we Americans knew of Chicago elections or machine elections, we thought of them as aberrations from a high standard of election day integrity.

Q: I was born in Chicago and I left there at the age of three, but I always feel that I've been voting now for 83 years along with my grandfather who died the year I was born.

BISHOP: *(laughs)* Ah, the American tapestry.

Americans knew about the imperfections in our elections, but they had never really been known much outside of the United States. The uncertain results, the long wrangle, and the hanging chads did diminish our standing.

Evelyn Lieberman, the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs as the Clinton administration was coming to a close, had apparently anticipated that Vice President Gore would become President. She thought that a big conclave of world cultural leaders should gather in Washington and meet President Clinton for some high minded talky talk that would help set the stage for the new Gore administration to undertake some initiatives relating to culture. It was on the President's calendar for January, 2001.

My job for the conference was to deliver Wole Soyinka, Nigeria's Nobel Prize winning playwright for his five minutes on a panel with the President. We had to arrange for his first class travel to get him to Washington, with promises that he'd be treated very well. I went to his house a few times to make arrangements. I think he understood well enough that he was to be a sort of prop at this gathering, since five minutes of commentary do not change the world.

Parenthetically, the vaunted conference made no impact whatsoever. The whole thing was a waste of time and money.

ABUJA, NIGERIA, 2001-2002
Country Public Affairs Officer

Q: You only spent a short time in Lagos before you moved to Abuja, is that right?

BISHOP: President Clinton's order to move the Embassy from Lagos to Abuja, signed just before I arrived, had taken the two posts by surprise. No one in the Management Section in Lagos had really done much planning for the move. The Nigerian government had announced in the 1970s that the national capital would be Abuja, and it officially became the capital in 1991, but for the foreign missions a relocation had always been comfortably "over the horizon."

We were not the only foreign mission that had not moved to Abuja. My take was that when each new foreign Ambassador arrived in Lagos, he or she contrasted the built-up

establishments they had in Lagos, with its vibrant commercial and political culture and the voluble Yorubas, with the we-have-to-build-everything-from-scratch-all-over-again situation in Abuja, which had been just a farm village when the Nigerian government announced it would become the new capital.

New Ambassadors came and went. Management counselors said, "Oh my God, move up to that empty place?" Abuja was like Brasilia, not very attractive, or like Washington in the early days. Who would go to Washington when Pierre L'Enfant was still laying out his improbably wide roads in the middle of nowhere? So moves to Abuja -- I'm not just speaking of the U.S. Embassy, but others too -- were put off and put off and put off. Each new ambassador decided that the necessary detailed planning for a move could be initiated by his or her successor.

At the time of the announcement, there were less than half a dozen Americans in Abuja, while the post at Lagos had, if I recall correctly, about 40 Americans, more than 200 FSNs, and another 200 local guards. In total numbers of employees, Lagos was a large post.

Chief of the small Embassy Office in Abuja was Tim Andrews, a Class One officer, who was DCM apparent. But down in Lagos was the Consul General, Nancy Serpa, an OC. In the interim she was dual hatted as Consul General in Lagos and Charge d'Affaires. The arrangement was a little awkward, especially for Tim.

In any case, President Clinton decreed the move. It happened that there was no Ambassador at post at that time. 2000 was an election year, so the President was distracted, and after the election of Governor Bush, during the transition, the Department was focused on getting ready for a new administration. There was the normal anxiety that if President Clinton named someone to be Ambassador to Nigeria, the new administration would choose someone else for the job.

Howard Jeter, who was Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, was lined up during the Clinton administration to be Ambassador. He had assented to my own assignment as PAO, and I had met Ambassador Jeter -- he had been Ambassador to Lesotho before -- when I was in Washington preparing to go out. This was assuming his appointment would, in the end, all work out. His destination -- Lagos or Abuja -- was still uncertain.

Because of the election and the transition, however, Ambassador Jeter's nomination and then his confirmation were delayed and delayed. Finally, the Bush transition team agreed that he could go to Nigeria as Ambassador, and he was confirmed by the Senate just a few days before the end of President Clinton's term, so January of 2001.

He proceeded to Nigeria quickly. I was already in Lagos. He sent word to Nancy Serpa that he had decided to go directly to Abuja. He would help move the Embassy to Abuja by going to Abuja, even though the small post was hardly ready for an Ambassador, not

to mention that the Political Counselor, Economic Counselor, Management Counselor, the Chief of the Consular Section, the Defense Attaché, and the PAO were all in Lagos.

Ambassador Jeter did arrive in Abuja at the end of January of 2001. Again, it was absolutely the correct decision to make. If he had gone to Lagos, the same forces of inertia and the same pull of Lagos that gripped every other Ambassador might have gripped him as well.

I had told Ambassador Jeter in Washington that I was going to Lagos because that's where my orders were for, but that if he went to Abuja, I would promise to be there within a month of his arrival. As I had promised, my wife and I transferred to Abuja, getting there in February, 2001. We lived in the "Newport" compound off Lake Chad Crescent. Gemma began working at the Embassy's infant consular section, not issuing visas, but rather doing ACS work.

When I arrived in Abuja, the plant and premises of the newly designated Embassy consisted of three adjacent residential houses. The post grew and grew during my tour -- some positions coming up from Lagos, others being added by Washington. When I left Abuja at the end of my tour, there were 37 Americans and 100 FSNs -- I counted -- working inside the three houses and what had been the "boys' quarters," the servants' rooms, behind the three buildings. It was crazy crowded, people jammed together in every corner.

There was no end of work, and the crowded spaces at the Embassy took their toll. So did having to worry about personal security. The growing Embassy had so little bandwidth that it could take 20 seconds for the internet to respond to every single click of your mouse. Our Physician's Assistant at the Embassy was a former Army medic. He told me that the ambient level of tension and stress at the Embassy was as high at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, the home of the 101st Airborne Division. There deployments and alerts kept the post and its units always on edge. With us it was overwork, crowding, and stomach acid from waiting too long for your workstation to respond.

Ambassador Jeter's decision to go to Abuja, no matter how little was ready, was a good one. He forced the management people in Lagos to get moving. Indeed, the supervisory GSO, in Lagos, who was finishing five years in Nigeria, had never visited Abuja! Ambassador Jeter did not approve his request for a sixth year.

Here's one of the first questions that came up: where will Ambassador Jeter live in Abuja? There was no house in Abuja that met all the needs -- security needs, representational needs, and so on. He ended up taking a suite in the Hilton hotel. When I was there for dinners, I found it depressing, a downer. And each morning when the Ambassador passed through the lobby to get in his car, he'd be ambushed by powerful friends of disappointed visa seekers. And a trailing question: what will happen to the gorgeous Residence in Lagos, on the lagoon? He decided to keep it as the Ambassador's Lagos residence for the time being.

My wife and I both agree we liked Abuja better than Lagos. For instance, in Lagos, you didn't dare drive yourself because of the dense traffic and the road hazards. You had to hire a driver. Abuja, on the other hand, had big wide planned streets like Washington. The city was still new and not very crowded, so you could drive around yourself. The circumstances of off-duty life in Abuja were more agreeable than in Lagos.

On the outskirts of the city were a number of "life camps," compounds built by foreign engineering companies that were working on large building projects. They had housing and dining halls and swimming pools. Every Sunday we drove to the life camp for the Irish firm Public Works, "PW," for mass, followed by a nice lunch and sometimes some Guinness.

Q: You arrived in Nigeria a little after the consolidation of USIA into the State Department. So you were no longer "USIS," but the Public Affairs Section of the Embassy. Tell me about what you were doing.

BISHOP: The Public Affairs Section at this new Embassy was trim. Tim Smith had been PAO Abuja when it was an Embassy office. He became the new CAO. Tim had several years of experience in Africa. Indeed, he had been BPAO in Kaduna when there had been a post there. The two Tims -- DCM Tim Andrews and IO Tim Smith -- were real experts on Nigeria. I relied a lot on their country knowledge. Jeff Daigle became the Information Officer when I arrived. In the summer turnover of 2001, Dehab Ghebreab came in as the new CAO, and my China colleague and friend Bill Palmer came in as IO. Two aces.

As Country Public Affairs Officer, now in Abuja, I still had supervisory responsibility for the consulate in Lagos. Once I moved north, the Public Affairs Section in Lagos was by default in the hands of some junior officers. Indeed, many were first tour officers. Making trips to Lagos, to make sure their programs there were doing well, took up some of my time.

Q: Was it Charlotte Beers that was Under Secretary at this time?

BISHOP: Yes, she was named by Secretary Powell, and she was "on seat" a few months after President Bush's inauguration. She came to State from a career in advertising.

I'm not sure of the date, but one of her good initiatives was to convene the first-ever worldwide conference of Public Affairs Officers. There had long been regional conferences, but this was, surprisingly, the first time there had been one gathering, in Washington.

I remember that she arranged for a famous private sector trainer to give us a talk on public speaking. Many PAOs rolled their eyes at this, but I found it was a good use of an hour. The trainer emphasized the positive use of emotion in speaking, and from then on I always included it.

This was a time when the rage in corporate public affairs was “branding,” and the British government had been persuaded to embrace the concept, launching a “Cool Britannia” campaign. I remember seeing a poster at the British Council that explained it. It showed jack tars from the Napoleonic wars, RAF fighter pilots, beefeaters and Grenadier guards - all of these were the “old” images that needed to be discarded. Instead, the preferred images of United Kingdom under the rubric of “Cool Britannia” should be rock stars and white-coated software engineers.

My own makeup favoring RAF pilots rather than rock stars, I was a little skeptical, but I thought this new way of “branding” a country was fascinating, and we should always be willing to challenge old habits of thinking. I spent a few days mulling over how we might brand the United States. “Cool” had already been taken by the Brits, alas. I thought that a brand for America must look both to the past (or it would be inauthentic) and the future. I thought two concepts would make for good branding.

One was “The Pioneers.” I thought this would bridge our history -- Conestoga wagons -- and our current and future system of enterprise, because Americans pioneer in medicine, and computers, and educational innovations, space exploration, “go boldly where none have gone before,” and so on.

The other possible brand was “Land of the Free, Home of the Brave.” What a great brand! Past! Present! Future! Economic freedom. Political freedom. Freedom to choose. The brave who fought the Nazis and the Japanese. The brave who faced the dogs and fire hoses at Selma. The brave who launch into space.

Then I thought of the reaction if such a brand were announced. “Land of the Free? Who are you kidding? What about slavery? What about the oppression of housewives in the 1950s? What about the Pinkerton men bashing the unions?” And so on. “Home of the Brave”? What about American militarism and colonialism? Oh, the “settlers” could be so brave against the Indians when they had repeating rifles. Or, brave like “Dirty Harry” or “Rambo.”

My conclusion: America can never be branded in a corporate way because Americans will never agree on how to describe their own country.

Q: What about Nigeria’s universities? Others have told me about the sad example of the universities, how they had been milked dry.

BISHOP: Yes, a very good topic, especially for a Public Affairs Officer because we have a natural welcome at universities, and we deal with them on the Fulbright program and other exchanges.

Sani Abacha had gorged on their flesh. The dormitories were wrecked, the classrooms were in a shambles, the libraries had no new books or journals, classes were intermittent. When I was there, the universities were just emerging from dysfunction.

There was something more, though. I got the same feeling in Nigeria that I had had in Bangladesh. Nigerian universities were public universities. The Nigerians inherited the British template -- “university” meant government university. Faculty were unionized public employees who lived in government housing. Tuition fees were low, so the universities were dependent on government appropriations. Even though the Nigerian government spent more on its universities than it did for primary and secondary education, and even though the university vice-chancellors had dozens of top priorities, critical needs, the faculty always clamored for more pay and benefits first.

The problems were so large and they were so tightly intertwined with some of Nigeria's social dysfunctions like corruption, all internal factors, that I was skeptical that even USAID with its millions and the other donors with more millions more could fix things. Moreover, if the donors intended to improve Nigerian education with their huge funds and huge, benchmarked multi-year plans, choosing a few Fulbright scholars a year wasn't going to make a huge impact. Public diplomacy is too light for the task, “light” as in light infantry, or light armor, or British paratroopers trying to defend the Arnhem bridge.

I noticed, though, that a recent change to Nigeria's universities law had allowed the establishment of private universities for the first time. This was the same significant reform I had seen in Bangladesh, and four new universities had been chartered. They were all established by religious congregations, so they were unlikely to be smiled upon by USAID and the other donors. There was a little Seventh-day Adventist school on the road from Lagos to Ibadan, Babcock University; a new Baptist school, Bowen University; a Catholic school, Madonna University; and a Muslim university. The Muslim school had not really been launched. You could pass by a vast field with a sign, “Future site of,” but no building had commenced.

Asking the FSNs in Lagos about Babcock University, I found that some of them had sent their own children there to study. This was because Babcock, small as it was, was working. Classes met. There were available dorm rooms, with dorm mothers to keep an eye on things. Students went to class for full terms without interruption by strikes. The school was in the countryside, so there weren't the distractions of studying in Lagos or Ibadan. This was why the FSNs were sending their own children there, rather than to the formerly famous public universities that the FSNs had themselves attended before Abacha had so thoroughly trashed them. They sent them there even though it cost more. Babcock University was organized with an American curriculum, four years to earn a B.A. or a B.S. degree. So I visited.

I went with one FSN, Sola Ogungbe, who happened to also be an ordained Methodist minister. When we arrived in our Suburban at the parking lot next to the administration building, I was greeted quite warmly by Vice Chancellor Adekunle Alalade, who gave me a big abrazo and held my hand as we walked to his office. I expected a short call with the Vice Chancellor and a campus tour, but as we entered his office I found he had assembled the faculty senate. There was a circle of chairs for the profs, and a sofa for the Vice Chancellor and me. I noticed on the other side of the room they were preparing food

for a reception. Since they were Adventists, I knew it would be cinnamon buns, not Swedish meatballs and Vienna sausage.

So, I realized my visit was a bigger event than I had anticipated. The Vice Chancellor and I were on the sofa chatting while the others were sitting down, and I noticed that in the corner there was a fellow with a karaoke machine -- serving as the sound system for the meeting. A junior member of the faculty took the microphone, speaking quite formally, and breathlessly. "Today it is our great honor to welcome Donald Bishop, the Counselor for Public Affairs from the American Embassy in Abuja!" I'm omitting the many flowery and flattering adverbs and adjectives. "Vice Chancellor Alalade will now give the address of welcome."

Oh, the address of welcome! An address of welcome meant that I must also have an "address" in return.

Vice Chancellor Alalade pulled prepared remarks out of his pocket and began to read them. "Our poor and humble university is being visited by the great distinguished representative of the United States, Mr. Bishop," was only the first of many generous remarks, for me and for the United States of America, from which David Caldwell Babcock had come to plant their church in West Africa and died too soon, I learned. I could tell his remarks were headed to a final crescendo. "And we know Mr. Bishop's visit is just the harbinger of American support!"

"Support"! That's the word they use at college alumni gatherings, when they hope for your check, your contribution to the Alumni Fund. Except I sensed that this little university was expecting a bigger check than I usually give to my alma mater. My antennae are quivering. A few more words, and then Vice Chancellor Alalade looked at me, sitting on the sofa, and concluded, "In short, Mr. Bishop, you are the answer to our prayers."

Q: Oh boy.

BISHOP: "Oh boy," is right. To recall a sixties phrase, this was h-e-a-v-y! And of course I didn't have anything I could promise to deliver. But the occasion called for generous words in return. I spoke of Nigeria and its riches, not the riches from the oil fields, but riches seen in the hard work of an enterprising people. A nation betrayed by its leaders. The land that must heal before its potential can be realized. Healing just doesn't come from economic recovery. It's the soul of the nation that must heal. And this will be Babcock University's gift to your nation. You offer more than more than education, but faith and moral guidance too.

The non-verbal reaction to these words told me I had touched them deeply. Had I been running for Parliament, I would have had their votes! Well, I'll always remember my welcome at Babcock University.

Indeed, I gave the university some “support,” though it wasn't a check. I made sure that U.S. speakers stopped there for programs. I urged the new Vice Chancellors of other new universities to visit Babcock -- the Baptists and Catholics needed some nudging but thanked me, because Vice Chancellor Alalade in a fine ecumenical spirit gave them plenty of good advice. I made sure they had all the English teaching publications, that they were visited by our Information Resources Officer, and by the Regional English Teaching Officer during visits to Nigeria. I made the American Studies Association invite faculty from Babcock and the other private universities to join their meetings. (The faculty at the main line public universities were a little stuck up, dismissive of these new schools.)

My visit to Babcock made me realize that we needed to support the private universities that were indeed producing graduates with real learning. Their graduates easily got jobs. When the Babcock dean attended a meeting of the American Studies Society for the first time, many of the profs from the main line universities passed him their resumes, even if they were in “plain brown envelopes.”

I'm happy to say that Vice Chancellor Alalade is one of the great men I met in a career. He wasn't “great” because he was elected to high office, or won a big prize or national honors, or was acclaimed in his own country. He was “great” because he devoted his life, and his talents, to something that touched first hundreds and then thousands of young people, giving them the education they needed for life. It was stressful, and he sustained his commitment during some of Nigeria's bad times. When he stood down as university president because he reached the age limit, he asked his church to reassign him, and he became a simple hospital chaplain at an Adventist hospital in Florida.

Many exchange programs with Nigeria had been cut off during the bad years of Abacha. The Eisenhower Fellowship was one. I contacted the Eisenhower Fellowship foundation, and we restored Eisenhowers in Nigeria. This led me to meet one of Nigeria's noted personalities, Joe Garba, who had once been Chairman of the U.N. General Assembly. He chaired the first selection committee.

Q: When you were in Lagos, you lived in one of Nigeria's regions, a largely Christian one, I believe. Abuja was at the edge of Nigeria's Muslim-majority north. How did that affect what you were doing in Public Diplomacy?

BISHOP: Yes, a side effect of moving the Embassy to Abuja was that Embassy officers now spent most of their time in the Middle Belt and the north. We got to know more of the Muslim parts of Nigeria when we were based out of Abuja than had been the case when the Embassy was in Lagos. When I visited universities in the north, for instance, I understood I was very much in the Muslim part of the world.

Since I had done “dialog with Islam” in Bangladesh, I thought to try something similar in northern Nigeria. I remember going up to Bayero University in Kano. The Vice Chancellor arranged a round table with the faculty council. I mentioned that in President Bush's inaugural address, when he was speaking about faith based initiatives, he

mentioned church, synagogue, temple, and mosque. The word “mosque” appeared for the first time in an inaugural address. The professors were visibly excited. The single use of the word “mosque” made a very positive impression. The scholars' last word to me was a plea -- send more people to us who are willing to talk. We *want* to talk about religion and society and life and policy. Just like in Bangladesh I found that what Muslims wanted, whatever part of the spectrum they were on religiously or politically, was an opportunity to talk.

There's a lot to think about there. First, the vaunted public affairs and Public Diplomacy machinery intended to communicate America to the world hadn't much reached the Muslim scholars of northern Nigeria. One of the largest Muslim universities in the world hadn't been much reached by my predecessors, partly because they were so far away in Lagos. The message needed a diplomat for the “last three feet.” Second, to have credibility with the Muslim scholars, an American interlocutor needed to have a basic sympathy for what faith contributes to life. Just saying, “in America we have separation of church and state” got you nowhere. All in all, I thought that there was plenty of potential for dialogue with Islam there.

When I compare my Public Diplomacy on what we might simply call the “Islam factor” in Bangladesh and Nigeria, there was a difference. In Bangladesh, it was the Embassy organizing some “dialog” so that Muslims would better understand the United States. In Nigeria, there were two dimensions. One was the same -- creating trust between America and Nigeria's Muslims. The second dimension was to help Nigerians of different faiths deal with one another. This was because the specter of confessional conflict always loomed in Nigeria, especially in the Middle Belt.

On this second dimension, we didn't have to do all the work. There were also good-willed Nigerians trying to build trust and ameliorate conflict, against long odds. We didn't need to invent a dialog movement out of whole cloth. We could support some local organizations, sometimes with some funding for a conference, sometimes with a program, sometimes with a few computers, sometimes with helpful publicity and recognition.

The Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding in New York had give its 2000 prize to Imam Muhammad Ashafa and Pastor James Wuye, co-founders of the Muslim-Christian Dialogue Forum and the Interfaith Mediation Center in Kaduna. As I recall, PAS provided their airfares to the U.S. under the Voluntary Visitor program to receive the prize, and in our small way we supported their work afterwards. We gave them old computers for a youth center, for instance.

Some of the foreign Christian missionaries were focused on peace education too. I quite admired the work of Rev. Danny McCain in Jos in this area.

This is what I usually said to somebody who was a serious Muslim that I met. I'd say,

“Think about the 20th century. It was a century of blood. The blood of the First World War, the blood of the Second World War. You may think of these as European or Asian conflicts, but Nigerian troops also spilled blood in both those large wars. And think of all the blood that flowed in Korea and Vietnam and Africa and other places as part of the Cold War.

“Look at the great totalitarianisms that spilled so much of that blood. What distinguishes them -- what joined the ideologies of the National Socialists in Germany and the Communists in the Soviet Union -- was that their beliefs were Godless. All the totalitarian regimes set in motion persecutions of different believers -- Christians, Jews, Muslims. Much of the blood spilled in a century of blood was caused by a militant lack of faith, a hostility to belief in God.

“The 20th century was the century of ideology, but in the end the atheistic ideologies failed. Now that the Cold War has ended, people are turning back to faith. The 20th century was the century of blood, but my prediction is that the 21st century will be a century of faith.

“As we begin this century of faith, however, there are two roads we can go down. Follow one road, and the faiths will be in conflict -- conflict between Islam and the West, or between Hindus and Muslims, and so on. That's not the road we want to go down.

“Rather, we want to go down the path where all the different faiths cooperate on the human needs in the world.”

I found that appeal was very effective. It sharpened their sense of how antagonism to faith had caused so much suffering, and it helped them think through that different faiths should think about what they have in common, not their differences.

I was saying this in late 2000, early 2001. It became particularly necessary after 9/11.

Who will dispute that the two paths lie before us, though as we chat in 2011 the odds of a conflict between faiths now seem higher than the prospect of concord I hoped for as the century turned.

Anyway, I guess I got to be known as the officer at the Embassy who was more sympathetic to faith groups. So I often had Protestants or Catholics and Muslims in my office for this and that program. I remember once a Christian group came to see me, and they were feeling quite good as the meeting ended, and they asked, “Do you mind if we all pray?”

A request to pray in a government office! We bowed our heads, and they spoke their words. After they left, some of my American colleagues were a little aghast. Praying at the Embassy! How did it happen! I won't tell anybody! But is that allowed?

Actually, President Clinton's guidelines for expression of faith in the federal workplace were permissive. I hadn't initiated the prayer. If someone walks down the hallway of the Capitol and wants to pray out loud in the hallway, theirs is a protected expression. The reaction -- is praying allowed? -- comes from a shallow understanding of "separation of church and state." I'm of the opinion, as you've heard me say before, that this tone deafness to the issue of faith in the world is unhelpful. Providing room for its expression helps build the kind of rapport between peoples that we all need.

Q: I recall interviewing Tony Quainton about his time as ambassador to El Salvador. It was a difficult time there. But anyway, some Maryknoll sisters came in.

BISHOP: Ah, Maryknoll sisters.

Q: And they said, "Can we pray?" And what he said "Yes." So they're all holding hands. Next thing he knows, they're praying against the President of the United States. And his wicked deeds and all that.

BISHOP: Ah!

Q: (laughs)

BISHOP: Well, I'm glad to know that Ambassador Quainton and I were on the same page about prayer in an Embassy. I hasten to say, I didn't hear that particular petition to the Almighty.

Q: Had Saudi influence gone there --

BISHOP: Yes. I never met any Saudi "missionaries," but the Saudi influence was clear. Most of the imams of northern Nigeria had been given scholarships to study in Saudi Arabia. If you're a young Muslim leader from a dusty town in Nigeria, you'll grab any scholarship or opportunity to see more of the world. So they went to Saudi Arabia, and they returned with a much more Wahhabist view of Islam. That influence was having bad effects in Nigeria as in other parts of the Muslim world.

Q: Was Nigeria sending out troops as peacekeepers in other parts of Africa?

BISHOP: Yes, there was a great emphasis on getting Nigeria to contribute to peace enforcement in different African crisis areas. "Peace enforcement" is more demanding than "peacekeeping." Nigeria provided battalions for two of the three phases of Operation FOCUS RELIEF in Sierra Leone. The Special Operations Command (SOCOM) sent trainers to the battalions, most in quite distant places like Birnin Kebbi and Yola.

The public affairs problem with the training was that the presence of any Americans in uniform, or the arrival of a C-130 or another aircraft, set in motion all the talkers about America trying to establish bases in Nigeria. The wordy, fevered, and ignorant chattering

and column-writing classes portrayed this as part of an American design to assert control over their country.

We had a preview of this when a local official alarmingly flagged some trucks carrying ammunition for the training from the port in Lagos to Yola, a long road trip. He suspected the U.S. was supplying ammunition to anti-government forces. We got the facts into the media, but it showed how the media could run amok.

Q: I take it that what you can call the chattering class was very powerful in this.

BISHOP: Nigeria had plenty of chatterers, yes, like the Bangladeshis. They're very talkative. And sometimes their ideas were on the edge, or perhaps on the fringe.

I could see it particularly in Nigeria, but it's a generalized phenomenon. Around the world, many articulate people who write columns and appear on talk shows -- many of their ideas have come to them from Europe and from the United States. When the ideas arrive in distant and quite different societies, the pundits lack perspective, lack first-hand knowledge, to be able to put all these ideas in context. So you get some weird takes on things.

In Nigeria, there were lots of newspapers, lots of radio stations. Every day I had acres and acres of columns and editorials to look over. If you read regularly, you begin to see characteristic lines of thought, who is Yoruba or Igbo or Hausa, to know which columnist has a permanent beef against the U.S., who's tied in knots by Jews and Crusaders, who hates the oil companies, which literary personality has a particular ax to grind.

My response to combat all the conspiracy thinking was to be very open about everything we did. This seems quite elementary, but it ran up against military cautions, a little from our side but way more from the Nigerian armed forces, who didn't like the press and were not in the habit of meeting with them. The Embassy's standing carried the day, so we held press conferences, issued longer not shorter press releases, and invited journalists to go see the training. This is not very profound or pathbreaking. Rather it shows that doing things by the numbers works. We really did defuse the notions that the U.S. had some ulterior motive in providing the training.

Ivan Watson of PBS was a stringer in Africa at the time. He came to Nigeria to do a story on the peace enforcement training. We went together to the graduation and sendoff ceremony for a Nigerian battalion that was going to Sierra Leone. The battalion was assembled on a parade ground in a large square formation. Along one side of the square were the American special forces soldiers who had trained the battalion, and it was obvious there was wonderful rapport, indeed affection, between the American trainers and the Nigerian soldiers. Ivan was buzzing all over the parade ground, recording the speeches and getting natural sound for his story. He simply held his microphone next to the speakers set up by the Nigerian unit. And in a rhetorical flourish, the Nigerian major general roused the troops by saying, "And show the effectiveness of your training by a high body count of the enemy!"

I groaned inside -- “high body count”! I knew that body counts were not in the American training. Thanks to Ivan, that was a sentence heard by millions on public radio. Thankfully it didn't gain traction.

You win some, you lose some in public affairs.

Working with the Nigerian Army on the public affairs side of Operation FOCUS RELIEF, I saw that the real job of the “public affairs officers” of the Nigerian armed forces was to keep the media away rather than engage. I asked DOD to find us two experts to provide a one-week training course on media relations for the Nigerian armed forces PAOs. Cliff Bernath and Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Smith organized the program, opened by the Minister of Defense. As a Defense Information School alumnus I taught a few sessions. I can't speak to the long term effect of the training, but the Nigerians were thrilled to have it. During the Abacha years, DOD had stopped its long practice of sending a Nigerian officer to DINFOS.

On January 27, 2002, I was returning to Nigeria after a trip. I'd landed at the airport in the late afternoon. I was traveling in a Consulate Suburban to lay over at the American Club for the night. It was getting dark in the city. Suddenly there were low claps of thunder, and the car rocked. It was the Nigerian Army's ordnance dump at Ikeja exploding.

Q: I remember reading about that.

BISHOP: When this ammunition facility had been placed in Ikeja, by the British, presumably, it was way outside town. It had not been moved even though the city had grown and surrounded it. I recall that our Defense Attaché had visited the facility and seen that it had British, American, Soviet, Polish, Czech, and Libyan ordnance -- it was a museum of Nigerian weapons deals, which probably meant weapons bribes too. It was a disaster waiting to go off, and it did.

There was the blast and fire, and shrapnel, exploded and unexploded, fell over a large part of Lagos. And there was a great panic. A number of people jumped into a nearby canal, and many drowned. It was a first class calamity.

President Obasanjo asked Ambassador Jeter to the Presidential palace the next morning, and he said, “Howard, we need help.” Ambassador Jeter passed the urgent Presidential request to the Department and to EUCOM. It took a few weeks, but EUCOM put together a team of 80 soldiers, mostly specialists in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), to come to Lagos and supervise the cleanup in the city. Operation AVID RECOVERY was another military deployment to Nigeria, but this time the humanitarian case was evident, and the local media didn't harsh on us as usual.

EUCOM deployed some psyops and civil affairs soldiers along with the EOD specialists. They aimed to reach local people with messages about avoiding more casualties, as in ... if a bomb with fins is nose down in your front yard, don't touch it.

Of course Ambassador Jeter had to approve everything done by the Psyops soldiers, every flyer, every announcement. He was in Abuja, of course. Neither he nor I had full confidence that these soldiers had quite had the right sense of Nigeria to be able to do that all right. They came in with the standard Fort Bragg toolkit. They could do posters, broadcasts, cassettes, anything. What they didn't know how to do, however, was make their communications fit in local society. Had the Ambassador been on hand in Lagos, or if I had been, we'd have been able to guide the Psyops soldiers. On the other hand, they never came up to Abuja to explain to the Ambassador what they intended. In any case, I'm afraid the psyops and civil affairs soldiers weren't used to their full.

Our first-tour Information Officer in Lagos, Stephanie Wickes, was thinking about the problem of persuading people not to touch any unexploded ordinance, and to make sure children did not, and she remembered seeing Princess Diana, suited up with British EOD soldiers. Was it in the Balkans? I can't recall. But Princess Diana had taken some interest in humanitarian demining. Stephanie had the inspiration to ask the reigning Most Beautiful Girl in Nigeria to become the celebrity spokeswoman for the clearing of unexploded ordnance in Lagos.

Stephanie called me. This was way outside the box, definitely not in the USIA playbook. It was, though, inspired, and I told her that if she could get the Most Beautiful Girl in Nigeria, Chinenye Ochuba, to do it, give it a shot, go ahead. Stephanie made the pitch the same day, and the beauty queen signed right on. The newspapers and television gave her great coverage! The messages really got out. It was a great idea from a junior officer. The localization of an issue, using some local star power, made a difference in our public affairs effort. I always give Stephanie credit for that.

Q: There was a large USAID mission in Nigeria. What did you do to help USAID and its programs?

BISHOP: Publicizing USAID was always a challenge. We were spending a lot of money in Nigeria. The Ambassador told me, however, that on many occasions when he met a Nigerian state governor, he would be asked, "Well, Howard, what have you done for us?" Ambassador Jeter would tell the governor about education projects, family planning projects, health projects, civil society projects, and so on.

Of course, Uncle Sam's money for these projects had been put in the hands of implementing partners to organize, and the implementing partners usually took all the credit for themselves. None of the governors realized that it was the Ambassador and it was USAID that provided the funds for the implementing partners to reduce malaria, or improve education, or provide micro-loans. We stepped up our Embassy press releases on USAID projects as a first step toward awareness, and USAID hired a development outreach FSN. I found, though, that what USAID really wanted was awareness of their

programs in the United States. They didn't seem very zealous in telling America's story to the Nigerians.

Both from Bangladesh and Nigeria, I am firmly on the side that says Uncle Sam should get credit for -- and own up to -- everything that Uncle Sam funds. It's a fact, though, that this runs up against many USAID people's and many implementing partners' desires. Family planning Americans, in particular, seemed happy enough to let the implementing partners get the credit, and then deal with the opposition to their programs. It seemed to me that for some USAID programs, we were reluctant to show Uncle Sam's role in the social changes we were actively promoting.

One of my great memories of Ambassador Jeter was a program annual review with USAID. One morning I received a call from the Front Office asking if I could join the Ambassador that afternoon when USAID briefed him on the next year's spending plan. As I recall, it was a Friday, and the final cable was due in Washington on Monday.

We sat down at the table and the USAID folks began to go over the paragraphs in the draft cable, one by one. So many million for this health initiative. So many million for that education project. The Ambassador was asking sharp questions, communicating in his tone that he wasn't pleased to be briefed on USAID's priority list the last working day before the cable was due in Washington.

Next on the list was a renewal of the banking reform project, which apparently needed more time. The Ambassador asked, quite casually, oh, how many times have we renewed the banking reform project before? The USAID people looked at each other, and they didn't have an answer. One left the conference room for a quick call to their banking reform expert. Twenty minutes later the word came back that this would be the seventeenth year of the project.

Ambassador Jeter replied drily, "have the Nigerians been sending us a signal? After seventeen years of work the banking sector has not been reformed? Doesn't that mean they don't want the banks to be reformed?" He told the USAID Director he would not approve another extension. The USAID people were stunned, and they worked all weekend to come up with an alternate use of the money. Whew! This was one of Ambassador Jeter's great moments.

There's another development initiative to mention, though it didn't belong to USAID. The Clinton Administration had found some money for what they called the Education for Development and Democracy Initiative (EDDI) in Africa. Their office was in the USAID building in the Reagan Center, but EDDI didn't belong to USAID. I never did figure out where EDDI fit on a government chart. What mattered is they had money, and they wanted to spend some of it in Nigeria. They proposed that EDDI funds be used to bridge the digital divide in Nigeria, to help provide more internet access. They proposed to establish six computer centers in six cities, to provide access and training, much of the training focused on women and those who could not afford private internet service.

I confess that I thought the idea was misplaced. I doubted that the internet was THE key to development, reform, and happiness in Nigeria. The digital divide was hardly Nigeria's most fundamental problem. Second, I thought that six centers would only reach people who were nearby. Third, once we built or organized a center, wired it up, provided computers and software and training, the people at the Center would expect us to repair every computer, continue to train, provide new versions of the software, pay staff salaries, and so on. These centers were, in my view, unlikely to become self-sufficient. The EDDI people talked about seed money, but I thought we were undertaking a long obligation without the money or commitment or expertise to support all the rhetoric.

I had another basic conceptual problem with the proposal for these six centers. Suppose we placed the center at a university, which indeed lacked enough computer access. Universities were not internet-free zones because the school didn't know how to wire up and organize the same kind of Center that EDDI was proposing. There was no will to do so. It was a government university, it had been corrupted, the administration was rent-seeking, and university leadership couldn't get anything done. And ... Nigerians from long experience had realized that if they knock on the doors of the donors long enough, then the foreigners give them what they ask for, and do all the work to set it up.

To avoid this, I said, the EDDI people were wrongly focused. They were eager to provide the technological bounty, and they were focused on what hardware, software, and training to provide. I said that the most important piece of the project -- one they were ignoring -- was the Memorandum of Understanding between the Embassy and the Nigerian host institution. I said that for the project to be sustainable, all the expectations and arrangements had to be worked out beforehand and written down in the MOU. The EDDI people didn't seem very interested in the MOU -- it was too hard, and they knew they could pass on all the subsequent quarrels to the Embassy, which would remain after the EDDI team left feeling the warm glow of all the good they had done for Africa.

The university people -- and Nigerian government people of all kinds -- characteristically said "poor, poor, pitiful us, we're so needy, can you give us more internet access?" (Or a library, or an English program.) EDDI proposed to parachute in a satellite dish and all these the workstations and training and so on. But across the street from every university gate, there were internet cafes. The private sector had bought the Internet to the edge of the university. These small tech-savvy entrepreneurs were heroes, hoping to make some honest profit from their work when students crossed the street to the internet cafe.

I proposed that EDDI spend the same money in a different way, a way that would nudge Nigerians to cooperate and work out their own solutions. Give the university the funds straight with the instruction, "go talk to those guys at the edge of the campus and see if for the money, they won't bring the Internet in." Or break up the money into small internet grants for chosen NGOs, who would make deals with the private internet providers. What I was looking for was a project modality that would sustain itself based on Nigerian enterprise, rather than a concept that looked to the foreigners or to their governments.

This was one of the times the ambassador and I had a difference of opinion. We didn't quarrel, but I said this was not a good use of the money. Of course, an ambassador always wins such an argument.

My task in PAS was, then, to make it happen as EDDI and the Ambassador conceived the project. Fortunately, in my Information Officer in Abuja, Tim Smith, I had an internet enthusiast, and there were smiles all over when the EDDI people came to Abuja for the big opening of the first Center.

Q: You were in Nigeria at the beginning of the Bush administration, and President Bush is praised for his commitment to combat HIV/AIDS in Africa. Was this on your plate as a public diplomacy issue?

BISHOP: Yes, we dealt with HIV/AIDS the whole two years of my tour in Nigeria. I dealt with it in Lagos, I dealt with it in Abuja. The visit of Jimmy Carter and his wife, joined by Bill Gates' parents, helped me learn how it was affecting Nigeria.

The former President wanted to visit a red light district in Abuja, Mabushi, and meet commercial sex workers. Our job in PAS was to handle the media.

The day before his arrival, we had a dry run of his visit to the selected location. I had a small team from PAS along with me so that we could scope out group movements and camera angles for the next day.

The dry run of the meeting with President Carter was held in the back room of a bar. The walls were made of rude wooden boards, not perfectly joined so that air circulated. The beer posters showed Nigerian beauties next to tall frosties, but the place had the same feel as the bars in "the villes" I had seen in Korea those years ago. In the evening when the room was crowded, I knew, the place would have a merry feel, made merrier with each drink. The room where our Embassy group met the young women had two doors. On one side a door opened onto the main bar. The other door led to a hallway of small rooms where the women would meet their clients.

The NGO working with the young women found six who spoke good English. The meeting was the dress rehearsal for the meeting with President Carter the next day, and they asked me to sit where the President would sit, and play his role. I listened to each girl tell her story -- how she had begun in the sex trade.

The young women were in their early twenties. They dressed well. Two or three held designer purses on their laps in a way intended to show their style and their earnings. Their good English showed that they had had good educations, at least up to a point. Taking their cue from the NGO, they referred to how they earned their living as "sex work," and they used the term in a way that intended to assert that their work was just as good as anyone else's, as if they had made a conscious career choice among many options.

Listening to their stories, I heard that most had been good students in rural middle or high schools. They had the ordinary hopes for their futures. But in each case, their family endured a blow. One's father had died, and her mother had had to find another man for the family to survive. The only man available was married, and the daughter couldn't live in the home. Another's father had left his wife for another woman, leaving the wife and children on their own. The bright daughter with the good English had had to leave the village to find work in the city. By herself, the work she could find was sex work.

These stories told me that “sex work” had not been a career choice. Rather the girls were forced into it by circumstance, most frequently by the “loss” of a father. The girls talked with me as “President Carter” frankly. How Nigerian men disliked using condoms, and paid more for sex without one, and so on.

As those of us from the Embassy left the bar, a woman colleague told me what was running through her mind. None of the girls would agree to be tested for AIDS, and it was likely that some had already contracted the disease and were facing years of sickness and then early death.

The arrangements for the meeting between President Carter and the sex workers had all been made by USAID and an implementing partner. No one from the Ministry of Health was there for our dry run.

The next day, I was at the site to oversee the media, and we had them properly staged. They had good shots of President and Mrs. Carter leaving their car and walking down the alleyway to the bar where they would meet the group of young women. President Carter was already inside when there was another small commotion. The Minister of Health had, unexpectedly, arrived to join the group. Inside, they found another chair for him to sit in the circle with the President, Mrs. Carter, Bill Gates' mother and father, and the sex workers.

An hour later, the group emerged, and the Minister of Health was in animated discussion with President Carter. “I've never visited this neighborhood,” he said. “I've never had a chance to meet the women.” “Thanks for letting me join you.” And “I promise you, President Carter, that I'll unleash the condoms.”

President Obasanjo organized a National HIV/AIDS Summit around President Carter's visit. Jeffrey Sachs also flew in to attend. I had not met him before. At the final big conclave, the dias included President Obasanjo, President Carter, Sachs, and a few others.

When asked to speak, Sachs – a man with real stage presence -- first outlined the scale of the problem Nigeria faced and the scale of funding that would be required for medical care for the growing number of HIV/AIDS cases. He then proposed that Nigeria could fund the medical care by simply repudiating its debt. “Send postcards to the lenders, and tell them you won't be paying.” I glanced over at Ambassador Jeter and thought his expression said “this is not the message I hoped for.” I thought that Sachs was irresponsibly playing to the crowd. I guess this is how one becomes an international

celebrity. Let me simply say I wouldn't put any of my own money in any bank that Sachs ran.

Our Embassy colleagues in USAID had their own approach to HIV/AIDS. You know the template -- condoms, "safe sex," comprehensive sex education, targeted programs for truck drivers (a high risk group for AIDS and for drug abuse) and for "commercial sex workers." I've already spoken of my discomfort with this approach. Certainly the use of condoms among commercial sex workers, a specific at-risk target group, was a prudential public health intervention, but I was not signed on, so to speak, for the larger approach and the premises that undergirded it. I didn't like how the condom advocacy organizations pivoted their self-interest. Condoms had been for family planning and population control a decade before. Now they were the favored approach to address HIV/AIDS.

This was during the Bush administration, with its willingness to use faith-based organizations to address social needs. When the Administration re-implemented the Mexico City Policy in January of 2001, it signaled that it was not bought into the entire "reproductive health" agenda of IPPF and Marie Stopes. I wanted to let Nigerians know that Americans were thinking through an approach founded on different premises. I asked for a U.S. Speaker on faith-based approaches to HIV/AIDS, and Rev. Eugene Rivers came to Lagos from Boston to speak on education for abstinence and fidelity.

I've seen evaluations of "abstinence and fidelity" compared to "comprehensive sex education," and the usual conclusion has been that the "abstinence and fidelity" approach has not proved to be more effective. That's the headline. But I haven't seen studies that prove that "comprehensive sex education" is more effective. They run about even. A faith based approach can be criticized as not more effective, but it's not less effective. To me, that means that both work -- in some circumstances with some target audiences.

Pastor Rivers' program got quite a lot of acclaim because Nigerians hold family values and religious values that are quite conservative. Uncomfortable with comprehensive sex education, they responded better to a faith based approach. My own take was that if either program can work, why use the approach that goes against the grain of local values?

I gather that my colleagues in USAID couldn't figure out what possessed me, but they couldn't openly oppose a "faith based" initiative. I suppose, too, that they knew that my investment of a few thousand dollars on a speaker and a seminar wouldn't have much effect when USAID was spending millions on their customary programs.

Looking back on my tour, I still regret one thing that I didn't do. While polio was almost contained around the world by 2000 and 2001, northern Nigeria was one of the very last places where polio still was being communicated. Just as the years of international effort had contained malaria and eliminated some other diseases, the coordinated international public health effort was within a year or two of work to completely suppress wild polio. USAID and the other donors were agreeably joined by the world's Rotary Clubs.

In 2001, however, the effort was running up against a rumor that the polio vaccine had been designed to be an anti-Muslim vaccine, that it had been somehow designed in the laboratory to render Muslims sterile. According to the rumor, the donors were only pretending it was a health measure. This certainly recalled the old East German and Soviet disinformation that the AIDS virus was cooked up at Fort Detrick and spread around the world from there.

I talked over how to address this disinformation with USAID a few times. I said I would really like to use all the programs of Public Diplomacy to try to overcome and finish off these rumors. Their reply was on the line of “Don, we want you to stand back because we’re dealing with this from the inside.” They were working the polio program with the Ministry of Health and the medical establishment. They had some of “our” Imams talking to the Minister. We’re talking to the Ministry, and the Ministry’s talking with the Imams, and we have some Imams on our side, they told me. They were going to rely on the inside game, to get all the professionals lined up so that they would address the rumors, take care of opinion. They could manage it, they told me.

In fact, though, the inside game strategy did not work, and polio got loose in northern Nigeria. The incidence began to rise. From the low incidence in 2001, polio has been spreading again. I feel badly that I didn’t push USAID harder on this. The world was so close to eliminating polio.

Q: Were there important visits by members of the administration?

BISHOP: President Clinton had visited Nigeria a few months before I arrived, so I dodged the bullet on one Presidential visit.

We did not receive as many high level visitors in Nigeria as at some other posts, so the few visitors we did get were memorable. One trip I recall was by three members of the Black Caucus of the House of Representatives -- Jim Clyburn, Earl Hilliard, and Bennie Thompson. Ambassador Jeter and I rode with them to appointments in Abuja, and on a trip to Kaduna. We walked in bean fields. They met members of Parliament. Almost the entire Kaduna provincial assembly turned out to meet them. There were no traveling journalists on the trip, so they were “off duty,” so to speak, able to enjoy the visit in a relatively relaxed atmosphere, and I enjoyed listening in on their banter in the vehicle.

President Obasanjo met them for a breakfast in the Presidential palace. The three Congressmen, Ambassador Jeter, and two or three of us from the Embassy were escorted into a formal dining room, and our small party took up just a few seats at the end of a highly polished long table that could probably seat 50. In my career, this may have been my closest equivalent to a Buckingham Palace dinner. In front of each of our chairs were several layers of crockery, Presidential silver, an abundance of glasses, and so on.

When President Obasanjo came in, taking the seat at the end of the table, he was followed by wait staff carrying big silver tureens and ladles. All of us guests were wondering what the Palace kitchens might have prepared for us, and it was Bennie Thompson who was

first to be served. With a flourish, the waiter -- the liveried waiter -- filled the Congressman's elegant china bowl with a big ladleful of ... oatmeal! Or, to be more accurate, the waiter plopped a gleaming sticky mass of oatmeal square into the middle of the bowl, where it quivered like jello. Congressman Thompson was ... surprised! And President Obasanjo enthused about how since his time at the missionary school he loved beginning the day with oatmeal!

Fortunately for the hungry delegation, after the oatmeal course, we were served a British breakfast of eggs, bacon, cooked tomato, and baked beans.

President Obasanjo thought of himself as a farmer in the same way that George Washington did, and he commented that Nigeria didn't really need American money for its agricultural sector, it needed real American farmers! The conversation was going smoothly when President Obasanjo asked what time they would be meeting the Minister of Agriculture. Ambassador Jeter mentioned that the Minister hadn't been able to fit them into his schedule. This surprised the President, and he lifted the telephone sitting rather conspicuously by his place at the dining table. "Give me the Minister of Agriculture." In 30 seconds he was talking to the Minister, who told the President the call had come in the middle of his morning shave. "You'll be seeing the three American members of Congress, of course" he told the Minister. And a little after we left the breakfast, the call came that the Minister could see them at 3 p.m. that afternoon.

It's too bad that more of Nigeria's problems couldn't be solved by a telephone call from the President!

Q: So far you haven't mentioned the shock of 9/11 and how it affected the work of the Embassy. How did you learn about the attacks and the destruction of the World Trade Center towers?

BISHOP: On September 11, 2001, Ambassador Jeter was on leave in the United States. That morning the Charge d'Affaires, Tim Andrews, had taken off in the DATT helicopter to deliver relief supplies to flood victims in northern Nigeria. That left me as Officer-in-Charge at the Embassy for the day.

I went to the airport early in the morning to see Tim off, and I spent some time with an Air Force C-5 crew that had just delivered some equipment for the American soldiers training Nigerian peace enforcers. The day unfolded normally. About one in the afternoon I was meeting a Nigerian professor who was in my office asking for help on a visa. Someone poked his head in the door to let me know that an airplane had hit the World Trade Center in New York.

From my past as an Air Force historian, I recalled that a B-25 had flown into the Empire State Building in 1945. I said to myself, "gosh, it has happened again." I knew this was a tragedy, but no alarm bells rang in my brain.

I finished up my meeting, got the visitor out the door, and within a few minutes the second plane hit. It didn't take long, maybe five seconds, to figure out that this was something much larger than an off-course plane hitting a skyscraper. Soon enough, we learned about the crash of the third plane into the Pentagon, and another crash in Pennsylvania. We also heard a bomb had gone off in the State Department building's underground parking lot. Of course that last report proved to be false, but we didn't know that for a while.

The brain raced. We had seen a fast series of attacks, all in the U.S. That there might be attacks on U.S. facilities overseas, meaning Embassies, didn't seem farfetched at all. If an Embassy was to be attacked, wouldn't the terrorists fix on a relatively soft target? One along one of Huntington's fault lines? Abuja, maybe?

I was the officer-in-charge, usually light duty because you can always reach anyone if something large comes up. On September 11, we couldn't reach the Charge. I realized that I really was "in charge," and "in charge" at a time when real decisions had to be made.

Q: Was CNN in Nigeria? I mean could you get --

BISHOP: We were watching CNN, but it came to the Embassy via the Armed Forces Network. We had the right boxes for satellite reception at the Embassy and in all the housing. I mention in passing that the AFN people did a great service. At the time, there were six AFN channels. They knocked their regular programming off five of the channels, and those channels streamed CNN, ABC, NBC, CBS, and Fox. They ran them all. So we just flipped back and forth between the five channels. We were as informed as anybody who relied on the news could be. We watched the collapse of the towers live.

Q: Go on ...

BISHOP: The first person I talked to was our RSO, Michael Bishop, and within five minutes he contacted the local police to increase their outer ring of guards. We had to button up the Embassy. And I convened the Embassy's Emergency Action Committee. We stood in a circle in the Ambassador's office. I knew that by having people stand, not sit, I would increase their sense of urgency. We went over Embassy security, the precautions we might take, and I curtailed any traveling.

I had organized it as a standup meeting so that reports would be crisp and brief, and the meeting lasted about 20 minutes. One substantive question that came up was whether we should send out a warden message to Americans in Nigeria. My decision was that "We can't possibly not send out a warden message to Americans. We have to let them know what we know and what we're doing."

Our acting Consular chief said, however, that "the Department doesn't like embassies sending out warden notices without having them cleared by CA first."

I had to remind everyone that because of the report of the bomb in the basement, no one was in the building to look at and clear a message. Moreover, even if people were in the building, we could assume that FLASH messages had gummed up the system, and even a NIACT IMMEDIATE would be in a queue for hours. This was a time, I told the group, that “We just have to decide on our own.” I told Consular to draft the message. If the Charge returned soon, the draft would be ready. Otherwise I would send it out on my own authority.

Of course we were trying to reach the Charge. He was out of range of the Embassy radios and Nigeria's not very robust cell phone network. About four in the afternoon a sharp downpour began, and later we learned his helicopter actually had to set down in a field to wait out the storm. He was unaware that the world had been turned upside down. Finally, we reached him by cell phone and explained what had happened. At first he couldn't believe what we were telling him.

After five or so the weather lifted enough so that the helicopter came back. He arrived at the Embassy about six, and he convened the Emergency Action Committee to brief him.

In the meeting, which ran nearly two hours, I thought to mention that I had already told the guards to put the flag at half staff tomorrow. He said, “Oh, we can't do that without a cable from Washington.” I was a little startled by this reply, but I said I would rescind the instruction until we had a proper cable. (Of course I didn't do so. The hesitation was *prima facie* silly.)

After reviewing what we were doing in Abuja, he asked about the Consulate in Lagos. I let him know that I had already talked to Robyn Hinson-Jones, the CG. She had asked me whether the Consulate should be closed the next day. I had told her that “This will never happen again in your career. This is the time when only you can make that decision. Only you know the city. Only you know the police. Only you can make the call. You decide, I'll back you up.”

I let the Charge know this at the EAC. I was again a little startled. “Only the Chief of Mission can decide to close the Consulate.”

No harm of this came. The Charge released the drafted warden message. The flag flew at half staff the next day. And he agreed with Robyn's recommendation that the Consulate be closed. But I drew a conclusion about the Foreign Service during these few hours of crisis. Better communication with Washington, year by year, had, year by year, fostered a mentality out at Embassies that everything has to be approved by Washington. Deciding, taking initiative -- these had been gradually leached out of the Foreign Service posts. On 9/11 I saw the result of the habitual “we better check with Washington” posture. In a real crisis, people were reluctant to make decisions, or they hesitated while they weighed some “what happens if I decide something on my own without Washington's approval” factor.

Q: Well, and also it points out a problem, that in, in emergencies each post is different. So if you ask Washington for a decision, they really don't know.

BISHOP: That's right too.

Q: I mean they are more poorly informed, obviously. A decision made by somebody sitting in Washington might apply to Kuala Lumpur, but not to Lagos.

BISHOP: That's right. It's not even sure that anybody on the desk in bureaus like DS or A would have been to Lagos. Even someone working the desk in AF, or in the AF front office, may have been to Addis but not to Abuja. The two are very different places.

I remember that day quite distinctly because of those meetings where people were affected by years of having to genuflect to Washington. I can be more blunt. I mean suck up to Washington, always ask Washington for permission on every damn thing. The side effect was to weaken initiative and decision in the field.

In any case, though, we got through September 11, the day.

Q: I ran consular sections. My reflex was you only ask Washington when you don't want an answer and you want to stall. Otherwise you do it and don't tell anybody.

BISHOP: I like that approach. On 9/11, we were on our own. This was the one time in the Foreign Service that I was the captain of a ship and there was no radio contact.

Of course, "9/11" doesn't just mean that day only. Other things followed.

There were American citizens strung out all over Nigeria. They tended to be Nigerian Americans. Many were infants who had been born in the U.S. even though their parents were not citizens or legal residents. My wife had been working on the Embassy warden system for northern Nigeria since she arrived a few months before, but it wasn't quite full and mature. With the shock of the attacks, moreover, these AmCits and parents of AmCits wanted to see an Embassy face, not just receive an email message.

The Ambassador returned soonest, and he saw the need for someone to visit all the outlying cities in the north, to meet the AmCits and also Nigerian leaders, government leaders like state governors, and traditional leaders like the Emirs. He couldn't do this himself, of course.

We were very thin on the ground in Abuja. Who could be spared? A first-tour, entry-level Public Diplomacy officer working in the Economic Section, as I recall, was Mitchell Moss. He became the man to "take the message to Garcia." The Ambassador asked him to make a long circular tour of northern Nigeria, first heading toward the old Emirate of Sokoto, and transiting northern Nigeria from west to east, to Maiduguri. This was a lot of ground to cover.

Mitchell's convoy was two Suburbans, one to race ahead and buy gasoline from the roadside vendors, and one to take him and a senior FSN from town to town. They met American citizens in small groups, and they made calls on all the governors and emirs. When he returned, I told Mitchell that he would never again have such an opportunity. He's a big tall fellow. He had "presence." When Mitchell Moss met an emir, say, he immediately communicated trust, confidence, and, OK, the American Embassy's in good hands. He didn't mention to the leaders that he'd been in the Foreign Service only a year or so. He's gone on to great success in the Foreign Service.

In the aftermath of 9/11, in Public Diplomacy, we faced a dark turn in that direction that I had talked about, conflict rather than harmony between religions.

As you recall, there were many rumors flying around the world, and Nigerians were vulnerable to every imaginable crazy idea. In the newspapers, several writers went off about how Nostradamus had predicted the attacks. It boggled my mind.

More common was the "ah-ha," we know that all the Jews working at the World Trade Center had been given the day off, and that proves that the CIA and Mossad were working together. All this craziness. Who set those stories in motion? Not to mention, who smiled and did a high five when they saw Americans dying?

It was a real Public Diplomacy challenge. Some of it might be dealt with by providing facts and information, but the challenge was larger because perceptions and beliefs were in the mix, along with conspiracy theorizing. Moreover, although the "Jews did it" conspiracy theory surfaced in only a few newspaper articles, I knew it was being communicated other ways, along other networks we did not monitor or access. A bad stew.

AFN continued its streaming of all the news channels, and a few days later I watched the memorial performance organized by Mayor Giuliani in Yankee Stadium. It was moving! Bette Midler, Daniel Fernandez, and one of the Mayor's finest speeches. I was quite taken, however, by the prayers and invocations by New York's religious leaders, one by one. The Muslim chaplain of the New York Police Department, Imam Izak-El Mu'eed Pasha, was particularly eloquent, saying that it was his faith that was hijacked.

The ceremony showed quite a lot: Americans coping with grief, Americans joining together, America the land where all faiths find a home, America that honors Islam as a faith by naming a Muslim chaplain, Americans weeping during the Muslim prayers too, and the "hijacking" of Islam by the terrorists in the aircraft.

I fired off an email to the Bureau of International Information Programs -- send us the videotape! Express! Showing it around Nigeria would make a number of points.

Days turned to weeks, and we never in the end received the videotape of the ceremony. USIA once had dedicated staffs that read magazines and newspapers and watched television to spot articles and programs that supported Public Diplomacy themes. They

had well greased procedures to pay for the rights for international placement, and to send out copies to posts. Somewhere in the 1990s in the shrinkage of Public Diplomacy, this had disappeared, and when a major crisis came, 9/11, no one in Washington was reading articles or watching programs.

A few weeks later, a “why are you bothering us” cable came out from Washington. It laboriously recounted the proper procedures how *we* could order items from C-SPAN if *we* provided exact information -- it required knowing when it was broadcast to the day, hour, and minute -- and our own funding. This stupid cable -- they were obviously unaware of how many steps were now required at post to make a payment -- was nothing but bad news, revealing to us how little support could now be expected from Washington.

Washington couldn't or wouldn't respond when we at post expressed a need, but ECA could come right off the blocks when someone spoke in Washington. Patricia Harrison was Assistant Secretary for Education and Cultural Affairs, and she was Acting R for some months. Some time after 9/11, she had gone to the Museum of Modern Art in New York and seen an exhibition of photographs taken at Ground Zero in the ruins of the World Trade Center. These were the dramatic Joel Meyerowitz photos.

She had recognized the power of the photographs and how they might bring home the shock of the attacks if they were seen overseas. When she expressed interest in showing the photographs overseas, ECA moved out smartly. They negotiated with Meyerowitz and MOMA to make six or eight exhibition sets that could be shipped to posts for display. When a cable announcing the exhibit came from Washington, we in Abuja responded immediately, and we were included in the first list of posts to receive them. We could have them for a few weeks, and then would ship them to a post in the second list.

We arranged to show the photos in one of Abuja's best venues, the exhibit hall of the Trade Center. The air shipment came in, and everything was in order. The MOMA had outdone itself, mounting the large photos on handsome panels of frosted plexiglas, easy to mount. Programs arrived. We held an opening, and the photos continued at the Trade Center for three weeks, as I recall. We also squeezed in exhibits in Lagos and Kaduna.

The photos did indeed have the expected impact, showing Nigerians the extent of the damage and much of the human trauma at Ground Zero. They had seen a little of this on television, but always on a small screen in short news clips, so the Meyerowitz photos made quite an impression.

Or, I should say, the photos made quite an impression on those who saw them. Our count of visitors to the exhibit in Abuja was about 3000 over three weeks. I didn't think this was a very large number, a little more than a hundred visitors a day. And it made me think some about the use of an old line program like an exhibit.

The problem was that ECA and MOMA had put together for posts what Patricia Harrison had seen in New York. The exhibit was a “venue based” Public Diplomacy program. We

put the photos at a venue, said “if we mount it, they will come,” and hoped for the best. The Public Affairs impact, however, was limited to those who actually visited the venue and saw the photos. This was a very small number of people, and the exhibit surely failed to reach those who needed to see it most -- imams, Muslim students, disaffected youth, and so on.

What we needed was something that would reach farther because it wasn't “venue based.” Putting the same photos in a large-format publication would have been a better use of the time and the money. We could have prepared versions in English and in Hausa. Embassy officers could have given copies to everyone they met. PAS could do its own targeted distribution. Every copy of the publication would have been passed around to many Nigerians, and we could have circulated it in smaller places that needed it most.

I thought that ECA's decision to send out the exhibit in the form that had been seen at MOMA indicated that they were not thinking about the transmission of knowledge, or the war of ideas, in a serious way. Think of the old plain vanilla three-box concept. They had an “issue” and photographs that communicated some powerful impressions. But in Washington, no one had seriously thought through “audience,” and they had not searchingly thought about optional modalities of the exhibit, the “program.”

The attacks forced us to begin to think more about northern Nigeria and its Islamic character. As you recall, when the Embassy was in Lagos, the northerners and Islam weren't particularly on the Public Diplomacy scope. They were hardly on the scope of any Embassy section, kept fully busy by the Yorubas and by oil in the Delta.

From Abuja, however, I got interested in things like the influence of Saudi missionaries and the Nigerian graduates of Saudi religious institutions. We heard that the Libyans and the Iranians were subsidizing certain newspapers and columnists, so that they communicated a sour view of things. We learned these things a little at a time, the usual Foreign Service way by careful reading and a lot of conversations, and by asking the FSNs. We had no time for surveys or polls, so we were reacting by feel. Here the expertise on Nigeria by Tim Andrews and Tim Smith was very valuable. So were discussions with our FSNs.

What should we do? Of course, when still in doubt, do what you know how to do. I think we were the first post to ask for an American Muslim leader to come to Nigeria and make the rounds of all the Muslim cities on a speaker program. Aly Abuzaakouk of the American Muslim Council did a terrific job, especially when he quoted George Washington on the “Children of the Stock of Abraham” -- I gave him a copy of Washington's letter to the Hebrew congregation at Newport as he climbed in the Suburban for his first speaker program.

A few months later, Robert Satloff of the Washington Center for the Middle East harshed on our program in a column. Aly Abuzaakouk did not 100 percent support the Administration's policies in the Middle East, shall we say. When the column appeared, I wrote Satloff to say that Abuzaakouk, in the immediate aftermath of the attacks, speaking

in Nigeria, not the Middle East, speaking on “Islam in the U.S.” rather than “U.S. policy in the Middle East,” had done a fine job. He well countered the notion, founded on ignorance, that America was somehow inherently hostile to Islam.

Aly Abuzaakouk's program was a first start, but it wasn't by itself what was needed, a sustained program. One problem as I thought through our response was that at the Embassy we didn't have many people. We didn't have enough officers to rely on our own resources to make a Public Diplomacy impact. Moreover, the communication environment of northern Nigeria was quite basic. There was no internet penetration to speak of. There was television in the large towns, but not the countryside. There were few publications of any kind in Hausa. Radio would be the medium of choice, and we did what we could. I hired a new FSN with a background in radio, and I told him to find the ways to project all our programs on radio.

Thinking over how to get the word out, I was mentally turning the pages in the old USIA playbook, and publishing a magazine occurred to me as a possibility. This was reaching way back into the playbook, indeed a “retro” choice, but it fit several of our needs.

It was something we could do on our own, without depending on Washington to get organized, or to gain its own new footing in this new war against terrorism. A written product would satisfy the need of the Ambassador and other Foreign Service principals to have their accustomed control over every word. If we could do it in Hausa, we knew it would be widely read. It could reach hundreds or thousands of readers who would not listen to English broadcasts. We could mix the “freight,” materials that addressed terrorism and radical Islam, with the “fluff,” general material on the U.S., in a useful way. We could address both worldwide and bilateral public affairs themes. We could sprinkle in news of USAID projects. And it would spread our views without making any of our Embassy people vulnerable when they traveled or spoke -- easing the anxieties of the RSO.

The key to doing this was to launch the magazine soon, and frequently. Our Information Officer, Bill Palmer, and I put the project on express. The senior FSN, Sani Mohamed, filled out our editorial threesome.

We abandoned some elements of the old USIA magazine doctrine. The Agency doctrine was any USIA magazine should be the utmost in quality paper and printing in order to demonstrate the wealth, power, and standing of the United States. The leading Nigerian magazines, on the other hand, had newsprint pages and a wraparound four-color cover. That's all we aspired to. USIA always preferred to print its magazines at one of the Regional Service Center. We didn't have time to wait on the shipping, let alone all the long distance dialog on layouts and format.

The three of us laid out the first issue on my conference room table, and we did so for each issue while I was there. We made it a monthly. We knew what we wanted to say (step one in the old USIA three-step model). We thought through audience and circulation (step two, audience). We wanted to get it out to the normal elite audiences

(journalists, professors, government officials, and so on), but we also wanted the magazine to circulate in villages, towns, and Muslim centers where people were vulnerable to the appeal Osama bin Laden. (All over the world, PAOs were coming to the realization that we had never reached out to a non-elite and religious audience.) How would we actually get it into their hands? We couldn't mail it because the Post Office was one more Nigerian institution that didn't work. Using a private courier company was too expensive.

In the end we decided to give the printing contract to a company that could also bundle the magazines for circulation in small towns and cities, with barefoot boys who took, say, 30 magazines over to the village past the rise. One, we delivered the information we wanted. Two, we created jobs in Nigeria, not at the Regional Service Center's printing plant in Manila. Third, we relied on markets and enterprise for circulation. "Magama" magazine was, I think, our primary public affairs response to 9/11 beyond a lot of speaking.

The first issue included the Hausa translation of the videotape of Osama bin Laden's -- when he admitted he had organized the attacks. We arranged for a special Arabic-to-Hausa translation to satisfy potential critics. When the first issue reached readers, it immediately undercut all the talk that it was Mossad that organized the attacks on the World Trade Center towers. We chopped that off at the kneecaps.

The day after receiving the first issue, one radio talk show host in Abuja simply read the translation, word for word, over the airwaves. As he left the station that day, a group of young Muslim toughs gathered to beat him up for having said these things on the radio. He was bruised in the scuffle. The next day, he called us to ask for more copies of the magazine. Right away, then, we had some feedback that the magazine had effectively reached an audience, undercutting one of the major false stories that was running around.

In subsequent issues, we continued to run things that focused on terrorism and Islam and so on. But then we also were able to add stories on USAID projects and American society. For instance, the same audience needed to understand the safety of the polio vaccine. We ran a cover photo of the Emir of Kano giving a dose of vaccine to a child.

There was one more unexpected effect of *Magama*. You recall my saying that students in Nigeria study their own language, English, and one of the other two major Nigerian languages. Every school in the country, then, teaches Hausa. In northern Nigeria the students are studying it as their own language. In other parts of Nigeria, Yorubas and Igbos were taking it as their additional language. We discovered, however, that almost nothing is published in Hausa any more. I visited the Hausa room at the National Library in Kano, and all the material would have filled two or three long bookshelves.

Magama, then, notably increased the supply of fresh reading material in Hausa, not available elsewhere. Our articles about health or about the U.S. were being used by Hausa teachers all over the country in their classes. We got, then, some extra juice out of our magazine.

BEIJING, CHINA, 2002-2006
Country Public Affairs Officer

Q: All right. Today is the 15th of March, 2011, the Ides of March, with Don Bishop. I believe we're headed to China, you for the second time. You were there from when to when?

BISHOP: I had left China in 2000. That first tour in Beijing had been as Deputy Public Affairs Officer. I went to Nigeria from 2000 to 2002. While I was in Lagos, my old boss Paul Blackburn gave me a call. When he finished as PAO in China he had become the Office Director of EAP/PPD. He asked me if I would like to be PAO to China.

The dream of every USIA officer was to run one of the big programs. I had thought about pivoting my career, to give me a shot at becoming an Ambassador by first being a DCM or a Consul General, but I was a little too senior to make the turn. So I agreed to accept Paul's offer. Lloyd Neighbors had replaced Paul as PAO in Beijing, and his tour ran until the summer of 2003. Paul called me in early 2001. There would be a year to fill between my departing Nigeria in 2002 and beginning work as PAO in Beijing in 2003.

That's how I was given one of those rare chances to go into language refresher for a year. Jemma and I left Nigeria in the late summer of 2002, spent some time in the U.S., and then went out to Beijing.

Once upon a time, all FSOs went to Taipei for their second year of training in Mandarin, but by 2002 the Foreign Service Institute and the Embassy had built up a parallel program in Beijing. The Chinese Language and Area Studies School in Taipei did not close, and even today it trains a goodly share of America's China hands. But there were a number of good reasons to add a Beijing option, which better suited many officers and their families as they sequenced their moves. I didn't think I needed to go to Taiwan again, and skipping another move was a plus.

I spent the end of 2002 and the beginning of 2003 at the Beijing Education Institute. I crossed town every day and had pretty much five hours of one-on-one in Chinese. It was a very good language experience, and the year gave me a break from the usual work and policy stresses. I needed it after Nigeria. Also, I was reading more on China -- and meeting more and different people -- than if I had gone directly to the PAO job.

I can conjure from the memory many riveting stories of language study, but let me just tell one that offers a glimpse on how things are organized in China. In my previous time in Beijing, I had never had a chance to visit the tomb of Matteo Ricci, the awesome Jesuit who did so much to bring Christianity to China. For many years "the authorities" didn't allow many visitors to his tomb. But with China now so much more "open," I asked about it. The tomb turned out to be only a walk from the Beijing Education Institute, it was now possible to arrange visits. The teachers set aside an afternoon for all of the Embassy students to walk over. This gave us a chance to work on our vocabularies and

expressions on history and religion, after all, and enjoy an afternoon in the University of Plein Air.

In the center of the Beijing Party School -- not the Central Party School, but the Party School for the Beijing municipality -- by the way, the Party Schools had all been renamed, in English, "Administrative Colleges" -- was a small grove of steles, traditional Chinese stone tomb markers. This is where dozens of Catholic priests were buried, Chinese priests included.

As we reached the gate of the Beijing Party School, the guard made a telephone call, and soon we were joined by a professor from the Party School to be our guide. He introduced himself as the Vice President of the Matteo Ricci Study Society.

What was this? A professor at the Party School had to be a member of the Chinese Communist Party. Members of the Party must be atheists.

He was an agreeable fellow, taking us over to the tombs and giving us a historical explanation of Ricci and the early Catholic missionaries. Then he offered some words of evaluation. Chinese appreciate some of Ricci's teachings, he told us. For instance, in a feudal society with polygamy and concubinage, Ricci's teaching that a man should only have one wife ... "anticipated the Marriage Law of the PRC enacted in 1950"! We Americans looked at one another -- this was quite a new take on things!

Chinese welcomed the scientific knowledge of the Jesuits and other missionaries, our guide said, but Chinese were not really attracted to Ricci's religion. For instance, Christians teach that between his death and his resurrection, Jesus "descended into hell." I was quickly turning over memories from catechism class to try and figure out what he was telling us.

He was evidently referring to the phrase in the Apostles' Creed, and to an interpretation of doctrine that derived from the phrase. The Christian teaching, he told us, was that before Christ, everyone who had died resided in hell, and it was Christ's descent that released Adam and Eve and other righteous souls into heaven. Chinese could never accept this, the professor said, because that would mean Confucius had been in hell, something inconceivable.

He continued with some other nickel-and-dime, cartoonish arguments against the existence of God, drawn right from the pages of *Krokodil* and *Manhua*, I thought.

So, what we were seeing on our visit to the Party School and Ricci's tomb was how the Party assured that no one could visit without hearing the Party's interpretation of historical events. And since there was a national Matteo Ricci Study Society, firmly under Party vigilance, no one else in China could try to develop Ricci studies without the Party's assent. This is how Party organizations keep scholarly thought within bounds, by crowding out independent scholarship and initiatives.

In any case, I finished up the language refresher and began work as Country Public Affairs Officer, succeeding Lloyd Neighbors, in the early summer of 2003. I was PAO for three years.

Q: What changes had taken place since you left China in 2000?

BISHOP: Let's talk about the post first. One big change was that after years of negotiation with the Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic Services Bureau, American families no longer had to live in the Diplomatic compounds. We were put in an apartment tower that belonged to the China World Hotel.

Another was that the Embassy could hire employees directly, and those employees could be FSNs, not members of the Diplomatic Services Bureau assigned to the American Embassy. Our longtime DSBs were given the chance to convert to FSN status. Some did, some didn't. We began to advertise positions as they came open. Individuals could now apply freely, and we were able to choose some very fine Chinese employees and train them up to our standards. When I became PAO, I allocated more of our Public Diplomacy money, for instance, to send our employees for programs in the U.S., and to send some to nearby embassies like Seoul or Tokyo to see how things were done in Public Affairs Sections there.

The consolidation – folding USIS into the State Department – had worked some major changes too. I'm sorry to talk organization and administration when foreign policy has more sizzle, but we should reflect a little bit about the progress of consolidation by 2003.

Enough time had passed that the initial frictions were over or should be over. I had been the DPAO in Beijing as USIA finished up, and now I was PAO under the State Department four years later. The organization was about the same size, and we had the same amount of money. But it's worth pausing to note what had changed.

As I mentioned previously, we lost our Executive Officer in 1999. Much of the work previously done by the USIS Executive Officer had shifted to the Deputy Public Affairs Officer. I had felt that immediately when I had been the DPAO. It had usually been the Exec, for instance, who represented USIS on the housing committee, the awards committee, and at most ICAAS meetings. The DPAO now picked up the full load of meetings. Executive officers had written the grants, now that job had passed to the DPAO.

In 1999, though, I could still call the individual who had been the USIS Executive Officer, now sitting in the Management Section with many more responsibilities, and ask for guidance and help. When I arrived as PAO in 2003, I asked the Management Counselor which one of his deputies had the PAS account? He was surprised by my question because they no longer had that arrangement. I knew that meant that the DPAO had an even heavier management load.

Another large change was that George Beasley's and Paul Blackburn's wonderful structuring of PAS – with everyone reporting to the DPAO as operating officer – had been ended by my predecessor while I was away.

As I arrived, I also learned that there was no longer to be a Deputy Public Affairs Officer. My predecessor as PAO had traded in the position for an additional Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer. This meant that many of the administrative burdens, originally handled by the Executive Officer, then by the Deputy Public Affairs Officer, would now shift to the PAO. This was partly because only the PAO had enough experience with the organization and money issues. Without a Deputy on the staff, I could not restore the better arrangement that had made the Public Affairs Section so effective under George Beasley and Paul Blackburn.

When I had been DPAO under Paul Blackburn, I supervised the Information Officer, the Cultural Affairs Officer, the Information Resources Officer, the four branches, and the Executive Officer. I was acting as a chief of staff, the operating guy. How about this as a parallel? Paul was the Petraeus, I was the Odierno. Freed from the day-to-day supervisory responsibilities and all the program implementation except when he wanted to put his personal stamp on a program, Paul was able to conceptualize things, strategize, work the ambassador, cajole members of the Country Team, and so on.

Coming back in 2003, then, I found that the PAO's time was once again taken up with day-to-day duties. I felt like I had had two assignments as DPAO. I had all the administrative work when I was DPAO, and I had it again as PAO. There was a cost to eliminating the DPAO position. It diminished the time I had available for conceptualization, strategizing, and dealing with the Ambassador, DCM, and other members of the Country Team. I confess that I deeply resented the organizational change. DPAO positions were eliminated in other countries, too, and in every case the PAO felt the same effect. Small administrative changes can have outsize effects.

When I was in Abuja, the DCM's OMS was new to the Foreign Service, Llywelyn Graeme. I suggested he bid on the position as OMS in PAS in Beijing, and happily he got the assignment. I was under such administrative pressure that I had to ask Llywelyn to take on some of the paperwork and be more involved with the Print Shop and administrative FSNs than had been the case for the OMS in the past. On the whole, this worked well for me, but not every FSO in PAS was happy with dealing with an OMS in that role. This minor friction was one more way in which decisions made in Washington made things at posts more difficult.

One more change unfolding from consolidation, number two. The former BPAOs were now Consulate PAOs in Shanghai, Shenyang, Chengdu, and Guangzhou. They were now supervised and evaluated by their Consuls General. Of course there was still the ordinary programmatic communication between PAS, the mother ship, in Beijing and the Consulate PAOs, but their priorities were being set by their CGs. The PAO, then, didn't have the same ability to unify the country program as before. Different CGs, from

experience or feel or what they had seen somewhere else, used their Public Diplomacy people and resources differently.

A third change I would note is that consolidation had already worked a change in mentality among the Public Diplomacy Officers in the Foreign Service. Let me use a commercial parallel. USIA officers had thought of themselves as members of a law firm or a public relations firm that was hired by a corporation. State was like AT&T, USIA was like Hill and Knowlton, advising on international public affairs and organizing programs.

The individual members of this “firm,” USIA, even as they were working on the Ambassador's or the nation's priorities, all knew their futures were in the firm. They could be partners. They could run overseas offices. They had public visibility, standing, and acclaim in foreign capitals. They had a discipline -- public diplomacy and public affairs -- that focused on the media and opinion and on programs to change opinions and establish a favorable standing for the brand. That meant they had a profession, a focus, a body of professional reading. Public Diplomacy was your bread and butter. Public Diplomacy was what you had to master. Mastery and competence led to advancement.

After consolidation, we stopped being members of a public affairs firm that worked for the Embassy. We became House Counsel. In the private sector, the top of that ladder is to become General Counsel in a corporation. The members of the Legal Department at a company are all attorneys, but they are much more focused on doing the bidding of upper management. They narrow their professional reading and competence to the part of the law that concerns the company. And only rarely, exceedingly rarely, will a General Counsel ever become head of the company.

My commercial analogy only goes so far, but think it over. After consolidation, the self-image of Public Diplomacy officers and their incentives began to change. There was a new career psychology that came with being in the Department of State. The PAO was only one of the Embassy's counselors. The independent brand and standing of “USIS” was now history, and the Public Diplomacy officers became much more anonymous, blending into the Embassy staff.

At the same time, it was now possible for Public Diplomacy officers to become senior leaders in the State Department. If good Public Diplomacy officers aspired to become an Ambassador or even a Consul General, however, they needed to get out of public diplomacy, probably when they were an FS-2, maybe as an FS-1, and begin checking off the boxes -- deputy Office Director, Office Director, then perhaps DCM in some modest place so they could become DCM in a bigger place. They then might become a DAS. That's the sequence that gives a State officer a shot at higher management and the coveted title of Ambassador. I began to notice that this new calculus was affecting the career choices of our most promising Public Diplomacy officers.

There was another change that had taken place while I was away. You'll recall I've mentioned USIA's three phase communication model -- Issues, Audiences, Programs.

The primary tool in developing and tracking the middle step, audience, was the Distribution and Records System, the DRS. USIA had developed its own software that was launched a little before I entered the Agency in 1979, and with many updates it was still the software being used by posts in 1999.

To speak frankly, the DRS completely collapsed with consolidation. No one in State picked up the responsibility. The software was never updated. In Beijing as at other posts around the world, we fell back on the old “cuff lists,” individual rolodexes on the desks of Americans and FSNs. Posts in their desperation began to use commercial software like Outlook or Goldmine, but no one undertook to decide on a single product that would be used at every Embassy.

These software programs could handle “distribution,” but they did not provide the tailored quarterly overview reports to PAOs to use in overall post management. No one in Washington took responsibility for solving the problems of non-Roman alphabets and character systems. Once network security became such a large issue for the Department, posts could not on their own elect to use a commercial program that might be in use by, say, AmCham companies locally. They all had to be approved by the network security people, and the security review of Public Diplomacy software never seemed to have a high priority.

The result of these dysfunctions was that Public Diplomacy lost the unified approach to “audience” that once was the pride of many strong posts. I knew we needed a new model DRS, but it was a problem we could not solve on our own.

Another thing that was different after consolidation was that the old Country Public Affairs Plan had disappeared, and now we were integrated into the Mission Strategic Plan. The Department's strategic planning has gone through several iterations -- MPP, MSP, MSRP.

My generation of USIA officers had been taught, “We don't do culture, we do policy.” In USIA, we were not going to win promotion by being Foreign Service impresarios bringing clog dancers and drama groups. I did my share of performing arts programs during my career, and “events” could play a useful role in some places at some times to build our nation's standing, but the heart of the work we were supposed to do was build up public affairs support for WTO accession, missiles in Germany, the Doha Round, votes in the United Nations, and so on. As I said, “we don't do culture, we do policy.”

The Mission Strategic Planning process in State at first seemed to favor that view of Public Diplomacy. If the mission decided its number one priority is A, and number two is B, the planning process should lead the Public Affairs Section to give extra focus, extra push, extra horsepower to these Mission goals in the plan. The PAO should bring to bear as many different programs as possible on the top priority Mission objectives. When I explained this to David Sedney one time, he said, “I'm hearing you say there are no Public Diplomacy goals per se, but only Public Diplomacy support for the Mission's other goals.”

That Plan's listing of an Embassy's goals, or the administration's goals, however, left out all the standing programs, mostly on the Cultural Affairs side, Fulbright, speakers, libraries, English teaching. There were bread and butter for Public Affairs Sections. Where did they fit?

In the revised iterations of mission planning, therefore, the Department allowed an extra Public Diplomacy objective in the plan under the rubric of "mutual understanding" or "foundation of trust." This free-floating add-on Public Diplomacy objective was conceptually sound, but it let officers just run the usual repertoire of programs -- rather than think carefully about what the policy goals the programs are supposed to serve.

My own focus had been to "lean" as many of the Public Diplomacy programs in the direction of MPP themes as was possible, but I'm not sure this was a common practice by PAOs. For instance, we knew that rule of law in China could be one of the first steps towards respect for human rights and democratization. So I leaned PAS programs toward the rule of law when I was DPAO. A goodly, some might say disproportionate, share of speakers were on rule of law topics, in front of legal audiences. A goodly share of the Fulbrighters that we sent to the States were law professors. A goodly share of book translations were American law textbooks. The idea here was to lean a post's different Public Diplomacy programs in a policy direction.

The Department adopted the Mission Program Plan process in the final years of USIA, and the Agency was an organization that carried with it certain convictions and practices about how to advance ideas. But the way the MPP worked out after consolidation was to make conducting exchanges or English teaching or cultural programs a Mission goal, but not necessarily tied to a policy effort.

After consolidation, PAOs became more vulnerable to various bright ideas coming from Ambassadors and DCMs. They wanted "events." They wanted "publicity." They wanted to meet authors and poets and musicians. USAID programs with their long timelines, in the hands of implementing partners, didn't yield many opportunities for them to bring "gifts" when they made visits. They increasingly looked to Public Affairs Sections to allow them to play the role of Lord or Lady Bountiful.

This has been a bit discursive, but I wanted to mention that when I arrived as PAO in China, many organizational changes had already taken place that affected Public Diplomacy. The most severe was that more and more of the management load had to be carried by the PAO, and there was an opportunity cost to this, forfeiting good strategizing and working with the Ambassador.

Q: In the White House, say, the equivalent of a public affairs officer usually sits in on the president's council and is, to some extent -- not an alter-ego, but is very familiar with the president's thinking.

BISHOP: Agreed. But remember that under the new dispensation PAOs no longer had a direct report to the Ambassador. A PAO's reporting official was now the DCM.

Q: So there were changes in the organization that had occurred since you left China in 2000. What about the U.S. policy posture with China?

BISHOP: As for policy, during my first tour from 1997 to 2000 we were all very much implementing President Clinton's policy of engagement. Originally, the word "engagement" threw the Chinese for a loop. They didn't know whether we were trying to get married, or to engage them in battle. Eventually they understood our meaning. What we were interested in was more contact, more Chinese participation in the international order, and eventually more collaboration on the issues. At that time, the largest issue in this comprehensive policy of "engagement" was China's accession to the World Trade Organization.

When I arrived for my second tour, from 2003 to 2006, I could feel there was a changed emphasis, and temperatures seemed a few degrees higher. The increase in the trade deficit made our trade discussions sharper, as did the question of exchange rates. We spent a lot of time trying to build up the military-to-military relationship. We spent time on human rights, as always. There were the Six Party Talks on North Korea's nuclear program. Compared to my first tour in Beijing, the number of visitors from Congress and the administration had increased. For three years we had constant CODELs, except for a pause in the closing months of the 2004 Presidential election campaign, along with visitors at the cabinet level.

And in the wake of 9/11 we had the new agenda on terrorism. Here there was an overlap between our interests and the Chinese interests. They weren't particularly eager to help us out with terrorism in the Middle East, with weapons of mass destruction in Iran or Iraq, or on Afghanistan. But they were worried that a terrorism motivated by Islam might infect Muslims in western China, out in Xinjiang province especially. Whenever Chinese minorities asked for more autonomy or more respect, the Han Chinese leadership often treated it as separatism or "splitism."

Q: Who was the ambassador?

BISHOP: Ambassador Clark T. Randt, Jr. Ultimately he served as Ambassador for nearly eight years. There was talk that he was President Bush's roommate at Yale. I heard him explain many times, however, that he was one of President Bush's fraternity brothers.

Some people could spin that in a way that made Ambassador Randt out to be an unqualified political appointee who got the job based on friendship with the President. But Ambassador Randt had learned Chinese in the Air Force, and after he was discharged he had gotten his law degree and become a China trade lawyer in Hong Kong. He was well qualified for the job.

When Ambassador Randt was at the Department for some consultations, and I was in Washington from Nigeria, I had a chance to meet him. I expected a short meeting, a courtesy call, but the planned 15-minute meeting lasted about 45 minutes. He told me all the things that were wrong with the Public Affairs Section. When I went for my in-call in Beijing, he again took 45 minutes and made the points again.

He was dissatisfied with some things. For instance, when he had reached post as the new Ambassador, he met the Information Officer, who gave the Ambassador a review of his work. The IO had used the word “clients” in his review. I assume he meant “stakeholders” or “contacts” like international journalists, Chinese journalists, think tank scholars, but he had said “clients.” That had really hit Ambassador Randt wrong. He told me what he told the IO: PAS had only one client, the Ambassador.

Q: I don't quite get the --

BISHOP: Well, Ambassador Randt was using “client” in a business sense. A company that hires a public relations firm or a law firm is the client.

Q: Right. And instead of saying who are our targets.

BISHOP: Yes. It was an unfortunate choice of word, but it stayed with Ambassador Randt. And I might add that the officer in question, one of our best Public Diplomacy officers with a rare 4/4 in Chinese, resigned from the Foreign Service a year after he left China.

There were other things Ambassador Randt didn't like about PAS. My predecessor as PAO, Lloyd Neighbors, had been able to maintain a good personal relationship, but I sensed Lloyd also felt the Ambassador's unhappiness with the Public Affairs Section.

When Ambassador Randt arrived, he found that the Information Officer routinely set up briefing sessions, on background, between American journalists and Embassy political and economic officers. This was and is a routine practice at most American embassies. A few times, though, the officers wandered off script, and the Ambassador would learn that an American Embassy source had said this or that. He often learned it when he received a call from Washington asking what's going on. The Ambassador wanted more control over backgrounding, and every backgrounder required his personal approval in advance. This reduced the number of off-script remarks, but it reduced backgrounding too.

The Ambassador was doing me a favor by being straight in explaining his feelings. He told me that we had one of the very largest sections in the Embassy, but for the number of people we had, and the money we had to spend, PAS was not contributing much. He didn't see us making a large impact. He wasn't sure the Embassy needed such a large Public Affairs Section, given its small role. This rather puzzled me, but of course I could only say, “Got it, sir. Right.”

Q: Yes.

BISHOP: I was nodding at what he said, indicating that I heard him. But I was turning things over in my mind. The size of the Public Affairs Section organization in 2003 was the same as it had been in 1992. We had a few additional FSNs and some locally hired Americans, but there had been no increase in the number of American FSOs in all those years.

Every few years, USIA had conducted regular reviews of how resources were distributed between posts and geographic areas. After 1989, these reviews were the bane of the European area since Europe was receding in foreign policy importance. Based on Cold War priorities, the European area and its posts traditionally had plenty of people and plenty of money running large programs. In the 90s, after the Cold War had ended, USIA always seemed to find that it was Europe that was “fat.”

Hearing the Ambassador's concerns, I recalled that USIA had conducted one of its major reviews as the Cold War ended and our foreign policy priorities began to shift. They had done it very carefully for every country. What's the population? The GNP? How many television and radio stations does the country have? How many universities? How many students has the country sent to the U.S.? How many newspapers in the capital? The number of university graduates? The volume of trade? Do we have an alliance? Are there U.S. forces based in the country? And so on.

USIA had been very careful and thorough about coming up with a kind of algorithm that matched resources to foreign policy needs. Out of that process in 1991, China got, I recalled, 18 Americans, 13 in Beijing and five at the four consulates, making China one of the largest posts.

Now it was 2003. We still had the same number of American officers. But consider all the same metrics. There were way more Chinese newspapers, and they were big and fat and slick because of newspaper liberalization. There were more journalists. The Chinese had, since 1992, invested billions in higher education, and in 2003 there were many more universities -- new, large, comprehensive universities all over the country. Every university hoped that a faculty member could receive a Fulbright grant. All hoped they could get International Visitors and U.S. Speakers and help with English teaching. They wanted more and more of what the Public Affairs Section had. So did the media. Bilateral trade and business ties had exploded. We had new bilateral agendas and senior dialogs on trade, economics, the environment and health, and defense. PAS was supporting many times more visits by Administration principals in 2004 than had been the case in 1992.

By every measure, then, the Public Affairs Section in Beijing was way under resourced. As important as money is, it was not the dearest resource. The most important resource is people. American officers are very dear in the Foreign Service. We had no more in 2003 than we had in 1992.

There was more in the Ambassador's views on PAS. As PAO in Beijing, I was a new Minister-Counselor. I learned from the DCM that, in the Ambassador's view, my rank

was too high. He believed section chiefs should be “hungry FS-1s” who would work and work to be promoted into the Senior Foreign Service. Their ambition would make them responsive to every Presidential and Ambassadorial priority.

So to be told by the Ambassador that PAS was too generously staffed, that he didn't see us pulling our weight when we had no more people than in 1992, and that PAS leadership was too senior, I couldn't quite square that. But of course, I saluted and said what I had to say. What do you do? You have to go ahead with what you've got. It was clear to me that the Ambassador had formed an impression of PAS soon after he arrived, alas, and it was fixed in his mind.

Q: And I think the thing that struck me as being someone who has sat in on a lot of country team meetings as a chief of a consular section, how important the public affairs side was. But it was under the old system and maybe --

BISHOP: Of course I attended Country Team meetings in Beijing, but the group had become so large that there were no real discussions or deliberations in those meetings. When I arrived, another member of the Country Team told me how meetings should go. When it came for my two-minute report, I should always look the Ambassador in the eye. Address only him. Be sure to show proper deference. Don't ever surprise the Ambassador, meaning the Country Team was not the place to give him a first brief on something.

Like you, I sat in on CT meetings over many years with many Ambassadors. The place where it worked wonderfully was Bangladesh. The Embassy hummed under Ambassador Merrill, partly because he was a very good manager of the meeting, partly because he also held a few “tight” country team meetings during the week, and partly because the Country Team in Dhaka was not large.

In China, though, new agencies were joining the Country Team, and the table was getting quite crowded. For instance, the different parts of the new Department of Homeland Security -- ICE, CBP -- joined the Country Team. Commerce and Treasury reinforced the Embassy with political appointees who sat at the CT table. The meetings got to be quite large, which meant that briefs and discussions necessarily became short.

Except for the Country Team meeting, many agencies might only be scheduled for a 30 minute meeting with the DCM, rather than the Ambassador, once or twice a month, to go over what they were doing.

It happened that I usually sat next to the Department of Agriculture's rep -- the Minister-Counselor for Agricultural Affairs -- at Country Team meetings. He was irritated with the lack of front office attention to what his people were doing. His “face time” was a having a biweekly 30-minute meeting with the DCM, and meeting the Ambassador in a group with the senior Economic and Commercial officers. In these group sessions he was the last to be called on, usually when the other two had used up almost all of the meeting. So when it came time for his two minutes at the Country Team meeting, he insisted on

giving full readouts on all FAS activities, undeterred by the expected time limit, taking no notice of the nervous non-verbals coming from the Ambassador and the DCM. He was going to report on what he did! Maurice House – I liked him for it.

If there were important meetings at the Embassy that might focus on a particular human rights case, or how to develop the mil-to-mil relationship, or the Six Party Talks, rarely was PAS asked to join. I got a window on those things during some short stints as Acting DCM, when the DCM was on leave and they rotated section chiefs to his desk. I got to be DCM a few times for a few days or a few weeks. Otherwise, Public Diplomacy wasn't at the conference table.

The most frequent PAS access to the Ambassador was not at the Country Team meeting but at the morning press brief. Ambassador Randt preferred an oral briefing to a written summary. The Americans and the FSNs in the PAS Information Unit came in well before the rest of the Embassy opened. They read the early editions, scanned the web pages, and they had watched broadcasts overnight. They ran Lexis-Nexis searches for the latest articles on China.

The Ambassador was not particularly focused on the Chinese media. What he needed to know was what the American and international media were saying, because it was their stories that might prompt a telephone call from Washington. Every morning there might be 25 or 50 important stories on China in the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the McClatchy group, Scripps Howard, Reuters, Associated Press, BBC, and so on. At the morning press brief, the IO or an AIO read out the first paragraph of a news report or editorial and then handed a copy of each story to the Ambassador, one by one.

This was expensive, in time and money both. We were spending a quarter million dollars a year on the Lexis-Nexis searches for the Ambassador's morning briefings, half of IIP's budget for internet searches. Fortunately, the bills went to IIP, not to us.

I was surprised how much the addition of this comprehensive daily press briefing to the list of PAS taskings affected our whole organization. It required a huge amount of hands-on time by the IO and the AIOs that then couldn't be used for other purposes.

Ambassador Randt let me know that I was also expected to attend. Missing the briefings, he told me, would indicate that I was not giving my complete personal support to the Ambassador and the President of the United States. As a 110 percent ardent supporter of President Bush and his agenda, this really stung me. Not to mention that it meant the middle of every morning of every day was unavailable for other meetings or activities.

I'm sure that those who looked over the Ambassador's schedule, seeing the time allocated for the press briefing, thought PAS had more "face time" than other sections. Usually, however, those briefings were scheduled for half an hour, and depending on the size of the day's take, the time was rushed. All the focus was on the news. There might be an opportunity for me to take a minute at the end to ask the Ambassador for some brief on-the-spot guidance on a program or an issue or a speech.

In three years, I only recall two or three proper sit-downs with the Ambassador to talk about Public Affairs strategies or Public Diplomacy. We were responsive when asked, but I can't say we were proactive. Yes, we needed the Ambassador's nod for most initiatives, but I just don't recall many meetings.

Q: Every ambassador has their own way.

BISHOP: Of course.

Q: But public affairs, of course, is probably the major tool of getting something across.

BISHOP: Yes.

Q: Political reporters don't do that particularly. It's eliminating probably the major strategic tool that you have to operate in the country.

BISHOP: It's right that at the Embassy in China while I was there, Public Diplomacy was "not there for the takeoff," to use half of the famous phrase from Edward R. Murrow. This was not only the case for Public Diplomacy, though. The long term trend in American foreign policy making has been to have the policy debates in Washington and look to Embassies simply as platforms to organize visits to foreign capitals for Washington principals, or to be implementers. As Henry Kissinger told Nick Platt, the job of the Foreign Service is to tend the "nuts and bolts."

I recently met some people who were on the NSC during my second China tour, and hearing them discuss China issues, I realized how valuable it would have been for me to hear their perspective at the time. In conversation with them, I gathered that the Ambassador's voice was heard in Washington, and they were aware of the Embassy's point of view. But none of this was shared with me as PAO.

In any case, few in the Embassy, not just PAS, were "there for the takeoff." I wasn't at decision making meetings because decisions weren't made in Beijing. They were made in Washington. The job of the Public Affairs Section was to deliver the Washington messages. Here I'm being frank, describing "what is" rather than what "ought to be" or "shouldn't ought to be."

As for smaller issues, like the release of a human rights prisoner, or getting China to respect a WTO provision, they were worked with the Chinese by the Ambassador and by the Economic and Political sections. This was the inside game, conducted behind the scenes without publicity. When the Chinese leadership made this kind of decision, it was unlikely to be criticized by the Chinese media, so the lack of involvement by PAS was not fatal. If we received a press query, the IO and AIOs just read out Washington's guidance.

Q: Tell me more about the Ambassador and human rights.

BISHOP: The Ambassador was always keen to urge China to release human rights activists that had been jailed. It was one of his admirable commitments. A common critique on Capitol Hill of U.S. human rights advocacy in China was that it was always on the list of bilateral issues to be discussed, but it was usually discussed last, giving the impression that trade or security issues, say, were actually more important. Ambassador Randt's speeches had quite a different pattern. No matter what the bilateral topic, he began with a review of human rights cases, making the point that the Chinese government had violated its own laws to detain individuals. During his years at the Embassy he had the satisfaction of seeing many of those cases resolved. Whenever that happened, he added another case to the list in his next speech.

Q: What was your impression of the press or to use the broad term, the media? Not just American, but the media core in Beijing.

BISHOP: In our minds we made the ordinary distinction between the Chinese media, the American media, and the internationals. We can talk about the Chinese media first.

At a Chinese press conference with one of their officials, all the Chinese journalists knew they must allow the reporter from *People's Daily – Renmin Ribao* -- to ask the first question. *People's Daily* is newspaper of the Communist Party of China. It was known to all that *People's Daily* and Xinhua, the New China News Agency, would report the story in the way the Party intended. One could say the two would write stories that reflected the Party line. I cannot help but add the *People's Daily* reporters wore their newspaper's preeminence on their sleeves. They were quite full of themselves, when in reality they were hacks.

At press conferences, other Chinese journalists would ask questions, and they might give the appearance of being fractious or assertive, bold or sassy, or make out like they were Sam Donaldsons or Nina Totenbergs speaking truth to power -- American power, that is - - but this didn't, in the end, show in the news articles they wrote. The Party's control of, or bounding of, journalism was evident.

At the same time, all the new media were strongly competitive, anxious for circulation, profits, and influence. They could show some of this in their graphics, the splashy color, the new sections on style or cooking or sports, but as for news, the journalists knew that ordinary people wanted more than the correct stories, aligned with the Party line, that *People's Daily* or Xinhua delivered.

Our Embassy colleagues who pored over news and editorial copy in the fashion of true China watchers could begin to see differences in the editorial postures of different newspapers. And they noticed that on different issues the newspapers and magazines could turn the volume up or down. If *People's Daily* or Xinhua were critical of the United States on this or that issue (and this was very much a default position), other newspapers did not formally cross any redlines by making the criticism sharper. This was a downside, an unintended consequence, perhaps, of the Party's template reliance on nationalism as

one of its sources of legitimacy. I'm not in close touch with Chinese news and views now, but I gather that this trend toward stories colored by more nationalism has become even more prominent since I left China.

All that said, if truth be told, we spent more time responding to the American media than we did the Chinese. That was because Washington read the American media, and we could expect a telephone call from Washington if there was a troublesome story. I suppose there were a dozen American journalists that PAS dealt with most frequently -- *The Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, McClatchy, Scripps Howard, Associated Press, the three networks, CNN, and so on. Reuters was usually included on our list as an honorary American organization. Influential British publications like *The Economist*, along with the BBC, had easy access to the Embassy too. We treated the Australians well.

We didn't give much access or attention to others from Europe, or from India, though the sudden prominence of al-Jazeera, and its generally straight news reporting on China, was noticed. The Japanese and Korean media were in Beijing in large numbers, and more, many more, would parachute in for each session of the Six Party Talks, but we didn't do much with them. We rarely accepted their requests for backgrounders, for instance.

Q: You mentioned that there were frequent visits by CODELs, members of the President's cabinet, and agency heads. How did this affect your press work?

BISHOP: As I mentioned, the number of visits by Washington VIPs was much greater than it had been during my first tour. President Bush had passed the word that members of the Cabinet should get busy with China. That concentrated their minds on thinking about what their Departments might do in China to thicken the relationship. I believe the whole Cabinet came to China while I was there, and some Secretaries made many visits.

The Mission standard was to give cabinet secretaries the full court press. All of them held press conferences, and most sat down for television interviews with one of the American networks, to let the American people know they were involved in China. PAS provided a site officer at each stop on their itinerary, and a riding Public Diplomacy Officer in the motorcade. We didn't have enough AIOs for all these roles, so I had to shanghai ACAOs and the *Jiaoliu* editor -- Charlene Fu had been a reporter for the Associated Press -- to join the media support for a cabinet visit. This took them away from their jobs, not just for the one or two days of the visit, but for the many interminable countdown meetings.

The press conferences, interviews, photo ops, and pull asides yielded a tremendous amount of coverage -- in the U.S., in China, and around the world. Of course television anchors have to trim big stories down to a few sentences or paragraphs, but volume adds up, and we were helping Administration newsmakers in a big way.

The down side was that the Information Unit had mostly become a press office. The other tasks in the Information Unit portfolio -- publishing *Jiaoliu*, tending the Distribution and Record System database, keeping up with and supporting the Voice of America and

Radio Free Asia, developing our web presence, and so on -- slowed down, so great were the day in and day out of media work. I quite admired how the IO, Sheila Paskman, gritted it out. She and I both realized, however, that other important tasks were being postponed.

I was very impressed with the Director of the Federal Aviation Administration, Marion Blakey. The FAA needed a close relationship with China because of the increase in flights between the U.S. and China, and for aviation safety, air routes, and crash investigations. Chinese companies were producing components for aircraft manufactured by Boeing and Airbus, and they were beginning to sell their own aircraft, which would eventually require FAA certification. This is a pretty serious agenda.

Administrator Blakey and the Chinese Minister of Aviation met several times. This is an example of how the U.S.-China relationship was developing in one area largely away from the public eye. It's also an example of lean staffing. The FAA had one staffer in Beijing, Joe Tymcyswm, and how he did so much of the legwork was a wonder to behold. His prep work would be cemented by a Blakey visit.

The Chinese Minister of Aviation had noticed that when American visitors arrived in Beijing they were usually jetlagged, and a lot of important business was delayed waiting for them to recover. The Minister arranged things so that the FAA Administrator would travel from the airport to the Summer Palace, which is on a lake. He would walk her around the lake, and with the interpreters they would begin to discuss the issues in an animated professional way. This gave her a break after the flight, got her into the fresh air, postponed the reckoning with jet lag, showed her something of China's heritage, previewed some of the issues that would be on the agenda when they sat down at a conference table, and built a personal relationship. I always highlighted this kind of cooperation when I spoke to groups in China.

The Coast Guard is one of the five armed forces, the uniformed services, but it doesn't belong to DOD. It had for many years been part of the Department of the Treasury, but it had been placed under the Department of Transportation, and it's part of Homeland Security now.

Because it wasn't part of the Department of Defense, it was treated differently than the other four services by the Chinese. When the Coast Guard came to China, the Embassy didn't deal with the PLA but with the various departments of waterways and fisheries and weather.

The Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Tom Collins, came for an official visit while I was PAO. I reminded him "I have seen you before" when we met, mentioning that I had watched, "seen," the Coast Guard cadets all march onto the Trinity football field when we were both studying in Connecticut.

Joining him during the visits with him to the storm center and the maritime offices were quite fascinating. Like the visits of the FAA Administrator, this kind of visit that brought

together specialists showed the promise of U.S.-China relations seen from the working level.

Q: You also mentioned growing numbers of CODELs.

BISHOP: More CODELs meant more work.

Some were from the House, some from the Senate. Some had a dozen members, others just one. Some members had become China experts from many visits, others were dipping their toes in China for the first time.

The visitors with long experience on China issues got quite substantive meetings, and, as always, they could be more frank with the Chinese about the atmospherics in Washington. We at the Embassy were the good cops, the Congressional visitors could be the bad cops.

For the newcomers, we had to mix in visits to the Great Wall and some shopping. We also had a steady stream of STAFFDELS, usually from the professional staffs of committees focused on foreign policy, defense, and appropriations.

Q: Do you have anything to share about visits by President Bush, meaning the media angle?

BISHOP: Here's a particular memory. Whenever we had a visit by President Bush, I noticed the advance teams spent an inordinate amount of time on events and settings.

I would say they were responding to the growing need for more visuality in advancing a Presidential agenda and the President's standing. The same was true for Secretary Rice. If I count satisfying public affairs events, Secretary Rice's visit to the ice rink at the China World Hotel -- remember she had been a figure skater when she was a teenager -- was a fine moment. It didn't just happen. It required a lot of work.

Earlier, media preparations for a Presidential event might focus on where the President would stand, or what would be in the background of each shot. During the Bush administration, the advance teams spent hours and hours designing and purchasing, locally, big screened backdrops for Presidential statements. They could cost several thousand dollars, not only for the design work but also for the rush job with a local vendor. Someone on our staff had to join the effort, of course, one more demand on the staff.

Yes, there were some lighter moments. I entered one hotel conference room fifteen minutes ahead of the President to get a final look at the preps for one of his statements, and I found that his press lead and our AIO had placed the President's podium in front of a new, gorgeous, huge backdrop of a red Chinese gate with brass fasteners. They had been working on this for days. It cost \$7000 as I recall -- \$7000 for a backdrop for a 15-minute event.

It was three panels, actually, set up so that the President could enter from just off center. When the time came, the President walked out from between the panels, stepped up to the podium, and expertly delivered his statement. Then, unmindful that he had entered from the rear, he walked to some double doors to his right. Except that they were locked. It was a short embarrassment, he made a joke, and then an aide appeared from the rear and helped him leave.

Of course, that scene was what made the world's news reports, along with a lot of snarky commentary about clueless Bush, no exit strategy, and so on. All those cheap shots I so hate. You win some, you lose some.

Q: I would like to ask, for your office, who monitored, or how important was the Internet?

BISHOP: By 2004 the internet had, indeed, become an important method of communication in China. In 2005 our Embassy web page was receiving about three million hits per month. The vast majority of visitors were searching the website's pages about visas.

If we speak of "monitoring" the internet, the FSNs who prepared the daily media summary reports for Washington gradually learned to look at Chinese newspaper web pages rather than the hard copy of the newspaper. Looking at the websites of television stations helped with covering what was said on the airwaves. If your question means, however, were we reading blogs, or following web conversations, the answer is no. That would have required a dedicated staff we didn't have.

During my first tour in Beijing, we had a USIA Foreign Service specialist, Janet Reid, who managed all our own IT functions. Janet's position was one that was absorbed by State, and her replacement did not work at PAS. We can say that her transfer was another self-inflicted wound of consolidation, and we lost our dedicated IT specialist just as the internet was opening up so many opportunities.

During my second tour as PAO, PAS had one local-hire American, Sommer Austin, who worked on the Embassy's website. She had two FSNs who combined some of the lower level "system management" tasks with maintaining the website. This was our own internet presence.

Sommer managed the transition from a unique American Embassy Beijing website to one that conformed to the worldwide same-look "branding" templates that were mandated by the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. She managed the parallel loading of materials in English and Chinese. She worked up some pages unique to Beijing, like a page on our book translation program. She updated the consular web pages. The Department had mandated that each Embassy have only one web page, and that it be managed by PAS. This was doctrinally correct, but it was, so to speak, an "unfunded mandate" since we received no more people or money to manage this.

Charlotte Beers was very keen, from her private sector experience, on branding. This meant more than simply having a brand like “Cool Britannia.” It also meant that a company's products and its web presence should be unified visually, which meant every Embassy's website should look the same, and URLs should have the same format, as in “london.usembassy.gov” or “beijing.usembassy.gov.”

An internet issue that preoccupied us was the “Great Chinese firewall,” the Chinese government's ability to shut down access to certain foreign websites. RFA's website was one. We did not want to be among the sites that was vulnerable to being turned off by the Chinese.

If our website was on “state.gov” or “usembassy.gov,” however, it would be relatively easy for the Chinese government to restrict access. At post, therefore, we wanted to keep the website inside the firewall, so we ran our own site at “org.cn.” What appeared on “state.gov” was a mirror site. That arrangement took time to manage.

Doing all this, I'm sure Sommer and her FSNs were wrung out at the end of each day.

A website is, in a way, a “passive” web presence. Companies and organizations and NGOs now know they need to reach out into the net, drawing netizens into conversations, friending, sending out regular messages to individuals by email. We weren't there. We were still in the old mode, as in, if we put our stuff on our website, they will come. We knew this was a weakness, but every time the Information Unit focused on it, then another cabinet visit was announced, which tied up everyone for weeks. To ride the wave of change on the internet, we simply needed more people.

This is one more reason the Ambassador's perception that PAS wasn't pulling its weight was wrong. In 1992, when the size of the American staff was set, the internet had no impact on public opinion or Public Diplomacy. More than a decade later, its presence revolutionized private sector communication, and the private sector added more and more people to deal with it.

In Public Diplomacy at posts in the field, in contrast, the internet was something extra that we were just supposed to accomplish in our abundant spare time, presto-chango, wave the magic wand. This was plain and simple stupid, and I'm getting hot under the collar just talking about it. It provides an example of how Washington can think a big thought -- we need to do more on the internet -- yet fail to consider what burdens that places on posts, and fail to consider providing more resources.

Compared to many other Embassies, however, our website was strong in Chinese, not just English. This was partly the fruit of now having a Washington File in Chinese. There was a steady flow of translations coming out of Washington. A hat tip to Bob Holden in IIP. At our end, we also spent a lot of money for outside translations, especially for *Jiaoliu* magazine, and we made sure the material was available on our Chinese language

webpages. That's where we were. Compared to any self-respecting American corporation that was doing business in China, though, we probably looked pretty pathetic.

Since you've got me going on this, let me say some more. During my whole last decade in the Foreign Service, I was struck, distressed, dumbfounded by the absurd distance between needs and means. In China, the economy grew and grew, and the universities grew and grew, and newspapers grew and grew, and broadcasting grew and grew, and the internet exploded, and the means, the resources, that we needed to respond were never provided to us.

The example that really brought this home to me was the NBA, the National Basketball Association. They sensed the potential of a huge market, and huge profits, in China, especially after Yao Ming began to play with the Rockets.

Q: The basketball phenom ...

BISHOP: Yes, the tall, handsome Chinese basketball star, and great national hero.

The NBA decided that one way to increase their viewership, which meant also meant Chinese buying more T-shirts and the televising of games that provided a platform for more advertising, was to arrange some exhibition games in China, with Yao Ming on the court. They chose Shanghai and Beijing as the venues, two games in each city. They rented huge basketball stadiums. I went to one of the games in Beijing. It was done wonderfully. I could see the impact. Everyone in the stadium was charged up about the NBA, and I think to some degree they had good thoughts about American-Chinese friendship, and worldwide sport, and so on.

In order to stage these four games in China, the NBA sent 185 people to manage things -- TV people, video people, tickets people, interpreters, and so on. One corporation, the NBA, for three weeks of activity in China, sent 185 people.

I was Uncle Sam's public affairs account manager in China. I operated all year round. I had the diplomatic portfolio, the trade portfolio, the education portfolio, the commercial portfolio, the human rights portfolio, the terrorism portfolio, the Six Party Talks portfolio, and on and on. I had 18 Americans and about 60 FSNs in five offices. We are supposed to make the Chinese love us and agree with us on all our positions? We're supposed to make some headway with this absurdly small amount of resources, in people and money? We're simply not serious.

We did our damndest, we did some good things, but my mind was being fried by this difference between needs and means.

OK, I've said it. Let me get hold of myself. Restore my diplomatic sangfroid. Forgive this "poor poor pitiful me" moment.

We received frequent reminders from Washington about the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA, or “Gip-ra”), with its emphasis on measuring outcomes. The great minds in Public Diplomacy in Washington hadn't figured out how to measure Public Diplomacy's effects, but they rightly realized that at least that they needed a comprehensive record of activities, large and small, at posts. They set up the RESULTS database to maintain the information. It was routinely sieved for reports and Congressional testimony.

This system may or may not have worked in different countries, but it really worked in China because I put a lot of emphasis on it. No matter how much was going on, the officer in charge of a program had to file the short report to Washington the day it happened, or the day afterward. We were the shining stars back in Washington.

Q: Well, this is something new to me. These reports, who was looking at these things?

BISHOP: Who was looking at them? It's a pretty good question.

Q: You know, sounds like a proliferation of paperwork or digital work.

BISHOP: We were doing it by email by that time.

Although the reports went into a big database, they were seen by people in the various Public Diplomacy offices in Washington, and they became the talk of staff meetings and daily spot reports to principals. A report that involved a Fulbrighter in China, for instance, was seen by ECA and also by EAP. So it created buzz, with occasional feedback that “the Assistant Secretary was pleased to hear you had done this or that,” which gave some extra incentive to our officers for filing the reports early and well. No one asked for my opinion about the overall worth of the reports and the database, but I decided we should do things zealously, not to be tardy or churlish in our response.

Looking at my list of the issues, there were the Six Party Talks. I wish that I could unveil the talks and give you the whole, unvarnished, down and dirty inside story ...

Q: Tell us what the Six Party Talks were about.

BISHOP: The Six Parties are North Korea, South Korea, Russia, China, Japan, and the United States. These are six countries that have a focus on the Korean peninsula and the North Korean nuclear program. The talks were aimed to persuade North Korea to give up its nuclear program. Even now, the North Koreans haven't done so. The talks haven't born fruit.

I wish I could give you all the inside dope, but when Chris Hill would walk in with the American delegation to join the other five delegations at one of the many meetings in Beijing, the doors closed and we public affairs people were outside the room handling the media horde. When I say “we,” I'm generously including myself, but the heavy lifting was done by Sheila Paskman and the Information Unit.

My one insight to share on Six Party Talks is that when Chris Hill became the chief American delegate, I noticed that he had a different view of using the media than his predecessors, different from practically everybody else in the U.S. government. For most American delegation leaders, meeting the press was an obligatory burden after a meeting. Foreign Service people are pretty well practiced at learning how to say nothing when speaking to the media: “it was a constructive meeting,” or, “yes, we really clarified each other’s positions,” or “I think there’s a way forward if ...” Nonetheless, meeting the press is regarded as something you had to do, and it was generally dreaded.

Chris Hill had a view that encounters with the press, even pull-asides, detouring before or after a session to talk to the media off the hotel lobby, were a tool in the negotiations. He often talked about “feints” in what he said to the journalists. He might say to us, “Oh, did you notice, I just feinted there.”

Now, I’m not in a position to really say how effective he was at that, but I did notice that he was serious and calculating in thinking about the media. I kind of liked it. He regarded meetings with the media as part of shaping or staging individual sessions of the Talks.

All of this meant work for PAS. Even encounters between Chris Hill and journalists that were portrayed as short impromptu chats walking in and out of meetings required planning and setup on our part.

Here it was possible to also see in microcosm the large changes that had taken place in Public Diplomacy over the years. In the 1960s, say, when communication between Washington and posts was much more spare, American Embassy spokesmen (I suppose they were mostly men, then) were well known media personalities in the host country. In the 21st century, the Spokesperson did more planning and setup of venues than standing behind a microphone. The actual policy words were spoken by visiting Washington principals like Chris Hill. Once, Embassy spokesmen did their own backgrounding for the American press. Now, the spokesperson would set up individual meetings with Embassy experts.

Q: What did the Chinese think of North Korea and the “Kim dynasty”?

BISHOP: China and North Korea have this emotional tie that goes back to the Korean War -- blood brothers on the battlefield, lips and teeth. The PRC drew on these themes when it propagandized its own population during the Korean War. One of the problems with Chinese narratives, however, is that they they’re hard to turn off. Even now, the Chinese must genuflect to those memories, at least in public.

My sense is that the Chinese officials who must deal with North Korea have had abundant opportunity to see their intransigence up close, and it has not led to more fondness. Though it has been insufficient, the Chinese have been vexed enough to occasionally twist the North Koreans’ arms, as when they cut off the fuel supply to North

Korea for a few days. They don't do it openly, but they do things to cramp the North Koreans.

When the Chinese look at a failing regime in North Korea, there's the possibility of an implosion, and a half dozen scenarios of how it might happen. All the scenarios result in refugees across the border with China's northeast. Surely the Chinese could contain the refugee flows in camps, and I can't imagine there's not some kind of plan for that. Even so, they regard a refugee crisis as destabilizing, and they don't want to go down that path. Also, the likely outcomes of a North Korean implosion would bring Korean unification with the South in charge. The Chinese like the idea of a North Korean buffer between China and the power of South Korea and its ally the United States.

So the Chinese do enough, from year to year and month to month, to contain North Korean excesses without doing anything fundamental to change the equation. Of course the only thing that can fundamentally change the equation is regime change in North Korea, and that makes the Chinese nervous.

Q: If you look at the many programs managed by Public Affairs Sections, from working with the media to education and exchanges, what were you focused on?

BISHOP: When we had our discussion about my first tour in Beijing, as Deputy Public Affairs Officer, I mentioned that I was keen to "lean" all our programs in the direction of high priority bilateral goals. In my second tour, I continued with that emphasis on "leaning," and I think I was able to run things in a way that increased the number of programs. "Lean" and increase the numbers, both.

I've always been keen to have things counted, and each time I was PAO I had my staff count the number of programs that had been conducted in the past few years. Some were easy to count -- how many Fulbrighters went to the States? How many International Visitors? How many press conferences did we arrange? This counting, baseline counting perhaps, allowed us then to think about expanding the number of programs. This was also valuable when I wrote each officer's annual evaluation, and, to be frank, when I provided information for my own ER.

I copied out some figures before I came here. For the 2004-2005 evaluation year, print and web editors ran our materials -- meaning press releases, op-eds, backgrounders, materials on the U.S., excerpts from testimony in Washington -- 3800 times. The count had been 200 in 2000. Here, our outreach work ran parallel to the increasing demand for materials by China's expanding media sector. Still, this was a pretty good rise, not just in quantity, but in quality too. Chinese readers got more of their views from our sources, quoting Administration officials. The circulation for each issue of *Jiaoliu* magazine was about 18,000.

International Visitors increased by one fourth to 100. We doubled the number of Chinese Fulbrighters in a single year, including 20 of the new Fulbright Language Teaching Assistants. We counted 468 presentations by 150 speakers. We sent journalists and film

crews from several Chinese stations to the U.S. to produce programs under the Television Cooperative program run by the Foreign Press Center. Among the topics they covered were AIDS, genetically modified organisms, protecting the environment, and enterprise. The television co-ops were a very fine tool, since programs produced by a station in one province eventually were circulated for broadcast in other provinces, too.

All this was running at a pretty fast pace.

One of our largest efforts in China was the International Visitor program. In most countries, it's up to PAS to find IV nominees who speak English so that they can join group programs with Visitors from other nations too -- programs for journalists, or economics professors, or city planners, or women leaders, for instance. The problem with the group programs is that you have to find English speakers.

From the first days of the program in China, there were so few people who could speak English that USIA and then the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs had organized single-person programs for China. We were sending 90-some IVs a year, and almost all were tailored one-person programs with escort interpreters. One of the finest officers in Public Diplomacy, Ruth Kurzbauer, had this portfolio, and I marveled at how she bore up under the workload.

The extraordinary dedication of IV resources to China meant that we should really know our stuff when providing input to Washington for each visitor. There are a couple of angles to this.

For instance, we sent many women on programs that addressed women's rights. Looking over reports from previous programs, I saw that ECA and the program agencies were organizing rather predictable programs. The IV would arrive in Washington. For three or four days they got the standard tour of federalism, separation of powers, and so on. When they began their tailored schedule and their individual appointments, they would meet a woman Member of Congress. They would visit the National Organization for Women and other women's organizations working women's issues. What got my attention was that the visitors were always being sent to meet people at Emily's List. It's a women's organization, for sure, but it is political, and partisan. It provides money to pro-choice Democratic women candidates.

This struck me wrong several ways. First, we were sending our Visitors to a partisan organization with no parallel visit to a Republican group. Second, we were telling Chinese women that women in the United States are all unified on a certain view of women's issues, the NOW view, and they are all pro-choice. I was bothered by this approach because it implicitly supported the reliance on abortion in China's family planning, which we criticized every year in the Human Rights Reports.

I insisted very strongly that Chinese women IVs had to see the full range of American women's organizations. For instance, Concerned Women for America has a larger membership than NOW, and it's pro-life. I found it curious that NOW had somehow

become the designated organization to represent American women. I was fine with Chinese women meeting pro-choice American women's organizations, but I insisted that they must meet pro-life women as well.

When I looked at the programs that had been organized for Chinese specialists on the environment, I noticed something similar. The usual template program was to send them to visit the EPA in Washington, and then in Denver, say, they would visit the EPA regional office. Or they would visit the Bureau of Land Reclamation in Washington and the local office in Boise.

What was missing was care for the environment in the private sector. Vast tracts of American forest belong to Georgia-Pacific and Weyerhaeuser, for instance. The corporations are very active in conservation and environmental protection, so much so that you can tell from aerial photos that the private forests and ranges are better tended than the public lands. So I insisted that our Chinese IVs must visit corporations -- and state governments too. My intention was to give the Chinese a much more balanced view of the United States, to reinforce lessons in federalism, and to see corporate responsibility in a markets and enterprise economy.

Here's another example. One IV was a professor of economics. This young department chair, nominated by a consulate, had received his Ph.D. from a Chinese university. I sensed that this professor still lived in a world of central planning, and I wanted the IV program to give him a totally new feel for the American markets and enterprise economy.

At the time, China was transitioning government employees, Party members, and those working for state-owned enterprises out of government-owned housing. They were privatizing unit-owned apartments, allowing employees to purchase ownership on favorable rates. This meant that the new owners could sell or rent out the properties in the future, so the change in favor of ownership must be matched by changes in banking and lending.

I knew from reports on past IVs that the programmers would send the IV, during the initial week in Washington, to the Federal Reserve and maybe the FDIC and Treasury. I wrote out a different plan, telling Washington to take him to a local real estate company to witness a house closing. He would see private property, transfer of property, prices, loans, mortgage insurance, the termite inspection, title insurance, and so on. I wanted him to have a consumer's view of the economy before he visited the big institutions -- a view from the bottom up, so to speak, rather than a look down from the Federal Reserve. I thought the visitor needed this because of China's own system of central economic planning and controls.

I followed up with Ruth and with Washington after the professor returned. When asked, the real estate agent thought it better not to have him sit through a real closing. What they arranged was for six or eight people in the office to gather at the table. One played the seller, another the realtor, a third the banker, and so on. Our visitor was the buyer. They went through all the forms, and answered all his questions for a few hours.

He was asked, which loan are you choosing? Thirty year fixed, 15 year fixed, an ARM? Do you want to pay closing costs? How many points will you pay? And so on.

The IV was surprised by the choices. He had lived his whole life in an economy where all things are made uniform, where the government decides, not the consumer. He had had no idea about the role of consumer choice, competition, consumer protections, and so on.

One more focus to mention. I mentioned the impact of 9/11 in China, and Chinese worries about separatism among the Muslim minorities in China's west. I asked all our ACAOs to organize some programs in the West, and Darrell Jenks moved out smartly. Darrell, EAP/PD area director Peter Kovach, and I opened this effort with a series of programs in Ningxia and Xinjiang provinces. The Foreign Affairs Offices were made nervous by our approach, so they didn't schedule us for any large presentations, but we met with scholars that they invited to round tables, and I would say the response by the scholars to our low key approach, discussing areas of U.S.-Chinese cooperation, was quite positive. Out west they hadn't heard much about cooperation at all. We also were able to meet Muslim leaders for good conversations.

Q: How about performing arts programs, high culture, so to speak? USIA had been famous for cultural presentations like Louis Armstrong.

BISHOP: You'll recall during Hong Kong portion of this series of interviews that I had mentioned Isaac Stern's visit to China in 1979 -- and later Charlton Heston's visit to China to direct *The Caine Mutiny Court Martial*. Those programs had made a large impact, and my take on things is that performing arts programs are particularly useful when a given bilateral relationship needs an initial shot of adrenaline, or when two countries that have been estranged establish a new relationship. No doubt when North Korea opens, a few strategic performing arts programs will be important. Those programs in China had illustrated that principle.

When I was in Beijing, though, it wasn't necessary for Uncle Sam to sponsor those performing arts exchanges. There were plenty of privately arranged performances. I recall attending wonderful performances with Chinese and American musicians playing Stradivarius violins brought from the U.S. The performances on the instruments were part of the sales strategy by houses that bought and sold the violins. Winston Marsalis came to Beijing as part of a promotion of his albums by Sony. My point is that the growth of the economic and cultural relationship had taken on a power of its own, so our Public Diplomacy priorities could focus elsewhere.

Even so, we organized some small scale performing arts programs. In my first tour, Kevin Maynor's musical interpretations of Paul Robeson were well received. When I was PAO, the folk singer Abby Washburn came to China under our auspices for a number of performances with Bela Fleck. She sang some songs in Mandarin. And a young Fulbrighter, Caitrin McKiernan, produced the play *Passages of Dr. Martin Luther King*.

Let me mention a few more Public Diplomacy focus areas.

The tighter scrutiny of visa applications all around the world also affected our work in Public Diplomacy. The need for every single applicant to be interviewed put enormous pressures on the consular section. In PAS, as single manager of the Embassy's website, we had to greatly expand the consular pages, and they needed frequent updating. We had to deal with criticism of the new system of advance appointments for visa interviews, and complaints about the FAQ telephone line. The major issue, though, was that the number of visas that were given to Chinese to study in the United States had decreased after 9/11.

Q: Why was that? Because just it was time or because we were doing a better job of --

BISHOP: Before 9/11, a Chinese applicant for a student visa primarily had to overcome an issuing consular officer's doubt about the applicant's return to China, meaning that after receiving an American degree, would the applicant return? As you know, refusal rates change, with chiefs of consular sections and/or individual officers and/or the inspectors judging that too many or too few visas are being issued.

There were always worries that some Chinese applicants in specialized scientific fields were seeking to learn technologies with military applications, and as the Russians and Chinese increased their efforts to obtain U.S. technology, the reviews became more thorough, and applicants had to wait many weeks or sometimes months for clearances.

I would say, though, that the decrease in visas to Chinese students stemmed primarily from more thorough security reviews, which often delayed issuance beyond the beginning of a school term. Once a few applicants were refused visas, fewer applicants applied to U.S. universities for fear of wasting time and money or losing face. There was a chilling effect of lower issuance rates. Once things begin to chill, there are more refusals to applicants who shouldn't receive a visa, yes, but the chill affected many other students who might have received a visa. The numbers cascaded downward.

When American student visa issuances sagged, the other English-speaking countries -- the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, even South Africa -- surged their efforts to attract Chinese students. In any case, whether we were too strict, or whether our competitors were attracting more students, in PAS we had to develop a response, a public affairs campaign to reverse the trend.

Reversing the decline required the Consular Section to play a role. They had to make Washington comfortable with the idea that the Embassy in Beijing was going to be giving visas to more Chinese students instead of being quite so cautious and strict. They had to work through some of the security issues that were causing long delays in the issues of visas. They had to tweak the visa interview appointment system so that student visa applicants could be seen earlier.

Our role in PAS was to let Chinese students know that American colleges and universities were ready to admit Chinese students, and that the door was also open at the Embassy.

This was work. There was the face-to-face work with students and their faculty advisors at the universities, talking things up. Both CAO Rob Laing and I hosted or were guests for web chats. We gave some office space at the ACEE to Frank Mok, who worked for the Institute for International Education as a student counselor.

I sensed we needed a written “anchor” for this effort, a speech with the right pitch and the right details that could be widely circulated. I ended up writing it myself, and Darrell Jenks, the ACEE Director, gathered a good crowd of students and educators at the ACEE to hear it. Once delivered, we translated it, and we put it on the web and could point to it whenever needed. This speech was picked up and loaded on dozens of Chinese websites, so great was the interest in U.S. student visas. It's still there. One Chinese magazine said it was the definitive speech on American education, the welcome for Chinese students, and visas. I included some useful advice on the visa interview.

American universities seem very expensive to Chinese, even if they're going to a fairly low cost state university. The tuition is so large, compared to Chinese living standards, that there was talk that American universities were making a profit off the Chinese students. New Zealand language institutes had become infamous for their focus on profits, so Chinese students were suspicious that all foreign universities, American schools included, wanted to gouge them. So in the speech I talked about this directly.

I explained that whatever Chinese students spend, their funds are being matched, either by the state legislature or by the endowments of the private universities. This is because the total cost of a year of education is much higher than the amount that students pay. A Chinese student, even paying out-of-state tuition, might be paying 30 or 50 cents for a dollar's worth of education. Even now, there are still comments and buzz about that speech.

And the numbers of applications, and visas issued, began to rise again.

Q: How about the return rate?

BISHOP: The return rate also went up, though I don't think that was necessarily our doing.

Q: Got to be the economy.

BISHOP: Yes. There are more opportunities for graduates in China. They return because they know their MBA from an American university is a primo credential to get a good job back home.

Q: It's interesting. I dealt for a long time with Yugoslavia. Students who went to the United States on Fulbrights or on exchanges -- the university faculties were not at all responsive to them because these were old farts who didn't want their way of tenure or anything else changing. The younger people full of bright ideas would be relegated to the lowest ranks. Was this true in China too?

BISHOP: I think that many of the Chinese returnees would tell the same story. Those who returned in the 80s and 90s commonly ran into just what you described. Heads of departments or senior professors who had earned degrees overseas had earned them from the Soviet Union. There were many economics professors with Soviet degrees, for instance. What did they know about economics, trade, commerce, business? Nothing useful for China's future. So the scholars who returned from the U.S. met more than ordinary university politics. There was an ideological hangover as well. And who are these young whippersnappers, anyway?

This was moderated over time by the enormous expansion of Chinese higher education. It solved some of the problems by creating new positions. In time the older generation of professors had to retire. And gradually university administrators knew they had to build quality faculties, which meant those with foreign degrees.

Q: In dealing with universities or other institutions, did anyone take a look at Marxism? Or had this become sort of ancient history?

BISHOP: It's not ancient history because every high school and university must offer certain courses in Marxism, Leninism, and Deng Xiaoping thought. My conversations with Chinese students led me to understand, though, that they just endure these classes. They sit through them. They nod and pretend to be awake. But in fact, just like other parts of the ideological posture of the Party and the state, these things are largely disregarded.

The courses are required for graduation because the Party doesn't want to give up its position as guiding the ideology of the country. Another factor that explains the lingering influence of Marxism is that the universities and policy institutes may have dozens of scholars on their rolls, and some (the older scholars, the lazy ones, or those whose background was in the PLA or the Party) coast along on their old learning, unwilling to question the premises they had been taught.

I was quite struck by this academic inertia of rest at a conference on Taiwan issues organized by one of the universities. Of course, Taiwan is a hot-button issue, and among the scholars were some who were quite sophisticated in their understanding of how changes in Taiwan, democratic changes, need to be factored into the PRC's approach to the island. To hear their nuanced papers, however, you had to listen to many others by their colleagues who rotely repeated all the old lines, complete with the oddly stressed voices of Communist indoctrination.

A program like the one we organized for the economics professor from Heilongjiang University was partly to challenge the whole concept of central planning, and to demonstrate that the old ideologies and habits were inadequate for China's future.

Younger Chinese academics in the leading universities were conscious that Marxism and Communism didn't provide good guidance for China's future. I was asked to speak at a conference at People's University on just war theory. As the Chinese government thought through its responses to Kosovo, 9/11, Iraq, and Afghanistan, they realized that Mao's ideological framework -- wars of imperialism, bad, people's war, good -- didn't provide much useful guidance in a rather complex world. So the university had organized a conference to examine just war theory. They weren't ready to endorse it, but they grasped that they needed to understand it, and that it might help broaden their thinking.

I hadn't been given much notice about the conference, and not many details. I put together my presentation on just war thinking mostly from memory, recalling my study of Thomas Aquinas and teaching at the Air Force Academy.

I discovered that the Chinese university had invited an international affairs professor from a prominent U.S. university to anchor the conference. Much of his way-too-long paper criticized several U.S. administrations for their unjust wars. I found that I was the paper presenter that gave them a plain vanilla description of the criteria for just wars, and defended the war on terrorism as just.

Q: Here and there you have mentioned the People's Liberation Army, the Chinese military. Did it figure in your Public Diplomacy?

BISHOP: It has been a U.S. goal -- a DOD goal, a State goal, a White House goal -- the same goal in Republican and in Democratic administrations -- to develop the military-to-military relationship with China, to build trust.

The PLA -- and here "People's Liberation Army" includes the Navy and the Air Force -- is the most separate and most ideologized of China's institutions. Remember too that the PLA is not the nation's army, it's the Party's army. Soldiers swear oaths to the Party, not the Constitution.

The PLA has an elaborate system of foreign affairs offices. Foreigners who deal with the PLA officers who staff these offices refer to them, informally, as the "barbarian handlers." The English-speaking barbarian handlers, who studied the language at their own separate military academy in Luoyang, are very smooth. These men and women are the ones who meet foreigners, set up schedules, arrange the meetings, sit with the Americans at banquets, and so on. Only highly reliable officers get these jobs.

Successive DATTs were frustrated by this need to move everything through the Foreign Affairs Offices. They wanted to build communication, knowledge, and trust with warfighters, with field commanders. It was abundantly clear from their actions, if not their words, that the Chinese didn't want this to happen. Meeting a commander or the

head of a staff section, or visiting a base or unit, was very hard to arrange. Again, the PLA is sealed off in most ways. To meet the incessant foreign demands to see the PLA in the field, the Chinese had a show roster of ships and bases, and Potemkin commandos would perform martial arts for the foreign visitors.

Q: It's been pointed out in numerous articles that the PLA is one of China's most conservative institutions ...

BISHOP: Yes.

Q: ... and one that views the United States as a potential enemy.

BISHOP: Yes again.

Q: If you're in the military you've got to have an enemy. You've got to have a big enemy so you can get more money. We could even say we are doing this with China ourselves, like we did with the Soviets, painting them as much more powerful as they probably were. Were you able to insert yourself in military-to-military things?

BISHOP: For the record, I'm not bought into that line of thinking – that the U.S. armed forces conjure up or exaggerate threats so that they can receive more resources – so I won't take that bait right now.

When you used the word “conservative,” I think your meaning has been the same as when I've used the word “ideologized.” And conservative Chinese ideology is left.

Dealing with different ideologies, you're always wrestling with words. I think you understand, though, what I mean when I say the PLA is ideologized and isolated. They live on their bases. The officers are Party members. They have their own schools. Units have political officers to indoctrinate all personnel. The PLA has certainly taken to heart the narrative in which the United States remains an imperial power that wants to keep China down, and that the U.S. is China's number one future enemy. This suspicion is a backdrop to every mil-to-mil initiative.

There have now been decades of American efforts, led by all the Secretaries of Defense and all the Commanders of the Pacific Command, to build trust and relationships with the PLA. The results have all been limited -- by how the Chinese historical narrative of victimization frames their suspicions, by Communist doctrine, because of the PLA's institutional isolation, by how the Foreign Affairs Offices handle American delegations.

Although it became a larger issue after my time as PAO in Beijing, the active Chinese military program to penetrate the servers of U.S. government agencies and American corporations was beginning to be noticed. I wasn't privy to any classified discussions of this, so I'm speaking of what was in the news. The Chinese denials of military involvement -- that any penetrations or cyber raids against U.S. targets were done

elsewhere, or were executed by patriotic hackers independent of the government -- were just not credible.

As for Public Diplomacy and the PLA, I have always believed that Public Diplomacy can be helpful in building mil-to-mil relations -- by arranging better and more far-reaching media coverage of mil-to-mil events, and by using Public Diplomacy's writ to deal with educational institutions to open military academies and professional military education to Embassy-sponsored programs.

It's always the case, however, that the Defense Attaches in American Embassies all around the world are possessive about contacts with local militaries. Is a ship making a port call? The colonel says, "Don't worry, Mr. Ambassador, we'll take care of everything." Is there a group of American officers from one of the war colleges visiting? "Don't worry, Mr. Ambassador. They'll stop by and shake hands with you, but since they belong to me I'll set up the rest of their schedule."

There are generally two ways that PAS can be part of the large effort. One is with the local media. When EUCOM deployed people to train Nigerian peacekeepers or clear unexploded ordnance, an active public affairs posture, organized and led by PAS, arranging for the American military people to meet the journalists, was a great confidence builder.

There were these opportunities in China too. Once or twice a year, for instance, an American naval vessel would visit Shanghai or Qingdao or Zhanjiang in the south. As always, the Attaché said, "Don't worry, Mr. Ambassador, leave it to us." The Attaché's team would meet with the PLA's foreign affairs handlers to go over the visit. When they got to the bottom of their checklist they raised the question of media coverage, and the PLA team said, "Don't worry. We'll take care of that." And our team would say, "Great, one less worry for us."

Done this way, who would show up to cover the event? It would be the Chinese equivalent of Armed Forces Network, CCTV-5, the military channel. There might be visuals of the ship at the dock, but the words of the story were always spoken by the Chinese military journalist.

I always took the position that if a ship came to Shanghai or Qingdao or Zhanjiang, that city's local media and that city's bureau chiefs from the national media should be invited to events. I regularly deployed Wendy Lyle, our scrappy Consulate Public Affairs Officer in Guangzhou, to handle these ship visits. Wendy immigrated to the U.S. from Taiwan, and she knew how to get results by being assertive in a Chinese way.

Wendy would show up with the DATT advance team when the ship arrived, and when the PLA handlers said "Oh no, no, no, we've already arranged the media coverage," she might just say, "I've got them here! They're in the bus! They're ready to come in the gate! Of course you're going to let them cover the ship." This gave the Foreign Affairs officers real heartburn, but often the PRC senior officers were so amused by this Chinese-

American woman and her assertive ways, they let the press come in for the events. Your ordinary province-level journalist was quite wowed by a U.S. Navy ship, and the papers ran lots of photos and stories.

So, PAS could advance the mil-to-mil agenda by playing its “media” card.

Another way was to use our role as the Embassy lead in education and exchanges to approach military schools. “You’re educators. Well, we’re educators too. We do Fulbrights, we do speakers, we do seminars, and we do it at every university in China. Your military academy is a university. Couldn’t we bring by a speaker to talk to your faculty about ...”

This proved a tougher nut to crack. We’ll talk about the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II in a few minutes, but I was, I believe, the first Embassy speaker at the Academy of Military Sciences. We succeeded in getting them to agree to allow Charles Hawkins of the HERO Library to speak there too. So we were slowly prying open the door to the PLA’s senior schools.

There was one more way to use Public Affairs to help with the mil-to-mil relationship. Each Ministry has an associated policy institute, a think tank. They were open to having U.S. speakers, joining seminars, and so on. We programmed speakers, for instance, at one of the Ministry of Defense think tanks, the Foundation for International Strategic Studies (FISS).

Darrell Jenks, as ACAO and Director of the ACEE, ran our speakers program, and he grasped what I hoped PAS could do with the PLA. He and his staff always approached MND institutions for our speaker programs. It took some time for him to work through their initial misgivings, but once they had accepted a speaker and met Darrell, who spoke wizard Chinese, they were pleased to have the chance to meet more Americans.

By the way, Darrell was doing the same things at the Central Party School and the provincial Party Schools, though they were now called “Administrative Colleges” in English.

Q: What did you talk about?

BISHOP: We should back up a little bit. I began as PAO in 2003. The sixtieth anniversary of V-J Day would be 2005. I asked around the Embassy if there were anyone thinking ahead to the anniversary, and the DATT recalled that he had recently seen a draft Pacific Command plan. When I read it, I realized the PACOM intended to organize or support observances in Hawaii, the Philippines, Guam, Australia, and even Palau. There was no mention of China in the plan.

I asked the DATT if his office intended to do anything. In effect he told me they would have no time. Like us, they were overwhelmed by visitors and by all their many different taskings from around DOD. He let me know they would be happy to attend an event if

the Chinese organized something, and maybe attend a dinner or two, but they were in no position to organize anything from the Embassy side.

I sensed that the sixtieth anniversary could provide an opportunity -- to use the story of U.S.-China cooperation during the war to put a dent in the Party's narrative that the U.S. was always trying to keep China down. Not to mention that the Flying Tigers, the Doolittle Raid, the Hump route, the Burma Road -- all were great and compelling stories that needed re-telling in China.

Q: Stilwell and --

BISHOP: Vinegar Joe, yes.

I discovered that after years of ignoring the role of China's allies in its war against Japan, the Chinese were beginning to offer recognition. For instance, when the USAF Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base wanted to add a stone runway roller to their exhibit on the Hump Airlift, the Chinese found a roller in good condition on the side of a runway in Yunnan Province, where it had sat, unused, for 60 years. There was a large ceremony in Kunming to present the roller to the U.S. My former USAF Academy colleague and fellow Trinity College alumnus, Brigadier General Jon Reynolds, came out for the ceremony as the Museum's representative. I got to give the big speech. There were six of us Americans on the stage, and when an elderly Kunming resident who had worked on the runways as a boy came on stage, we all gave him a salute. He was sincerely abashed by the salute and by the thunderous applause. A nice moment.

We had all noticed that in the front row in the audience was an elderly Chinese woman jauntily wearing a beret, and she came forward to see us as soon as the ceremony ended. She was Rita Wong, who had worked as a Chinese nurse at the U.S. Army hospital in Yuannanyi. It was a rather fine occasion, and she had bought old photos of herself in her nurse's uniform.

She kept repeating a name, "Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Bush." He had been the hospital commander. After the ceremony back in Beijing, I spent some time with Google hoping to track down Dr. Bush. He had passed away, but I found his son, also a physician, in Connecticut. Rita was too old to make the trip, but her family flew to Connecticut to meet the son and place flowers on Lieutenant Colonel Bush's grave. Another nice moment.

One more memory of the gathering in Kunming. Another old gentleman told the story that his father owned a silk shop, and many of the American GIs visited the shop to buy silk to take home to mothers, wives, and sweethearts. Indeed they had helped the son with his English, and they had invited him to the base to see a musical play. The elderly Chinese thought a moment ... "what was the name of that tune?" I said, "Oklahoma!", and he clapped his hands with delight. Yes, he had seen the USO production of Oklahoma! This was an interesting story of the longevity of memories of cultural events.

In addition to the stone roller donation, the Chinese were finally inviting a few veterans groups -- Russian, American, British, French -- to China. They found a partner in the Sino-American Aviation Heritage Foundation, of which Jeff Greene was the sparkplug, idea man, and tour leader.

There were still a few of China's "united front" organizations that looked back to World War II. For instance, the people who had been at Yan'an with Chairman Mao when they were young, who had dealt with the Dixie Mission, there were still a few of them around. They had their own little society. These united front groups would be given some money on occasions such as this. They were inviting, for instance, the family of people like Evans Carlson, the Marine Raider who had ...

Q: Gung-ho.

BISHOP: ... been in China before the war. Yes, Randolph Scott played him in the film. He passed away many years ago, but his granddaughter was invited to come, and to bring with her some people who were also interested in China.

Learning of these Chinese invitations, we began our own planning. We wanted to do more than join or attend events that China was organizing. We should also go on the initiative, organizing some events in Beijing, Kunming, and Chongqing. We organized seminars using our own money. IIP provided the historian Ronald Spector as a speaker. We attached ourselves to Chinese events too, and protocol at their events required them to allow us to speak. We focused on the war for about a year and a half.

We frequently used three documentary films that had been made in World War II. We took the Frank Capra film in the "Why We Fight" series, "The Battle of China," and had it subtitled in Chinese. We did the same with "China Crisis" about the Flying Tigers and "Stilwell Road" about the war in Burma. That Captain Ronald Reagan was the film's narrator added a nice touch. We didn't do a careless subtitling. We transcribed the full texts of the narrations and had them properly translated.

We showed two of those films at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse. There weren't any active duty PLA who attended, but among the four or five hundred who gathered to watch the film, many were retired from the PLA, generals included. Most were younger, but in the large crowd were a few old enough to remember the war. As the films ran, we could hear people saying, "Woww, I didn't know." "Stilwell!" "Flying Tigers, ooohh!" And "gosh, the Road." There's some great, wonderful footage in those films, which conveyed at first hand America in the war, and Americans losing their lives for China.

There was a woman in her 70s in front of me, and when the films ended, I asked her what she had thought. She had been a child during the war. She said, "no one has told this story for years."

Darrell Jenks and ACAO Jeff Loree showed the films to many groups, and the reactions were always positive. The films still had dramatic punch.

From Jeff Greene I learned that the combat cameraman who had made “China Crisis,” Hal Geer, was living in California, still active at the age of 94. We brought him over, and he attended a public premiere of his great documentary at the National Library. After the film was shown, the Q&A could have gone on for hours.

We were on a roll with the films. Our conferences were successful too. With the mayor of Chongqing (old “Chungking”) and the governor of Sichuan Province, we had the first dinner in General Stilwell’s conference room in Chongqing since the war. I detached two Hump fliers from Jeff Greene’s group to join the dinner, and the applause they received was quite sincere.

I gave plenty of talks, but I realized we needed something more substantive and long-lived, so I reincarnated myself as a historian for a short period of time, and I wrote a long paper that outlined American participation in the war in China. It was the first paper in a volume published by the Chinese government’s World War II History Research Group.

As 2005 ended, I had a really good feeling that we had succeeded in reawakening the memories of Chinese and American cooperation during the war, putting one dent in the Chinese narrative of the war.

Q: Nobody called me to talk about my experience of watching HMS Belfast bombard Chinese positions off Chodo Island in North Korea.

BISHOP: (*Laughter*) Stuart, that’s the wrong war! I was working on recalling the time when we were working with China, not fighting China! (*Laughter*)

If it helps, I’ve been on the decks of the HMS Belfast. It’s docked in London on the Thames, a museum ship.

Q: Were there any attempts to, you know, get the veterans of the Korean War on both sides to get together?

BISHOP: Well, there wasn’t anything that I was doing. I do recall that some of the World War II veterans who came out had been in the Korean War also, and Jeff Greene had helped some American aviators from the Korean War meet Chinese pilots. But in 2005, I was focused on World War II.

While we’re discussing the Korean war, though, Ha Jin, the professor of English at Boston University, wrote *War Trash* which won the PEN Faulkner Award in 2005. It’s about the Chinese prisoners in South Korea during the war. It’s quite a stirring book. I read it in Beijing.

Just after reading the book, I happened to be sitting at a table at a conference next to one of the very well known CCTV talking heads, and the Korean War came up. His father had been in the Korean War, had been a prisoner of war, and was one of those who, at

Panmunjom, chose for China instead of Taiwan, I learned. His father went through the years of hardship as a result of what the Party did to the former POWs after they returned.

It was more than he could stand, my CCTV friend told me, when the soldiers who had chosen to go to Taiwan came back to see their families 30 years later. They were honored by their high schools and given the red carpet treatment because they were rich. The loyal prisoners who had come back to China and had been dumped on. He was bitter about it. His father's story paralleled Ha Jin's novel.

Q: Oh, absolutely.

BISHOP: The World War II observances and events were quite satisfying. I got to see lots of China. In Weifang in Shandong Province, I met many of the men and women, then children, who had been in the Weihsien internment camp during the war with Eric Liddell and Art Hummel.

Q: The Eric Liddell who was in the movie Chariots of Fire, and the future Ambassador to China, Art Hummel?

BISHOP: Yes. And it led me to read *Shantung Compound* by Langdon Gilkey, one of the most profound books to come out of the war. He had been held in the Weihsien camp too.

I gave one speech in Kunming that made everybody sit up straight. Seated in the center of a large outdoor square was a group of American CBI veterans and their wives, in their 70s and 80s. The city's and the province's leadership had turned out to greet them, and in the Chinese fashion they were giving a series of speeches of welcome. Behind the veterans, in ranks, were high school students, policemen and policewomen, members of the People's Armed Police, and PLA soldiers.

When it came time for me to speak as the Embassy representative, I called on each of the groups in ranks to "listen to what I say!" The officials in line behind me definitely looked my way. "Look at these men. They have had long lives after the war. They have had careers. They have raised families. They have never forgotten China. Their experience here made them better men and better Americans." Words to this effect.

"They took care of their comrades who had setbacks after the war." And, "they voted in every election." "This is how they loved their country, by being good citizens."

I was listening to the interpreter and watching his non-verbals. Mention of an election was skating at the edge. But of course, I backed away with reassuring talk about U.S.-China friendship, about Chinese airline pilots learning flight safety from a Boeing subsidiary in Kunming. The interpreter and the officials behind me relaxed a little, but they had gotten my message about democracy. It was one of my better moments.

I'm reminded that one of the things we did to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II was publish a special issue of *Jiaoliu* magazine. Editor Charlene Fu, a local

hire American, outdid herself on the issue. She had also put together the theme issue on religion in the United States.

I can't mention *Jiaoliu* without mentioning, however, the end of the magazine. After the end of USIA's magazines in the 1990s, we were still publishing *Jiaoliu* as a one-country post publication using our own money. China with *Jiaoliu* and India with *Span* were the last two posts able to sustain single-country magazines.

Both magazines depended on locally hired editors. When the Department ended the flexibility given to posts to hire Americans locally, at an American salary, in favor of a single "Locally Engaged Staff" status that meant Americans could only be hired at FSN salaries, they grandfathered incumbent Local Hire Americans for five years. Charlene Fu was one of those affected. As the end of her five years approached, we worked with personnel to keep her on without a salary cut, to no avail. Without her, the magazine came to an end. The Bureau of Human Resources wanted to standardize hiring options and simplify things. Their one-size-fits-all ruling that ended Local Hire Americans had a toll in ending a significant publication.

Q: We haven't come to Iraq and all that, or --

BISHOP: Let me think. The initial American responses after 9/11 had taken place while I was in Nigeria. The overthrow of the Taliban also took place while I was in Africa. The invasion of Iraq and the taking of Baghdad were in the first half of 2003, when I was in my language refresher. At that time, the focus of American diplomacy was to assure that China did not veto any of the U.N. Security Council resolutions that would give us freedom of action.

One of the fundamental anchors of China's foreign policy is the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries. Our arguments about Saddam Hussein -- he is a pretty nasty character and look what he's done to his own people -- never struck any chords in Chinese officialdom. The Embassy was always demarching the Chinese on this or that, and the Chinese surely sensed that they didn't want to challenge us on Iraq, but in the Public Affairs Section we weren't spending a lot of time defending the war.

As the "GWOT" unfolded, the Chinese found our focus on terrorism had some advantages for them. China's population included non-Han Muslims in Xinjiang province, and they could increase their control over Xinjiang's people under the terrorism rubric. They also liked our preoccupation with Iraq and Afghanistan, which give them more space to maneuver in other parts of the world.

Q: Did the fact that the Chinese were essentially bankrolling our trade with them, did that come up?

BISHOP: The direct answer is that all of us in the Embassy well understood that China's foreign currency reserves were rising and rising. And of course we realized that they

were parking those reserves by buying up our Treasury notes. But while I was there, China's reserves, and ownership of our debt, were seen through the lenses of trade deficit reduction and exchange rates. We were focused -- and visiting members of Congress like Senator Schumer were focused -- on the unfairness of their pegging the yuan to the dollar so that there was never any adjustment in rates in response to the imbalance in trade.

I'd say that we weren't focused on how the level of debt might hazard the strength of our own domestic economy. That was something that became evident in 2010 and 2011, after the rapid increase in the deficit and in the amount of debt owned by China as the Administration responded to the economic crisis.

Q: Were there any events that you had to respond to? Any particular events during this time or?

BISHOP: In my first tour in Beijing there had been the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade. I am not thinking that there was any big event like the Olympics that hit us. The pleasure of organizing the Public Diplomacy for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing fell to my successor, Don Q. Washington.

Q: Or the plane collision at --

BISHOP: Oh, no. The collision between the Chinese fighter and the U.S. P-3 Orion had happened before I arrived. The people who dealt with it were still at the Embassy and talking about it, but I had missed the event. I did, though, pay attention to how China portrayed the event.

The collision and its aftermath were quite instructive. The Chinese were lying through their teeth when they said the Orion maneuvered in order to hit the Chinese fighter. The two planes had collided because of the wild acrobatics by the Chinese pilot. Samuel Hynes said fighter pilots could be divided into two groups, the "sanes" and the "crazies." The Chinese pilot was obviously a crazy. Rolling around the Orion at high speed, he miscalculated. He thought he would give the American crew a good scare, but instead he clipped the radome and the wing. The Chinese fighter was lost, and the pilot died. The Orion, thanks to an amazing feat of airmanship by the pilot, managed to land on Hainan Island.

The Chinese propaganda machine went into high gear. They propagated a dishonest account of the maneuvers of the two aircraft. And, in their own domestic propaganda, they also decided to portray pilot Wang Wei as brave, the best pilot that had ever flown the skies, a zealous and selfless member of the party, an exemplar for all Chinese to follow. Demonstrating this, they said that when his wife had become pregnant, the couple had had a chat, and they decided that it was not the right time in his flying career for them to have a child. So they had decided to go ahead and abort the child.

You can guess that this rather staggered me -- that a career, or perhaps the greater glory of China, justified an abortion. This was bad enough.

As I thought about it, though, the same story line told me that the Chinese who wrote out this narrative for domestic consumption had no idea for how this would be heard around the world. It reflected the isolation of the PLA. They played to a domestic audience without being aware of how controversial and heart-rending an abortion would be regarded in the United States. They didn't realize that the story that they told to their own soldiers and their own people about his great virtues would come across quite differently when it was read overseas.

Anyway, the P-3 incident was before my time.

Q: I've heard that the Chinese are becoming quite active in their own Public Diplomacy. Did you see this?

BISHOP: My counterpart in the Chinese Government was the Minister for the State Council Information Office. China's public diplomacy belonged to this Minister, Zhao Qizheng, who had a winning personality. We got to know each other when we worked together on World War II V+60 programs.

Right after I arrived, I went to the State Council for my initial call on Minister Zhao. We drove to the main entrance of his office building. I was greeted at the car by members of his staff, and they escorted me down the halls and up the elevator to the reception room near his office.

They made small talk all the way. They gave me a quick introduction to the SCIO, mentioning how it had been formed in the early 1990s. Sensing the need for China to build up its own public diplomacy, they told me, they had done a serious study of how other governments organized their information, public affairs, public diplomacy, and cultural affairs -- that bundle of different activities. The model they most admired was the U.S. Information Agency. USIA had it all down right, they told me.

When they organized the State Council Information Office, then, they largely organized it on USIA lines. Just as when USIA had been formed in the 1950s, they pulled in a mix of people, some from the Foreign Ministry, some from the PLA, a few journalists, a few cultural experts, so that the mix of people they had in the SCIO paralleled the kind of people we had in USIA.

I was feeling pretty good about the conversation, and then they said, "Of course we have heard that USIA has become part of the State Department."

That was no secret, so I said, "yes."

And ... they exchanged knowing glances and chuckled out loud. They were laughing, diplomatically. As if they knew how we had taken a focused, high morale Public Diplomacy organization -- one that combined "information," public affairs and the spokesman function, with "culture," education and exchanges -- and moved it all into the

State Department. They knew that if the State Council Information Office became part of the Foreign Ministry, they would soon be pulled into the Foreign Ministry's own culture and its own sense of priorities.

As I went in to meet the Minister, just an ordinary introductory call, I couldn't shake off their laughter. They knew what USIA had been, what it had done, and they thought, these unpredictable Americans. They had a winner in USIA, and they moved it into the State Department.

Q: Did you get any idea of what the Chinese were doing in Washington at the Embassy?

BISHOP: As far as their Embassy in Washington was concerned, the answer is no. You could, however, see that China's new public diplomacy was pulsing with the resources of money and people. Minister Zhao was doing quite a good job. China's Confucius Institutes, for instance, are equivalent to an American Corner or in some cases a USIS center. They launched those while I was in China.

For us to have a library or a permanent program space in China, we would have to run a full gamut of permissions from every part of the Party and government in China. The U.S.-China consular agreement was an obstacle. It provided for an American office in only five Chinese cities. When someone in Washington had the bright idea of American Presence Posts, the Chinese asked in Washington whether they would be allowed to open presence posts in American cities, and of course the Department's answer was no. So the Chinese nixed American presence posts unless the consular agreement were re-opened. No one was willing to take on that porcupine.

But for the Confucius Institutes, the Chinese just called up University of Wherever and asked, "Confucian Institute, would you like to have one? If so, we can provide you with this and that." Their public diplomacy has free rein in the United States. Ours was bounded, kept within certain bounds by Chinese Government.

They now have hundreds of journalists who work for PRC government or Party media in the U.S. Their only counterparts are two VOA correspondents in China. The Chinese never granted permission for more.

Our Center in Beijing, the American Center for Education Exchange (ACEE) had a library, and our English teaching officer, the IIE rep, and university admissions materials were there. It was, however, in the wrong part of the city, in the east on the Second Ring Road, though all the university students, the traditional Public Diplomacy audience of convenience, were in campuses in the west of the city. It would take a student a long time to get over to the ACEE from Peking University, and in the years I was there, the trip became longer and longer as the city became larger and more congested. In 2003 I could make the trip in 40 minutes in a taxi or Embassy car. (Travel options for students were slower.) By 2006 it took well more than an hour. In any case, we were inconveniently situated because the Chinese had decreed years before that diplomatic establishments could only be in the northeast quadrant of the city. It wasn't just us, it affected all the

other embassies too. The Chinese had succeeded in bottling us up by allowing us to only be in certain places.

We could take a speaker out to a university, but that was not the same as having a library or center. Given the traffic, a single talk by a speaker at a university required us to set aside a whole afternoon or a whole morning.

China Central Television, CCTV, had several channels. One was CCTV-9 in English. You can see it here on cable in many areas. It's really slick. Someone who has been to China can watch a program and know what they have omitted, what they have gauzed over, but for most viewers, their presentation of programs and therefore of images of China, visions of China, is very good, and very well thought out. The State Council Information Office was working to expand reception of CCTV-9 around the world. It was clear that China was enlarging its public diplomacy presence around the world, and it's even clearer now.

If China reforms, their greater public diplomacy presence will be OK. But if the Chinese turn in troublesome directions, then their public diplomacy will be troublesome too.

For instance, American college students who go to the Confucius Centers are likely to absorb the notion that Taiwan is some kind of illegitimate hangover from the Chinese civil war, and that it really does belong to China. Even among the young Americans that I met studying language in Beijing, you could tell from their conversations that they were taking in the PRC view of Taiwan, partly because they had not been to the island to see things for themselves. China's public diplomacy would, of course, propagate the PRC's view of Taiwan as illegitimate.

Q: What was your wife doing while you were in Beijing?

BISHOP: Both during our first and second tours, Jemma was a Consular Associate. She worked in American Citizen Services, handling virtually everything -- lost passports, notarizations, reports of birth, voting, taxes, letters rogatory, disputes with local vendors, indigent Americans, "free to marry" certificates, and so on.

There were some high profile cases while she was in charge -- an American severely injured in Qinghai province, and Americans detained by North Korea. The cases involving North Korea usually involved the Swedish Embassy in Pyongyang. Sweden is the protecting power for Americans in North Korea. When a North Korean woman successfully deceived the Chinese guards and came into the Embassy, it was Jemma who was the interpreter during the several days it took to arrange for her to leave China.

Q: How did you find social life in China?

BISHOP: Although it's changed some over the years, it's harder to make Chinese friends in China than it was in Taiwan. Taiwan is sophisticated, educated, trading. In Taiwan, it's easy to have Chinese friends, and they are friends.

In China, it wasn't the same. There was always the anxiety that Americans have ulterior motives, and also that being too friendly with Americans might get me in trouble. Chinese you met in the course of your work rarely became friends. You might see certain individuals frequently -- at a Ministry, an institute, or a university -- and you could become friendly in a business way, but it didn't extend to being friendly in a personal way. So that's one thing to say.

That said, Beijing has become a great city to live in -- public events, museums, shopping, all kinds of restaurants, and sights to see -- so it's a very attractive assignment.

And when the China hands get together, the eyes water at the memory of the food.

Jemma and I continued to visit the Panjiayuan market on many Saturday mornings, and we began visiting furniture dealers on the outskirts of the city. That was one form of our recreation.

Q: Well, then you left there when?

BISHOP: Jemma and I left China in the summer of '06. And what remains before we can wrap up, then, is my going to the Pentagon and then finally Afghanistan.

Today is the 21st of March, beginning of spring 2011 with Don Bishop. And Don, where are we now?

Q: This is probably a good place for an end of tour view. Whither China? I mean its relationship with the U.S., and its own future.

BISHOP: Here's one man's sense of things.

Underlying China's economic advance in the world is a narrative. The narrative explains that China lost the preeminence it once possessed in the 1500s, 1600s, and 1700s because of the foreign imperialism of which America had been a part. China's 20th and 21st century advance, then, is only China resuming its place in the world. It's a success story, yes, but Chinese have mixed emotions about the resumption. On one hand they are gratified by China's economic recovery and prosperity. On the other hand, they haven't let go of some grudges, and the memories lead some to want to get even.

I've read enough Chinese history to know that imperialism was a factor in China's years of agony, usually counted from the Opium Wars. But it was hardly the only factor, and indeed a stronger case can be made that China's own domestic dysfunctions during the Qing dynasty contributed more. The Chinese narrative largely ignores this.

This narrative of restoration, and getting even, has been woven into the Communist Party's own narrative about Chinese history and class. So the answer to "whither China?" largely depends on how that narrative is shaped for the future.

I don't see, either on their part, or on our part, any serious attempt to change that narrative. It's clear that substantial fruits of China's growing economic power -- their holding of so much of our debt -- is financing their outsized, year after year investment of money in the PLA, the most closed and ideologized institution in Chinese society. This is going to create tension and friction for some time. All this means that China will continue to pose large challenges to our foreign policy.

Q: Do you see any potential areas of conflict? I don't necessarily mean armed conflict, but conflict with the West, or with the United States.

BISHOP: My schooling in international relations included the concept that the relationship between any two nations can be placed on spectrum of conflict, a continuum, a line between peace and war. This applies even to the relationship between the U.S. and Canada. We would place our relationship with Canada way over toward the "peace" side of the spectrum, but we have our conflict over timber exports and border trade, and there are Canadian columnists who worry about Canada being overwhelmed by its gigantic neighbor to the south.

During the Cold War, one could argue that there was "peace" between the U.S. and the Soviet Union because we did not fight one another, but who can doubt that our relationship would be marked closer to the "war" end of the spectrum -- Cold War.

Between the U.S. and China, yes, we have a "peaceful" relationship, and many areas of common interest and cooperation, but a clear look shows many conflicts too. Their intelligence services, without doubt, have launched a concerted campaign to steal our technology. It troubles me too that the Chinese have opened a cyber campaign against us. This is war behind the curtain, war that they have begun, not us.

If we speak of conflict in the geopolitical sense, the first contested area is likely to be what the Chinese call the "near seas." China wants these waters to be recognized as its maritime sphere of influence -- the Sea of Japan, all the waters along the chain of islands that we call the Pacific littoral, and then way deep down into the South China Sea to cover its island and resource claims.

We believe that anywhere outside of a country's twelve mile limit we have a complete carte blanche, a blank check, to move our power in and out. Set aside for a moment that with only 280 ships, our naval power is much diminished. Chinese zero-sum thinking about their naval domain means there are likely to be a lot of frictions over the near seas as they challenge any deployment of American power. I think their long range ambitions extend farther east into the Pacific, certainly to Guam and perhaps as far as Hawaii, believing that large Pacific areas should be acknowledged as their maritime sphere of influence.

It's not the rise of Chinese naval power, by itself, that is worrying. If China applied its growing blue water Navy to constructive use, fighting pirates in the Straits of Malacca or

the Indian Ocean, getting their citizens out of Libya, sending Chinese ships and units to help neighboring countries deal with earthquakes, and so on, I'm comfortable with that. That would be win-win.

I fear, however, that the Chinese don't see it that way. Deep inside they think that -- as their power develops, ours must recede. And I think that's one of the differences in vision -- asymmetries in our visions, perhaps -- that needs to be worked through. That's why we need more dialog with China's military planners and strategic thinkers, and why it's so frustrating that China refuses our mil-to-mil proposals that would build trust.

Since a war -- a real war -- with China is unthinkable, we're going to have to do this largely with diplomacy and non-aggressive use of our military power. And our Public Diplomacy always needs to help the Chinese change their narrative.

Q: How do you see China itself? I mean looking at China, first off there's the problem of the population, far too many -- probably not enough females. But also how to keep them occupied. Plus, the fact that it is big and there's a tendency to move towards the equivalent to warlordism. And the ideology is kind of gone out of the mix, but --

BISHOP: This is several questions wrapped together.

You know from our previous conversations that I've never signed on to the concept of "overpopulation," and I believe the one-child policy violates human rights.

The Chinese, moreover, have not yet been willing to face all the issues that stem from their demographic trends. I was one of the first in the Embassy to begin talking about the imbalance between boys and girls, in our own conversations, and with Chinese. I found that Chinese were not generally aware of how large the imbalance had become. The Party, using its control of the media, doesn't admit to problems until they have figured out how to say the Party is righting the problem.

The Party has a dilemma on public discussion of population issues. They have stridently persevered in their population control policies despite public hatred of the controls, so now they can't allow discussion of the adverse social consequences of the policy, lest that discredit the entire system of Party control over Chinese society. I also found out that Chinese didn't much like to have a foreigner talk to them about it.

If each new birth cohort has from 15 to 20 percent more boys than girls, China is well into uncharted demographic, social, economic, and political territory. The full force of this imbalance has not hit China yet. Many in the unbalanced year groups are still young.

The reaction of many Chinese I talked to about the imbalance was to laugh it off. One official smilingly conjectured that girls in Taiwan would find men from the Mainland more attractive, helping reduce the imbalance. He was sitting next to me at a large banquet, so I couldn't stand up and shout out loud what a fool he was.

I suppose a sharp economist would say the official was looking for a solution that relied on “imports” of women. I’m not aware that young women in Taiwan are eager to move to the Mainland to redress the gender imbalance, and the numbers don’t work out anyway, but indeed there is an “import” factor at work. There are already reports of kidnapping of girls from the near counties of Vietnam, Laos, and Burma. It has been reported that the most hazardous place for a young woman escaping from North Korea is the first five miles into China after crossing the river. It’s not the threat of being caught by the police that is the hazard, it’s the gangs that prey on the North Korean refugees. They let the men go, but the women are kidnapped and then sold to farmers in remote villages. (If you can’t imagine that women are really sold in China, look at the photos in Nick Kristoff’s and Sheryl WuDunn’s book.) In any case, there aren’t enough nearby extra women to supply the Chinese imbalance.

When I think about this, I think of some historic parallels. After the Chinese Exclusion Act became law in 1882, the Chinese railroad workers and cooks and laundrymen in the American west couldn’t bring wives to join them. The Chinese communities in the west had real gender imbalances, too many men, too few women. Some of the old literary stereotypes, the prejudiced stereotypes, of the Chinatowns -- opium smoking, gambling, giant queue-wearing Chinese immigrants in the United States prone to drink, wielding their cleavers in any quarrel -- were rooted in the fact that the men in the culturally isolated Chinese communities in Wyoming and other areas didn’t have wives to pull them into family life. So could that happen on a large scale in China?

The Party and the government know that high rates of employment are necessary for China’s social stability. Especially if there’s an oversupply of men, China has to provide jobs for the coming birth cohorts. That’s why the Party focuses so much on the implicit deal that’s been made with China’s people. The Party will provide economic growth, jobs, and livelihoods as long as you, the people, don’t challenge our authority and our leadership.

For years, people in the Embassy have been saying the high Chinese economic growth rates don’t seem sustainable in the long run. How long can a country grow at 10 percent a year, year after year? Continued high growth has been partly attributed to the presence of large labor pools among the rural population, millions and millions of villagers willing to migrate to the cities and factories. Even though wages in Shenzhen are low, and Chinese migrants work in what we would call sweatshops, life is better there than in the villages.

There’s some evidence, though, that those rural labor pools are drying up, and China can no longer rely on cheap labor for its comparative advantage. I myself am not predicting any imminent turnaround to China’s economic prospects, but there are adverse trends. No doubt China’s leaders lose some sleep over this. They want China to continue to grow because it is economic growth that propels its national power and enables the growth in its military power. But they lose sleep over the prospect of social instability if growth slows and unemployment rises. Social instability could undermine the “legitimacy” of the Chinese Communist Party.

As for the possibility of a new warlord era, I believe that there's a big difference between now and the 1920s and 1930s when warlordism was a factor in Chinese politics. There have been several decades of national mobilization since then. The mobilization has strengthened national identity and feeling. There was the nationalism driven into China by the Second World War, and you have all the mobilization that took place after 1949. It is now firmly fixed in the Chinese mind that China is one nation with one future and one destiny. The social power of Chinese unity is so great that I can't see a regionalized future, a warlord future, for China. This is not to say that minority peoples, in China's west, for instance, do not want more autonomy or even independence, but for Han Chinese, 91 percent of the population, I don't see warlordism as a prospect.

Q: Did you get any feel for -- I don't know, don't want to be pejorative in this -- but the lack of innovation within the Chinese economic side?

BISHOP: Well, it was commonly observed that although Taiwan is a fully trading nation, its contributions in the economic chain tend to be at the lower end because Taiwan had not developed its own brands. Perhaps Acer was the first of the Taiwan brands to be known in the international market.

The Chinese can also reference the example of South Korea. Their path to development relied heavily on the conglomerates, the *chaebol*, which had pluses and minuses. Taiwan with its small and medium enterprises had a higher per capital GNP than South Korea for many years, but South Korea has now pulled ahead. The Korean companies -- Samsung, LG, Hyundai -- have created well known brands, which are now their own factor in Korea's prosperity.

The PRC realizes that being an assembler or a provider of components for products that other companies design and sell under their own brands is not giving China a full share of the wealth that might come to them. So there's an effort to develop their own brands. That's just starting. They would like to increase the share of their export earnings that comes from branding, not just producing.

As for the general question of innovation, there are Chinese businessmen who make millions by copying and selling our software and other products. There's plenty of money to be made by reverse engineering. The Amcham always counseled new American firms entering China to guard the "crown jewels" of their processes, or their trade secrets, or else they will be stolen. You can take this as a lack of innovation if you want to. I frame this rather in terms of the great distance between the power of foreign brands, products, and organization, and China's. The money to be made by "copying" or theft is too great a temptation, both for the businesses and for the local governments that collect tax revenue from the Chinese companies that engage in these predatory practices.

There's another reason to hesitate about saying the Chinese as deficient in innovation. They are pioneers in some fields. In applied agricultural science, my sense is that they are quite innovative, and there will be major Chinese contributions to increasing the world's food supply. And although it's taking place behind the curtain, my guess is that the PLA

and Chinese companies are leaders in certain, shall we say, troublesome software applications.

Q: My guess is that we could talk about China for several more hours, but it's probably time to wrap up your assignment.

BISHOP: Yes, China is a large topic. I'm conscious that this interview format shorts nuance and complexity. The large questions you have asked have no short answers, only long ones, and America's China hands produce long and thoughtful papers on every one. They argue all of them at seminars. Those who read these interviews may think I'm being shallow and glib. I could write out the same opinions with lengthy qualifiers and numerous footnotes, but that would take away some of the frankness I've been aiming for.

I'm being more frank than diplomatic. I'm well aware that a diplomatic career makes one very careful in word and speech, and when speaking with our foreign counterparts we particularly choose our words. If any Chinese ever get to reading these transcripts, they may feel an edge on what I've said. If they conclude that I was uninformed on this or that topic, or that I jumped to unwarranted conclusions, I'm OK with that, and I look forward to more conversations. If they conclude, though, that there's any hostility, any anti-Chinese feeling, in what I've said, they are mistaken.

Over the years I have developed a great respect and affection for China, and the entire aim of American policy must be to keep our countries at peace, so that we can in time join together in solving the world's problems. Over the years I've come to the conclusion that there is a natural affinity between American and Chinese cultures. Both of us are frank and blunt. They respect education as we do. They work as hard as we do, and the Chinese traits of business and enterprise that so awed the world in the early twentieth century are once again earning the world's respect.

I will be frank, though, that I think China was badly wounded in the twentieth century, by the death throes of the Qing dynasty, by its civil war, by the long war with Japan, and by Communism, and it still carries the scars, one of which is a reflexive suspicion of American motives. I wish it were not so.

Some of my leadership of Public Diplomacy in China supported the efforts by American administrations to bring China back into the international order as a constructive player -- things we did to support WTO initiatives, protect IPR, and so on. There was much wailing and gnashing of teeth when we pressed the Chinese on WTO, for instance, but I believe Chinese now see the benefits that flowed from their accession. Some were efforts to help China in its own acknowledged task of establishing the rule of law. Some were to recall earlier periods of cooperation between China and the U.S.

And some challenged the Chinese Communist Party's curbs on their own people -- human rights, religious liberty, and an end to population control, for instance. If reading this offends some Chinese gatekeepers, I am confident there are others in China who hope for

the same changes as I do. Chinese officials fear *luan* (chaos) if China democratizes. I think they are wrong. They disrespect the energy, patriotism, and good sense of their own people.

**HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS, THE PENTAGON,
2006-2008
Foreign Policy Advisor to the Commandant**

Q: You finished up in China in 2006. What followed?

BISHOP: As 2005 turned to 2006 I was thinking about my next assignment. I was a Minister-Counselor in the Public Diplomacy cone. I had been “out,” overseas, for 12 years. I was given hints that I could be PAO in Korea or in Indonesia, but I waved those off, perhaps too quickly. I just felt I had to come back to the U.S.

One of the realities for a Minister-Counselor in the Public Diplomacy cone is that there are few Public Diplomacy positions at that grade in Washington. This is a legacy of USIA. Senior positions in the Agency were filled by political appointees, and when State absorbed USIA no one ever thought to convert any of those positions to Foreign Service. Deputy Assistant Secretaries in the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, for instance, are all political appointees. This means that senior Public Diplomacy officers have no “home” to return to.

Looking at the bid lists for 2006, there were many jobs I could, in theory, bid on. I could ask to be the DCM at a large mission, or a Deputy Assistant Secretary, but I had none of the usual prerequisites. I had not been DCM in a small post, nor had I been a Deputy Office Director when I was an FS-2 or FS-1. In USIA, an officer with seven overseas tours who had become PAO at one of the largest Embassies was a star. As a State officer, however, I hadn't punched the tickets I needed for a senior position in a Bureau. The senior officers who began their careers in USIA didn't quite “fit in” anywhere.

There were three jobs on the lists within my reach. The Public Diplomacy Office Director (PDOD) jobs were still graded for Minister-Counselors, and the positions in EUR, AF, and WHA were listed. These were the rump of the old Area Director baronies in USIA. I had only served in one of those areas, so I bid on Africa. I had been PAO in Nigeria, and I had a lot of enthusiasm for Africa. The area needed a good PDOD because so many of the young PAOs were sent there without any, or much, experience.

I flew to Washington (my own expense) to show my interest. I met the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the AF Bureau at 9 a.m. We had a very positive interview. I was on the schedule to meet the Assistant Secretary, Jendayi Frazer, at 5 p.m.

I arrived for the 5 p.m. appointment a little early. The OMS told me that my appointment with the Assistant Secretary had been cancelled, and Ruth Davis would meet me. Ruth was in the Bureau as a Senior Advisor. I sat down, and right up front she told me that they had given the job to someone else. We had five more minutes of polite conversation.

As I left her office, I first said to myself that it would have been nice for them to have told me a little earlier. I would have saved a lot of money on the airline ticket and expenses in Washington. A minute later, I realized that the door had closed on my Public Diplomacy career. I was due for transfer to Washington, and there was no job for me in the cone, my career field. I had had six hardship assignments, been promoted to the Senior Foreign Service in my nineteenth year, run the largest Public Diplomacy programs, but there was no place for me in Washington. What do I do now?

I was deflated, but I had to start looking around. I discovered that the jobs as Foreign Policy Advisors in armed forces commands, POLADs, tended to be underbid. The glory jobs among the POLADs are at the geographic COCOMs, especially at EUCOM, PACOM, and CENTCOM. Those POLADs tended to be very senior political officers. The four stars at those commands, moreover, wanted former Ambassadors. It wasn't likely, then, that I could become a POLAD at a COCOM.

There are also four POLAD positions at the Pentagon. Each service chief -- the Army Chief of Staff, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Air Force Chief of Staff, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps -- had a POLAD. Not many officers, though, bid on those positions. If you were across the river from the Department, you were "out of sight, out of mind."

I explored all of the jobs.

Tom Lynch was the Army POLAD, and I emailed him from China. He advised me not to bid on the position. "You'll be considered a major general lite on the Army Staff. They have a lot of major generals, so you'll have no particular place."

I went in to see Pam Frasier, the POLAD to the USAF Chief of Staff. She told me that the Chief, General Buzz Moseley, already knew whom he wanted to be his POLAD. He had worked with the U.S. Ambassador to the UAE, Marcelle Wahba, on the Gulf air defense network, and he intended to select her.

That left open the possibility of being the POLAD to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Michael Hagee. I visited John Norris at the Pentagon, and I was interviewed by General Hagee from China by DVC. To my pleasant surprise, he chose me.

Finishing up his tour as the Commandant's POLAD, John told me that the Marines' largest foreign policy issue was the move of Marines out of Okinawa to Guam and the realignment of the force structure in the Pacific that the move would set in motion.

Once I was paneled to be the Commandant's POLAD, I persuaded the Embassy in Beijing to let me go TDY to Japan. At the Embassy in Tokyo I made the rounds of POL and DATT to learn about Marine Corps issues and the base realignment. Then I went to Yokota Air Base to visit USFJ, U.S. Forces Japan.

It was a very instructive trip. The commander of U.S. Forces Japan was away the day I was at Yokota, so I was taken in hand by the Deputy Commander of USFJ, Marine Corps Major General Tim Larsen. We met in his office, and then I joined the daily morning operational briefing.

I was there the day after North Korea had fired a missile over Japan, so this was quite a useful meeting to attend. The briefs were interrupted by a klaxon. The Chinese had fired one of their own missiles in a routine test, and of course the launch sounded the routine alarm. For a startled moment, though, everyone wondered whether the North Koreans were flexing their muscles by firing missiles two days in a row.

The particular memory I have of the briefing was that it included the Japanese. Their liaison officers attended the most inner meetings in the most inner sanctum. They knew what we knew. I realized that this kind of trust and rapport was the product of many decades of working together. It had probably begun in the late 1940s or 1950s when the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force had a few tugboats, but they had been brought into search and rescue exercises, something low key like that. The close relationship I could see at the USFJ headquarters between Americans and Japanese was a result of years of training together.

The Coast Guard had just been to China, and the U.S. Navy was always begging the Chinese to do search and rescue exercises. The Navy's concept was to do some small things together to build knowledge, confidence, and trust in one another. The Chinese always pushed back against these offers, or agreed to do something and never followed up, or agreed to do something and then conveniently cancelled the initiative to protest U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. That operational briefing at Yokota showed me what could happen between two countries when they collaborated. We wanted to begin that process with China but were consistently rebuffed.

In any case, I finished my assignment in China, took leave, and reported to Marine Corps headquarters. I was the Commandant's Foreign Policy Advisor from 2006 to 2008.

Q: Who was the Commandant?

BISHOP: Commandant Michael Hagee had interviewed me. He was due, however, to finish up his term within a few months of my arrival. The new Commandant, General James Conway, had been confirmed by the Senate. So I spent almost all my time as General Conway's POLAD.

General Conway is a remarkable man, so I might spend a little time describing him. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to see a member of the Joint Chiefs in wartime, up close and personal. He's tall and big-framed, but 100 percent fit. He fired on the range and ran the annual physical fitness course every year, and when Marines all began to receive martial arts training, he qualified for an advanced belt himself. He had a real voice of command, deep and compelling. He was a confident speaker who rarely used a text. I sat

through dozens of his pep talks to Marines around the world, and by the second or third sentence, he had their full attention and confidence.

He used to say that his alma mater, Southeast Missouri State University at Cape Girardeau, “sweats its reaccreditation every five years.” He had been a football player, and he still had the build. When he joined the Marine Corps after graduation, his classmates in The Basic School -- I met some of them at a parade -- knew that even then he was first, utterly committed to the Marine Corps, and second, destined for high command. He had chosen his assignments very deliberately. In “A” billets, he led and commanded. In “B” billets, he trained Marines. He was an infantry star long before he had a star on his shoulder.

Seeing him in conference three times a week in the Smith Conference Room, and on his travels, I observed a man confident of his judgment in all the staff areas -- operations, intelligence, money, recruiting, legal, acquisition, the manufacture and deployment of MRAPs, Congressional relations. I noticed, though, that whenever training issues came up, he leaned forward at the conference table, utterly intent on ... uniforms, pack loads, the annual physical fitness test. These were issues that really energized him.

Q: Where did you fit on the organizational chart?

BISHOP: Formally, I was a member of the Commandant's personal staff. He wrote my evaluation. Let me talk a little, however, about some organizational arrangements. They don't have the sizzle of foreign policy issues, but they certainly shape how the Department and the armed services interact.

In my initial round of calls on the members of the Corps' senior staff, his former Military Secretary told me that he had noticed that previous POLADs were in the habit of sending copies of important State cables for the Commandant to read. The former MILSEC let me know that it was he who had read the cables, and he couldn't see why the Commandant needed to read them. He was cautioning me to send fewer not more emails to the Commandant, and to make everything brief. I took his advice.

There's the general issue, common to all POLADs around the world, that commands have their own staffs, their own machinery, to address international issues. For foreign policy issues, the “5” -- J5, G5, A5, and so on -- has action. The generals or colonels in these positions are anxious to keep issues properly channeled. Advice coming from a POLAD with a direct report to the commander always made them nervous.

In the Marine Corps, moreover, the Marine component commanders at the COCOMs naturally have the most influential voices on international issues. These three stars include MARFORPAC, MARFOREUR, MARCENT, and so on. So, if the Commandant planned a trip to Japan, they welcomed my input and my coordination with the Embassy. The Commandant's real pre-trip briefing, though, was in a telephone call with the Commander of Marine Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC) in Hawaii. “John, what's the

latest score with the Japanese? What will they ask me for? What points do I need to cover?”

Teasing this out a little, the Marine Corps tends to be governed by its three and four star general officers. There are two four stars, the Commandant and the ACMC, and there are twelve three stars. (There are more three- and four- stars in joint assignments, but there are just 12 in the Marine Corps’ own command structure.) All the generals and members of the SES get together once a year at the GOS, the General Officer Symposium. The three- and four-stars meet quarterly in an EOS, an Executive Off-Site. The real down and dirty about how the Marine Corps is run is decided or confirmed in those meetings.

As POLAD I was a two-star equivalent, and a civilian. I was one notch below the top level of decision making, and I didn’t attend an EOS. Only one SES was in that circle, the General Counsel of the Marine Corps, who was there to make sure that everything was legally square.

Then there was the small stuff. When I was at the Pentagon, the Navy POLAD (first Turk Maggi, later my China colleague Ford Hart) had a lieutenant commander as his Deputy. The Army POLAD (first Tom Lynch, then my China colleague Howard Krawitz) had a lieutenant colonel as his Deputy, along with a Civil Service secretary. The Air Force POLAD, Marcelle Wahba, had a Colonel as her Deputy, a lieutenant colonel as Military Assistant, four majors in the office as POLAD Fellows, and a Civil Service secretary.

In contrast, the Marine Corps POLAD had nobody. I was one State officer sitting in one office at the Headquarters, an E Ring office with a view, for sure, and an authorized parking space, but no assistant. The POLAD’s office was not in the Commandant’s area of the building. I sat down the hall in the office suite of the Deputy Commandant for Programs, Policies and Operations, “PP&O” in Marine lingo. The Deputy Commandant was Lieutenant General Jan Huly.

General Huly told me he had made the arrangement. Sometime early in General Hagee’s tour, General Huly had noticed that there was a Foreign Service officer at the Headquarters, but no one in the Headquarters quite knew what the POLAD might contribute. His take was that the State Department POLAD drifted around and showed up at meetings from time to time. I believe they had even considered letting go of the POLAD, but they couldn’t do so because there was a State-Defense memorandum establishing the position. Lieutenant General Huly had proposed to the Commandant that the POLAD be placed in his office suite. It was understood that the POLAD was on the Commandant’s personal staff, but that he would be “embedded” in PP&O. That was the arrangement John Norris endured, and how things were set up when I arrived.

It happened that Lieutenant General Huly finished up soon after I joined the Headquarters. He was followed by Lieutenant General Richard Natonski. He and I were at opposite ends of an office suite, although all the people in that office worked for him, not for me.

I spent, then, most of my time with PP&O. The up side was that I was in an excellent position to get a view of the whole Marine Corps.

It happened that General Conway's passage of command happened immediately before the annual GOS, the General Officer Symposium. Once a year, in September or October, all Marine generals and senior executives gather for one large meeting. The POLAD attends too. In one room I got to see the 80 active duty Marine generals (except one or two fighting in Iraq), the ten Reserve generals, and the 24 members of the Senior Executive Service. General Conway was able to see all of the senior leaders of the Marine Corps as he took the reins.

At the GOS, General Conway told us that he intended to issue his Commandant's Guidance to the Corps within four days. You're all going to get copies of the first draft, he said. Give me your recommendations.

They weren't expecting the POLAD to provide any input, but I thought I would give it a shot. I marked up my copy pretty heavily. Most of my suggestions were about grammar and punctuation and phrasing; what we received really was a first draft off the word processor. My substantive comments were on the seven Marine Corps priorities. I rewrote some of them, and some of my wording made it into the final Commandant's guidance. I wanted to show that I felt myself a part of the Marine headquarters, able to deal with issues as an equal, not just to write foreign policy footnotes.

That I felt myself qualified to do so was partly because I had devoted so much time, even in the Foreign Service, to professional reading in national security, and to regular reading of the service journals.

In General Hagee's final weeks as Commandant, I had been troubled by the exclusion of the POLAD from regular senior meetings. The weekly Monday morning PP&O meetings were useful and informative, and gave me some granularity on the large issues, but I wasn't seeing the Commandant at all. I needed to attend the 7 a.m. meetings with the Commandant and the senior staff in the Smith Conference Room, but General Hagee preferred tight meetings and had ruled, long before I arrived, that the POLAD wasn't needed. With General Conway on board, I just went to the Smith Conference Room and took a seat. I wasn't sitting at the table, but I was there for the operational briefs, the reports by the major divisions at the Headquarters, and I could join the senior leaders of the Marine Corps in conference.

We were always briefed on current Marine operations in Iraq, and we were also briefed on the three Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) that are floating around the world at any one time -- one from North Carolina, one from California, one from Okinawa. Each embarked with a pre-planned schedule, which usually included training exercises with foreign partners, but the MEUs were frequently diverted to respond to crises or natural disasters. While I was at the Pentagon, the general pattern was that the MEUs from North Carolina and California headed directly for the Persian Gulf. They might do some

training with the Kuwaitis or in Djibouti, but they usually became the floating reserve for CENTCOM, and they joined operations in Iraq.

For the first time in my career, a Marine courier brought in a big intelligence briefing book for me to review every morning. There were probably 50 pages each day, some summaries, some briefing slides, some raw intelligence. I'd see the daily intelligence reports given to the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and the Secretary of the Navy too. There were sections in the book from DIA and NSA.

I'd been cleared for many years to see these kinds of secrets. But at an Embassy we were focused, naturally enough, on our host country, or the region. Public Diplomacy officers, moreover, working in a largely unclassified world, didn't read these reports regularly. Before going to the Pentagon, then, I hadn't been exposed to the enormity and breadth of the threats against the United States, whether armed threats, terrorist threats, insurgent threats, cartel threats, or cyber threats.

In Public Diplomacy, we are the happy talkers of the Foreign Service, mainly giving tried and true answers to all questions. "Oh, our policy hasn't changed." "Take the president at his word." And so on. I have to admit that it was really hair raising to see this intelligence, quite sobering. Here I can't discuss things that were in the books because of sources and methods, so I simply make the point that I learned how we're in a really high stakes game in the world, and we have scant resources.

Q: Well, looking at it sort of as an outsider, if you're a head of the military organization, the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, would you feel that this might turn you into a different person seeing all these threats? I mean --

BISHOP: Surely detailed knowledge of the array of threats gives the cleared people in government -- whether it be the White House, or the EOB, or State, or the armed services -- a different sense of things than people in, say, journalism.

The sheer amount of intelligence is hard to grasp, and I now have a new respect for those who can absorb the main currents and strategize. I can see that it's a life calling. Even the best legislators, even the best academics, can't contribute much unless they have had long stints in the executive branch.

I might spend from 15 to 45 minutes with the book, depending on my schedule, though reading it through could have profitably occupied a full morning. The same book was delivered every day to the Commandant's Military Secretary, and General Conway would be personally briefed on main items. Because of his breakneck daily schedule, he couldn't read the book himself. Naturally, there was an elaborate system of briefings to pass intelligence up the chain. A few items were covered in those 7 a.m. meetings in the Smith Conference Room. The Commandant also would be briefed in the tank as one of the Joint Chiefs.

We frequently hear critical buzz about the militarization of foreign policy. There's more buzz about the short term focus of American foreign policy. Having seen the briefing books, I have a little different view of things. Whatever the long term threats that we face may be -- from ecological disaster or overpopulation or lack of economic growth or even the PD favorite of "lack of mutual understanding" -- those are all at best medium term threats. These are all things that a wise policy will seek to address over the years. But many of the things in the briefing book are this week and next week. They call for action today. Naturally, the military spends more time thinking about this, if only because the armed forces have more people and more money to devote to the task.

There's another factor too. Officers in the armed forces spend more time in school. A Navy officer might say to herself, "OK, I've been in the Pacific, and here and there I got to know something about Chinese naval power. Now I've got a year at the Staff College and I have to write a long paper. Let me see if I can think all the issues through. And how do I fit my little piece into America's grand strategy?" FSOs don't have much time to do that. Is that what policy planning is supposed to do?

Q: Well, policy planning ends up, for the most part, writing speeches.

BISHOP: OK, I understand. "Is that what policy planning is supposed to do?" If we're relying on policy planning it's a weak reed. We don't have enough horsepower on this.

So, these were some of the organizational arrangements that affected my work. All that said, my personal reception in the Marine Corps was more than fine. I was on their protocol list as a Major General. I was also grouped with the Marine Corps members of the Senior Executive Service. They had 24, and I was the 25th. When we traveled, I sat next to or right behind the Commandant at meetings with foreign leaders. The Marines were very proper that way. Regardless of my rank, being a Vietnam veteran also gave me some additional standing.

I also became a member of the 2007 BGSOC, the Brigadier General-Select Orientation Class. Each year the Marine Corps promotes a dozen or so Colonels to be Brigadier Generals, and they form a year group among general officers. The year group includes any new civilians in the Senior Executive Service, maybe half a dozen. They might be "new" from crossing the threshold from GS-15, or they might be SES members who transfer from other services into a Marine Corps SES billet. The new POLAD is always included in the next year group.

Our group, with spouses, gathered in Washington for a week of orientations. There was a parade at the Marine Corps Barracks for the class. The senior officers of the Marine Corps share their own perspectives about becoming a general. The General Counsel gave an ethics briefing that made us all tremble about the chance of relief and scandal. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Peter Pace, gave us an hour and a half of his time, all of us seated at one table. Away from other eyes, there was great frankness in all the sessions.

The second week of the course was conducted at the Battle Staff Training Center at Quantico. We did an exercise over several days. The scenario was the Marines moving into, of all places, the Malayan peninsula, on an operation. This was one of the very first exercises that the Center had run to test concepts related to the transition from phase three to phase four operations, turning from a kinetic operation to governance.

On one hand, this gave me some experience with Marine Corps concepts of planning and the publication of Commander's intent. On the other hand, I think I was the only member of the class who had spent some time in that area of the world, and as members of the class drew on their experiences in Iraq to put together their concept of operations, I was able to let them know what they didn't need to worry about, like illiteracy.

One of the steps in operational planning is to establish regular contact with other headquarters or commands that have something to contribute, or those that need to follow what's going on. As my class of new Marine generals did so, establishing contact with ships at sea and commands around the world, I noticed that they did not think to include any Embassies. Here was a small indicator of a gap in their training, and their knowledge of the instruments of American power. Since that exercise with my classmates the new Marine Corps brigadier generals, I've spoken about this to virtually every military group I've met.

Q: Did you work, or network, with other POLADs?

BISHOP: We four service chief POLADs met regularly for lunch to compare notes. There weren't any POLADs at other Marine Corps commands, so that wasn't something that I was doing.

Q: You were there at a busy time!

BISHOP: Yes. Brigadier General Joseph Dunford handled the "O" in PP&O, operations. This was the staff that moved Marines around the world, deployed them, and in late 2006 and 2007 General Dunford had more than his share of headaches. The Marines were fully committed in Anbar Province in Iraq at the same time that they began to deploy to Helmand Province in Afghanistan in real force. General Dunford's first level problem was to identify the battalions that would deploy to both theatres.

Even as the Marine Corps expanded from 176,000 to 202,000 Marines, even as the Corps sent battalions from Okinawa to CENTCOM, even as the Marine Expeditionary Units from Camp Lejeune and Camp Pendleton steamed to the Persian Gulf, even as Marine Corps Reserve battalions were activated, even as Marines stopped training for snowy places or jungle warfare, there weren't enough battalions for both wars, unless battalions that had just returned back to the U.S. were sent out again without enough rest, without enough "dwell time." General Conway wanted Marines to maintain a 1:2 ratio of deployment time to dwell time -- fourteen months of dwell time in the U.S. before going out for another seven month tour in Iraq or Afghanistan.

For a brief time after the Afghanistan surge was announced, Secretary Gates wanted to send more Marine battalions to Afghanistan while the Marines sustained their surge levels in Iraq. General Conway told the Secretary and the JCS Chairman that he could not surge the Corps in Afghanistan without drawing down some numbers in Iraq. In any case, this was General Dunford's first set of headaches.

The second set revolved around the question of “enablers.” Marine Corps infantry units are made up mostly of riflemen, but a full MAGTF has many kinds of specialists -- intelligence people, explosive ordnance disposal experts, communicators, and on and on. New Marines could fill up infantry battalions, but EOD men don't grow on trees. General Dunford and his staff were plucking enablers from every corner of the Corps, and for individuals in shortage specialties, individual dwell time was hovering around 1:1, not 1:2.

Brigadier General Terry Robling -- his aviator's handle was “Guts” -- led the “PL” part of PP&O, Plans and Strategy. I helped out all over PP&O, but I ended up working most closely with PL. Guts had an exceptionally strong team under him -- a brilliant and well organized civilian, Jeffrey Deweese, working Strategy, and Colonel Dan Hahne, a salty and cheerful aviator, as head of International Affairs. By “salty,” I don't mean profane. In the Marine Corps, “salty” is a word meaning an old hand who's been around and embodies the service's lasting qualities.

When Guts moved on to his next assignment, another great Marine, Brigadier General Mark Clark, an aviator, took his place. General Clark had a low-key appearance with a slow and slightly “country” manner of speech that kept you from noticing his sharp mind and his powers of decision -- for about ten minutes, anyway.

The PL shop worked a lot of issues, large and small. Let me mention two of the larger ones. One was to write out the Marines' “Long War Concept.” The other was to plan a new kind of Marine formation, the Security Cooperation MAGTF, that would work with partner nations. I had the chance to mark up some drafts and add some wording, but the exercise mostly gave me an opportunity to admire the Marines' own sharp thinking about the future.

Then there was the time a planning paper was sent to me for a chop. The topic was counterinsurgency, and it began by writing out the key planning assumptions for the next year. I added a paragraph to the effect that despite its signing on to the national counterinsurgency strategy and its announced plans to lead whole-of-government nation building, the State Department was not ready to fulfill its responsibilities. The Marines could not expect much State support, I wrote. I didn't ask anyone in the Department for permission to add this to Marine planning. In wartime you need blunt honesty, not smooth words of reassurance.

Q: Did you handle issues related to the Marine Security Guard detachments?

BISHOP: The short answer is “no.” Here and there I was part of a conversation, but the Security Division of PP&O under Raymond Geoffroy had things well in hand.

Q: Back to POLAD work ...

BISHOP: Let me preface with some philosophy.

Maybe I was too affected by my earlier time in the Air Force, and teaching at the Air Force Academy, and by being a Foreign Service Officer with a degree in military history rather than international affairs. I mentioned earlier that wars have their own internal dynamic, full of rip tides of emotion and commitment. Diplomacy may be along for the ride, but Mars is in the driver's seat.

My view in 2006, and now, is that once a war commences, everything starts with will. To win, you have to know you can win, believe you can win, find a way you can win. The will that wins wars starts with commanders, and it works its way down. Everyone has different roles, different tasks, different missions, different backgrounds, but all must absorb and extend the Commander's will.

In General Conway we had a Marine Corps Commandant utterly committed to winning. In General Petraeus we had the same. General Petraeus's partner in writing the counterinsurgency field manual, Marine Corps General Jim Mattis, radiated a will to win. These men had experience, conviction, knowledge, and will. They had command presence and the ability to inspire.

My view of being the Commandant's POLAD was to help him, and help the Marine Corps, achieve that goal. For all their smarts and intensity, Marines needed to have a POLAD. I was a fresh set of eyes on problems. I had a sense of how events in one country could affect others. I had a feel for the internal politics of our partners in the coalition, or I could absorb main points in a shorter period of time. I could get answers on policy from the Department. I could link up the Headquarters with Foggy Bottom. I read State's intelligence summaries, and I passed them on to Marine colleagues. (I often heard how valuable they were.) I could help the Marines be even smarter. My role wasn't to be the Department's mole in the Headquarters, I was a member of the Commandant's staff helping to achieve his goals, the nation's goals.

Soon after I began my assignment, in late 2006 or perhaps the turn of 2007, I attended my first POLAD conference. The Bureau of Political Military Affairs gathers all the POLADs once a year. This conference happened before the Anbar Awakening, sometimes called the Sunni Awakening, had begun to affect the balance in Iraq. Anbar Province is, of course, in western Iraq. This is where the Marines started working with local tribal leaders to win them over to our cause, to provide money for their fighters, and to persuade them to start fighting al-Qaeda. It's not the whole story of the turn in Iraq, but it's an important part of the story.

At the conference, I was quite shocked by the negativity among the other POLADs. There was black talk about how Iraq had been a mistake, that our armed forces colleagues had no idea how this was going to turn out, and it was going to turn out badly. And I have to say the person at the conference who seemed to have the blackest opinion was the CENTCOM POLAD. I don't know him very well, and he is no doubt a man of capacity who played an important role at CENTCOM, but I was alarmed by his negativity that day when he was speaking to us. It was downright discouraging.

At the lunch in the NDU library, Barbara Stevenson, who was working for the Secretary trying to get the Foreign Service better prepared for Iraq, gave a talk. Again, I don't know her, and I'm sure she did good work, but I was a little appalled by what she didn't know. She told us how the Foreign Service was going to get better, how we would deploy more FSOs with language and field training, how John Herbst was setting up the Civilian Response Corps, how we're going to send more ambassadors to the Embassy in Baghdad, and how we're going to create a special Iraq cadre, with a few months of intensive training before they go out.

Somebody said, "Oh, this sounds like we are finally getting around to what we did in Vietnam, except that in Vietnam we gave people a year of training."

I wasn't surprised that State couldn't afford to send people for a year of training. We had immediate and pressing needs to have people in Iraq even if they had just a smidgen of the cultural training that we gave in Vietnam. But I was shocked that she didn't know anything about what we had done in Vietnam. She had no idea about the last time we had gone down this road. This was amateur hour.

I left the lunch in an even worse mood -- from the negativity, from the lack of historical perspective, from people treating this as some kind of intellectual problem in Washington while Marines or airmen or soldiers are dying in the field. I was breathing rapidly and shaking my head back and forth. I couldn't stand it.

Fortunately, after the lunch the first speaker was the representative from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine Corps Lieutenant General John Sattler, the J3. He had a few PowerPoint slides on the way forward, but once he began to speak, no one was watching the slides. General Sattler's style is to make a lot of references to how he was at the bottom of his class at the Naval Academy, and it's everything he can do to keep up with the smart people, ha, ha, ha. This is the way he presents himself. His crew cut and his bearing make him the picture of a Marine. Whether he talks to Marines in the field, or Marines at headquarters, or intellectuals, or POLADs, he's really rah-rah.

General Sattler broke the cloud of negativity with his conviction, his inspiration. Damn it, we don't have all the answers yet, but we're going to find them. We're going to go, and we're going to win. "Win." What does "win" mean? There has been a lot of ink spilled on the subject. He didn't get that far in the talk, but I was struck by how, at the end of his talk, all of the morning's negativity had gone away. We went on to good discussions of our various POLAD issues. But I asked myself, why is it that a general had to come over

and give us that kind of talk? Where is the charismatic figure in the Foreign Service who could stand up and say -- this is what we're going to do, we're going to make it happen, we're going to turn things around, follow me.

You can tell I have a vivid memory of the conference.

Q: Tell me more about the kind of issues on your plate.

BISHOP: All the service chiefs have a regular traffic of foreign VIPs coming to visit their American counterparts, so countries that have a Marine Corps, small or large, or a body of naval infantry, would come in to see the Commandant. This included Navy chiefs or Defense ministers too. I joined their calls, and I could pass on to the Department anything that was useful.

Generally these people came to see General Conway because they wanted some kind of cooperation. In ordinary years of peace, those floating Marine Expeditionary Units stopped in many countries and exercised with local forces. These were important events for many of our partners. With the MEUs now always heading to the Gulf, these exercises had become less frequent, and foreign Marine leaders wanted to make sure the Commandant understood their need for visits, training, and exercises.

They also wanted to make sure their best officers could attend Marine Corps schools. Every year's slate of international attendees was vigorously debated at the Headquarters, and a personal appeal by a foreign Marine Corps or Navy leader could tip the scales. I spoke on behalf of using training slots to build mil-to-mil partnership with countries that were assuming new regional responsibilities, especially in AFRICOM, a view largely shared by the Plans and Strategy staff, but the Commandant personally reviewed the list and made changes.

Every four years, the Marines organize a Worldwide Conference of Marine Leaders. The Headquarters moniker for this event, the WCML, was "Whack-a-Mole." I went through one of the Whack-a-Mole cycles. The senior officers from all the world's Marine Corps or naval infantry were invited to Washington. One day was a confab in Washington, an interesting day of talks and briefings. One day was largely ceremonial with a parade at the Marine Barracks. The whole group flew down to Parris Island on another day.

We were at "the Octagon" at Parris Island, a small arena, while one platoon of recruits went at it with pugil sticks. Looking around I could see the foreign generals and admirals really getting into the spirit of things, reliving their youth, so to speak. Their blood was rushing as they watched. They enjoyed watching marksmanship training, and several were ready to buy the electronic dry fire system used before any Marine recruit went onto the range, buy it on the spot. Also, the all-NCO presentation at the school for Drill Instructors made quite an impression about the Marine reliance on non-commissioned officers.

Q: Were the Chinese in this?

BISHOP: The Chinese were invited, as they had been before, but they did not come. As I said, we knock at the door, and they won't answer.

The Commandant made a trip to China while I was at the Headquarters, though I did not make the trip. It makes the same point, though. He wanted to engage them to be constructive players and partners in the Pacific. He made an offer to the Chinese, for instance. When a MEU had to respond to a natural disaster somewhere near China, it could stop in China and pick up Chinese Marines so that we could go together. (Imagine the good will! Imagine the staff work!) That was a pretty striking offer. I'm not sure he had fully cleared the offer through the defense and foreign policy process, but he made it anyway. To my knowledge, the Chinese have never responded.

Q: Well, we've talked about the PLA. Did you have the feeling that -- I mean were things changing? Was the PLA still very standoffish because any cooperation with us would diminish their face or something like this or ...?

BISHOP: Of course my portrayal of the Chinese non-response to our mil-to-mil overtures has shorted their viewpoint. Yes, after Tiananmen when the Congress made the long list of technology and organizational matters that could not be discussed with the Chinese, it offended their sense of dignity. Yes, the Chinese have a theory that exchanges and exercises benefit the more powerful of two partners. Yes, our provision of weapons to Taiwan breaks open their most sensitive scar. Yes, they have a longer memory of past incidents than we do.

But the U.S. approach has been to take baby steps first to set the stage for more substantive mutual agreements later, and to work on things like air-sea rescue or procedures when ships meet at sea that are good in themselves. The American hope was that any "visceral distrust" factor could be eased over the years by mil-to-mil programs.

It's struck me over the years that the Chinese approach is different. They want major concord before agreeing to small initiatives, while our view has been to let small initiatives grow into larger ones. Public diplomacy with PLA institutions could make some contributions to easing the fundamental distrust that frustrates the development of mil-to-mil programs, but here the ideological and isolated nature of the PLA worked against us.

Q: Well, we might coopt them --

BISHOP: Yes, that fear is in the mix, too.

Q: Returning to issues and POLAD work ...

BISHOP: One part of POLAD work is to prepare the Commandant for the visitors to Washington. Another is to support the Commandant's international travel.

The Department's expectation is that when the service chief or COCOM commander travels to other countries, the POLAD should be in the official party. This is not always the case, however. Tom Lynch was aggravated by the Army staff's pushing him away from trips with the Chief of Staff. General Hagee hated having an entourage, and I was a little surprised not to be asked to join his final trip to Latin America.

General Conway made his own decisions about who would join him on trips. I joined some, but not all. Some trips I flew on his aircraft. On others I flew commercial air to the destination. The main factor was the limited number of seats on the VC-40. When Mrs. Conway joined a trip, or when General Conway needed to take one of the Headquarters three-stars along, or when Marine Corps Public Affairs persuaded the Commandant to allow a famous journalist to join him, the flight was overbooked, so to speak, and the POLAD couldn't fit.

The trips to Iraq and Afghanistan were always overbooked, but I was determined to go. My Marine Corps trips to Iraq and Afghanistan were with the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps (ACMC, "Ack-mack"), General Robert Magnus, another great Marine and great American, arguably the smartest man in the Pentagon, and one of the most personable.

Having been an Embassy Control Officer for visiting Washington dignitaries so many times, I have to say that the role reversal, being a controlled officer, a member of the VIP party, is most agreeable! Marines hustle to take your bags right to your quarters, and you get a good seat at the briefings! I could get used to this, I thought!

On one trip to Iraq, we stopped at Shannon Airport to refuel. We arrived after midnight. The terminal was empty, but the Irish opened the bar for us. They liked the Marines. And everyone enjoyed one last drink before we went on to the combat zone where "General Order Number One" is in effect. "General Order Number One" bars military personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan from drinking, not even any beer.

On the trips to Iraq I got to see Ali Al Salem in Kuwait. In Iraq we visited Balad airfield and Al Asad, the big Marine airfield out in the west. In Baghdad, we overnighted in one of Saddam Hussein's minor palaces, visited General Petraeus's headquarters, and we stopped at the Embassy.

These trips were bounded, of course, by certain proprieties and authorities. The Commandant doesn't command Marines in the field. Their chain of command is to CENTCOM. The Commandant "visited" to be up to date, to get a firsthand look at problems, because his role under Title 10 is to equip, train, and provide forces. I don't recall receiving any current operational briefings during the trips. You recall how General Schwarzkopf came close to apoplexy when the Army Chief of Staff asked to review his invasion plan for Desert Storm.

Everyone welcomed visits by the Commandant and ACMC, however. General Conway was an inspiration to Marines. I remember Colonel Fred Milburn, his Military Secretary,

telling me that among the service chiefs, it's the Commandant who is closest to being a service God. In any case, the trips with the Commandant or ACMC always included many talks to Marines. Usually the Commandant's talk was followed by another by the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, first John Estrada, later Carlton Kent.

In Baghdad, General Petraeus set aside an hour and a half to meet General Magnus. Chaplain Rear Admiral Harold Robinson, a rabbi, the senior Reserve chaplain in the Navy, and I were included on that trip. I've been in large meetings with General Petraeus, but this was my one chance to sit with him at his office table, to see him up close and personal, so to speak.

Before we got down to business, he recalled for Chaplain Robinson the time, earlier in his career, when a helicopter had crashed at Fort Bragg, causing the death of many soldiers. When it happened, only a Jewish chaplain was on hand to handle the many tasks and counsel the members of several shattered families, none themselves Jewish. General Petraeus told this story with real respect for the chaplaincy, and with interfaith good will. Chaplain Robinson was not the only one who was moved by General Petraeus's recollection.

It was a few weeks after he had testified to Congress, and there had been a big buildup about his testimony as the war was debated in the U.S. He was quite open in saying that his testimony had bought four months to continue the operations and continue the surge, and that hopefully he could buy another four months. He would run the clock as long as possible until the progress in the war under his new strategy would be evident to all.

General Petraeus is exceptionally impressive. In addition to intellect and dedication, he has what many Secretaries of State lack, management capacity and a commander's leadership touch. This meeting was one of my career highlights.

In Afghanistan, General Magnus made a trip to the Khyber Pass. Helicopters took us to a forward operating base a few miles from the pass, and we went the rest of the distance in up-armored Humvees. Marines were in the area, training the border police and nearby Afghan Army units. At the pass, we drank tea with the border station commander and with the Afghan customs chief. We shook hands with the Afghan police and the members of the Pakistani Frontier Corps at the border line, and we walked up the side of the pass to an overlook. The local Marine commander, Lieutenant Colonel Scott Fosdal, a PP&O alumnus, gave us an area tactical briefing -- the location of Marine teams, Afghan and American units, artillery that could be called in if needed. He knew the laydown of Pakistanis on the other side also. His brief was crisp and expert.

General Magnus looked down on the pass and the border stations. There were the two nations' customs and immigration offices. Trucks were backed up in both directions. Most of the trucks entering Afghanistan from the Pakistan side of the pass were carrying the supplies for ISAF. General Magnus is an aviator, but he also has a powerful management and logistics mind, and he was thinking about throughput. If we built

another siding there, widened the road here, and gave the customs people some more training, we could increase throughput, handle more traffic, and move the supplies faster.

I looked down and I said, “This place is the biggest gusher of corruption that I have ever seen.” I just knew that every driver must make a payment at every place there was a policeman, at every little room or office the driver had to enter to register the goods and show the documents, and at every place the truck would have to wait. One set of payments for the Pakistanis, a second set for the Afghans. I’ve often thought of our 15 minutes looking down on the pass as a small demonstration of why “more eyes” are needed. Three men gave a tactical view, a logistics view, and a corruption and political view of one place. We needed all three.

At Balad Air Base in Iraq, we visited the Air Force hospital, and we watched as a soldier came off the chopper and was wheeled into the emergency and triage bay where he was stabilized by a team of eight -- doctors, nurses, and corpsmen. Then he passed through one of the most sophisticated MRI scanners in the world, so that the doctors could see every tiny grenade or bone fragment and the whole internal picture of the trauma. Then he went into the operating room.

Walking through the hospital – it was actually a series of tents -- one of the operating rooms was kept at 98 degrees so that during a touch-and-go operation the wounded soldier would suffer no loss of heat -- just to give his body a little edge in holding on to life. Watching the docs and nurses perspiring in the heated operating room was dramatic, even moving.

I noticed that the Air Force was staffing this hospital with doctors, nurses, and technicians on three-month TDYs from all around the Air Force. This gave witness to the high degree of training and standardization in military medicine, so that a nurse just arrived from the Malmstrom Air Force Base hospital (in Montana) could quickly be productive in the new setting.

On the return leg of the trips to Iraq and Afghanistan, it was usual to lay over at Ramstein AFB, and General Magnus never failed to visit the wounded Marines at the Army hospital in Landstuhl. “Wounded” may be too gentle a word. Many were maimed, and while most had stabilized medically at Landstuhl – enough so that they could be aerovaced to the U.S. -- the psychological side of their wounds was becoming evident, too.

General Magnus had a good touch with the wounded, and he never failed to line up with the team of med techs who would lift incoming wounded on stretchers from the ambulances to the hospital gurneys, and walk with them to their first examinations. Chaplain Rabbi Robinson was in his element, whispering God’s love and care into the ears of the soldiers and Marines as they arrived.

I must confess that these visits to Landstuhl affected me greatly, and I made sure to join General Magnus on these rounds. I had been an officer, and officers must never turn their

eyes from the consequences of their decisions. I also did it to remind me that foreign policy and international relations are not lofty and theoretical matters of the classroom, think tank papers, a conference room on the seventh floor, or chairs in a circle at the Oval Office. There's blood and lost limbs, and lives altered forever, too. We send men and women to do the nation's bidding. Some die, and others will live with wounds and disability and mental demons because of decisions made in Washington. That some decisions may have been influenced by low politics, ambition, turf, or votes disgusts whatever idealism remains in my personality.

Let me pause here to speak more about General Magnus. At the Pentagon, whenever any of the vexing money or organization issues landed on his desk to move or to untangle – the ACMC was tossed the thorniest problems, I sensed – I was amazed by his feel for the whole mix of matters in the swim – Pentagon funding, the planning cycle, service equities and service rivalries, the commitments of the Secretary of Defense and the senior general and flag officers involved, Congress and funding, and so on. I also admired how he spent a lot of his personal time with wounded warriors, on weekend bike rides, for instance.

Let me mention a few more trips. I went with the Commandant to Jordan. The visit to the Jordanian naval base at Aqaba was fascinating. The Commander of the Jordanian Marines told us that their relationship with the Israelis across the water was completely professional and cordial. Their commandant gave us a look at an armed, unmanned, remotely controlled watercraft that they used to patrol the approaches to Aqaba. General Conway's main item of business was to socialize the idea that when the Marines left Anbar province, they would like to take out vehicles and materiel by road through Jordan. The Jordanians were fine with that.

The Commandant visited Poland at Ambassador Ashe's request even though there was no real Marine Corps business. At the Ministry of Defense, the Minister mostly talked about the Polish troops in Afghanistan. Polish commanders were vexed when our Special Operations troops carried out missions in their area, without giving any advance notice. When we arrived back at the aircraft, General Conway put in a secure call to ISAF.

The Commandant put a wreath on the tomb of Poland's Unknown Soldier. The Marine attaché, Major Donald Thieme, arranged a visit to the Warsaw ghetto for our group. I could tell it made quite an impression on the Commandant and on Mrs. Conway.

On the same trip we stopped at EUCOM in Stuttgart for briefings. This was before the standup of AFRICOM, when EUCOM still included Africa.

I recall that the main, slick, smoothly worded, and well-practiced EUCOM briefing addressed Africa first and Europe second. Discussing Africa, the new concept of “ungoverned space” had been included. Somalia and parts of the Sahel were examples of “ungoverned space” in the EUCOM area.

You can, of course, add parts of Pakistan to the list, and parts of Afghanistan too. Places without governance can become breeding grounds for terrorism. I had read about “ungoverned space,” and I understood it as a military and diplomatic concept.

Then the briefing turned to Europe. I was surprised when they used the term “over-governed space.” A command challenge in Europe is that it is “over-governed space.” I’d never heard of “over-governed space” before. What did that mean?

Overgovernance was now a factor in anything that the European Command might want to do, on the bases in Europe, or operationally in Europe. Did they want to open a new PX gas station? Of course the Army civil engineers would assure it complied with American DOD environmental standards. Now they had to conform to German laws and environmental regulations, and the European Union's as well. With studies, and reviews, and clearances, and talks, it might be years before the PX gas station could be built. That was the overgovernance they had to deal with. The briefing and the phrase have stayed with me because, as we’ll talk about next time, our own approach to Afghanistan has been “over-governed” as well.

Q: We have too many people there.

BISHOP: And nobody can make up their mind, or rather, no one is allowed to make a decision. I'll have a lot to say about that when we get to my tour in Kabul.

I made another trip with the Commandant to Okinawa and Tokyo.

Q: Okinawa -- how stood the issue during the time you were with the Marines?

BISHOP: It was pretty much the same as before, and the same afterwards. The issue's largely deadlocked or perhaps gridlocked. No doubt many dissertations will be written in political science departments in the future, and our time together could hardly review the background and the agreements up to 2006.

Secretary Rumsfeld had agreed to eventually close Futenma Marine Corps Air Station, but not until a replacement facility at Camp Schwab was completed. Half the Marines at Futenma would move to the new airfield, and half would transfer to Guam.

I was along on the Commandant's first visit to Camp Schwab, and in a building overlooking Henoko Bay we had a rather comprehensive series of briefs on the waters, the terrain, the plans for the new runway, the construction of new facilities, the planned sequence of unit moves, and so on.

To paint with a very broad brush, the burden of the planning for the move had fallen on the Marine Corps civil engineers and the Marine aviation planners in Japan, but they couldn't quite finalize the plans, write out a timetable, or set contracts in motion until all the bilateral agreements were set in stone.

The Marines in Okinawa, the Okinawa prefectural government, two villages situated along the approach and departure flight paths of the proposed new airfield, the Japanese Foreign Ministry, the American Embassy, the Consulate in Naha, the Diet, and the Congress all were stakeholders, and getting everyone on the same page at the same time had not happened. When the implementers were close to an agreement, money had not been appropriated by the Congress or the Diet. When the budget people found some money, the others couldn't make a final agreement on other issues during the time window when the money was available.

I won't go through the back-and-forth over the years -- the initial plan for a new runway to be built in Henoko bay, and the subsequent agreement to build two conjoined runways (the V-shaped runway) that would fill in less of the bay. In Washington, I spent a lot of time visiting the Marine Corps facilities people, aviation people, and Plans and Strategy, to understand all the parts of the deal.

I didn't get a chance to visit Guam until I was working for the Air Force Chief of Staff, but there were coordinate headaches for the Marines there. The civil engineers of all the services were tussling with major problems -- not just construction of barracks, family housing, schools, fuel storage, and runways, but property acquisition and land use and water supply and the environment on a very crowded island. It didn't help that both the Navy and the Air Force, for their own reasons, intended to increase the number of ships and aircraft on Guam. The usual offhand comment was that Guam would sink into the Pacific before the Marines from Okinawa got there.

The negotiations between the U.S. and Japan to seal the deal were conducted in Tokyo, and both Japanese and Americans expected that the central government would, as it always had before, bring the Okinawans along in their own way. A major ingredient in "their own way" was contracts and subsidies for the prefecture. The only real leverage that the Okinawa prefectural government had in the process was that its approval was needed to conduct the necessary environmental studies. Elections, national and prefectural, introduced uncertainties because the national political parties and different national and Okinawan candidates made election promises, promises they often couldn't keep.

Summarizing perhaps too baldly, Okinawans liked the part of the deal that involved the U.S. leaving Futenma Marine Corps Air Station. When it was occupied after the invasion in 1945, it was in mostly empty countryside, but greater urban Naha had now surrounded the installation, and there had been a major local crisis when a Marine Corps helicopter crashed just beyond the base fence, on the campus of Okinawa International University in Ginowan, in 2004. Fortunately, no one was killed.

The resentments over the Marines got translated in public discourse as "Okinawa bears too much of the burden" of the U.S.-Japan defense relationship. When the closing of Futenma had first been proposed, all the stakeholders expected that moving the Marines and the aircraft north to Camp Schwab, away from the more populated areas of Okinawa, would be acceptable to all. It was the basic structure of the deal, and the U.S. had

managed over the course of the negotiations to assure that Futenma could not be vacated until the new facilities at Camp Schwab were in place. By 2006, however, there were many Okinawans who opposed any movement that left any Marines in the prefecture. To them, “too much of the burden” meant all the Marines must be moved to another part of Japan. This was NIMBY on steroids. This was a non-starter for our side, and for the government in Tokyo.

Then there was the dugong. I had never heard of this aquatic mammal before I became POLAD. My internet research revealed that the dugong is a salt water cousin of the manatee. It ranges in the waters between Indonesia and Okinawa. Indeed, the bay off Camp Schwab is the very northern end of its habitat. Whenever a dugong was sighted in the waters off Okinawa, a news helicopter would be dispatched so that the video could be shown on the evening news. Sketches of the dugong for children emphasized its smiles and gentle good nature. As luck would have it, the tender underwater grasses that the dugongs favor were going to be decreased by the landfill for the new runway at Camp Schwab. This built an alliance between the environmentalists who wanted to protect the dugong and the Okinawans who were upset about the defense burden on their islands.

In Tokyo, the foreign and defense ministries understood the soundness of the transfer plan, and successive governments were willing to appropriate the substantial amount of funding that Japan would need to provide. They understood the importance of the alliance. The decision was in the hands of the central government.

In the Japanese way, of course, national leaders and the ministries wanted Okinawa prefecture to join the consensus, and there were always consultations between Tokyo and the prefectural government. In the past, economic benefits had been provided to Okinawa for its assent on various base issues, and it's only natural that Tokyo hoped to do this again. It seemed to be a Japanese method of finessing disagreements. The entire project would provide construction jobs to Okinawans and Okinawan firms for many years.

I noted, though, that every time a final agreement seemed around the corner, the Embassy cautioned that there would soon be another Japanese election, national or local, and it would be best to keep the base deal from becoming a political issue. Borrowing a phrase I often heard in Nigeria, the Marines in Japan and Washington got the “go-slow.”

Q: Well, we just had a case where a very high ranking officer got fired because he said that the Okinawans were experts at eliciting money from the United States.

BISHOP: The Country Director for Japan, the desk director. He had been involved in the base negotiations for many years, and he had served both in Tokyo and Naha.

Q: After this great flurry and his relief, because he was the most knowledgeable person, he's in Japan today dealing with the aftermath of the nuclear and tsunami --

BISHOP: Ah, I hadn't heard.

Many Marines develop their careers regionally. There are “Atlantic” Marines at Camp Lejeune and “Pacific” Marines at Camp Pendleton. There are also some who think of themselves as Japan Marines. Japan Marines had plenty of assignment possibilities -- in a unit on the island, or to float around the world from Okinawa with the MEU, or work Japan issues at PACOM, and perhaps return to the island on a staff. These men and women had strong emotional attachments to Japan and to its defense. They got along famously with their counterparts in the JSDF.

Because they are Americans they are action-oriented, and because they are Marines they are Gung Ho, so many of these Marines who focused on Japan and Okinawa were impatient with the delays on the Japanese side. For some, the impatience turned into cynicism. Hundreds of thousands of Marine man-hours, Embassy man-hours, and Pentagon man-hours were eaten up by the issues around the Futenma move. I finished my assignment as the Commandant’s POLAD in 2008. We’re talking in 2011. The move still hasn’t begun.

When I talked to Marines in Okinawa, I sensed -- this was just my antenna quivering -- that the Marine headquarters on the island wanted to keep their distance from the Consulate. I thought it was because the Consul General would tell them things they didn’t want to hear. I sensed some nervousness about turf. Here’s what a POLAD can do, cross the borders.

Q: Don, I’ve been doing these oral histories now for almost 26 years. In my early days I interviewed many Foreign Service people who were veterans of the second battle of Okinawa. This was between the State Department and the Marine Corps over Okinawa.

The Marines said we bought this island with blood, and we’re not going to give it up. The State Department said, “Look, we’ve got to make nice to the Japanese because they’re important.” And this was a nasty, nasty war for a long time.

BISHOP: Well, the reversion was in 1972. I remember watching it live on the Armed Forces Network when I was stationed in Korea in the Air Force. Vice President Agnew was there. I remember turning over the phrase, “bought with blood,” in my mind at the time.

Now, though, the acceptance of Japanese sovereignty is a given. The old sentiment, “bought with blood” -- I don’t ever recall hearing it voiced when I was following the issue at the Pentagon, or visiting Okinawa. In the words of an Irish song, “what’s won is won, what’s done is done, what’s lost is lost and gone forever.”

Q: Well, what about something that really is very vital to the Foreign Service, and particularly along the West Coast of Africa? Embarked Marines?

BISHOP: I mentioned that at any given time there are three Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) afloat. While I was on the Marine Corps staff, all three MEUs were sailing to, from, or in the CENTCOM area. These were the units that could be diverted to respond to

natural disasters -- Bangladesh, the Indonesian earthquake, and so on. Sometimes they moved into position to handle an Embassy evacuation, or a larger evacuation of American citizens from a trouble spot.

In west Africa, the Navy organized a few partnership cruises, with a small group of ships visiting West African ports. Some Marines have always been included. Similarly, the hospital ship USS Mercy visited many Latin American ports. These cruises were largely organized by the COCOMs, and their POLADs were involved, but I don't recall any specific role for the service chief POLADs in the Pentagon.

Q: As I talk to Foreign Service officers, particularly those who have gone to the war colleges, one theme that comes back again and again -- not always, but most of the time - is that at the upper levels, the Marine Corps is much more introspective and much more thoughtful than say the Air Force, the Navy or the Army. Did you see this?

BISHOP: You are exactly on the money. That is true. Absolutely. I had come to the same conclusion even before going to the Pentagon. The Marines have a popular image of brawn. By the time officers have become lieutenant colonels or colonels, however, they are all highly educated professionally. Their system of education focuses of course on how to move Marines from the ships to the beach, or how to coordinate infantry and aviation, or how to build an iron mountain of supplies, or how to get mine resistant armored vehicles to Iraq. But it also thinks about the large national security and foreign policy issues, and combines all that with real zeal. The Marines are, if anything, zealous.

I've had an association with Air University over many years, and Maxwell Air Force Base is a good serious place. But the intellectual crackle down there doesn't match Marine Corps University at Quantico. The Marines are very serious in a good and wholesome way. So I agree with you.

Q: When I was in Vietnam, the Marines had the reputation as having the best sort of teams out in the field that dealt the Vietnamese villagers.

BISHOP: Yes. Certainly. Right.

Q: Rather than just coming in and blowing up the village they --

BISHOP: Well, actually I can talk about that a long time, and I think I mentioned this earlier, talking about my year in Vietnam. General Westmoreland was fighting a big unit war. I seem to recall that "crushing the boulder" of NVA main force units was his phrase. But Marines like General Walt and the senior General Krulak, drawing perhaps from the small wars heritage of the Marine Corps, drawing perhaps from the special Marine adaptability that I've spoken of, conceived the war differently. They had the idea of what we would now call a population-centric war, rather than a unit-centric war. They implemented the concept in the Combined Action Platoons, reinforced by the Unit Leaders Personal Response Program. I recently went to a Marine Corps conference in

North Carolina to prepare the next Marine rotation to Afghanistan, and they were still talking about the Combined Action Platoons.

I think I mentioned during our session on my assignment to the Air Force Academy that I had written an article that summed up my thinking on “American Forces in Foreign Cultures.” It was published in the *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, the April 1978 issue. Based on my time in Vietnam and Korea, I didn't think that the armed forces had entered those conflicts with enough country knowledge, especially in culture. My thinking had been influenced by the Combined Action Platoons, the *Unit Leaders Personal Response Handbook*, and Lieutenant Colonel Corson's book, *The Betrayal*. Thinking about my article after all these years, I recall that when the *Proceedings* editor sent it out to a panel of readers, it was the Marine Corps reader who said it must be published, even though I was not dealing with a “blue water” subject.

Fast forward thirty years. The Marines in particular, and the other services in general, had really gotten the message about cultural knowledge and awareness of cultural factors in operations. The Army had its human terrain teams. The Marines, however, were the true exemplars. The Marine Corps had gathered its expertise in a new Center for Operational Cultural Learning at Quantico. The indicator that demonstrated they had *really* gotten the message was that cultural factors were taught “in the schoolhouses” and became part of pre-deployment training. Whether bound for Iraq or Afghanistan, Marine battalions went through MOJAVE VIPER training at Twenty Nine Palms, California. In “Iraqi Village” or “Afghan Village,” local area immigrants from those countries role-played villagers to heighten the Marines’ preparation.

I'm a little vain about my article in the *Proceedings*, and when I'm feeling the swagger I want to claim that I was a prophet. Cue the violins! An unsung prophet at that!

Yes, I could see in 1977 that we needed to better prepare for the cultural dimension of warfare. At best, however, reading my article is like watching “Highway Patrol” on an old black and white TV with a 17-inch screen. A generation later, the Marines took their own insights and implemented programs far beyond my wildest imagination. Compared to my article, MOJAVE VIPER is like “24” on an 80-inch screen in Blu-Ray.

Q: Highway Patrol -- that's a long way back. An early television crime program with, Broderick Crawford, wasn't it? In the black and white era?

BISHOP: Yes, and you're dating both of us. Notice my humility in not comparing my article to something immortal like “Dragnet.”

Q: Does the small size of the Marine Corps make a difference?

BISHOP: Yes, its small size is one of the Marine Corps' major advantages.

In an odd way it's also an advantage that they are always short of money. Marines can lay out a great concept, but it requires new ships, and new aircraft, and they don't get the

money for it. At the high end, they are short of ships, vehicles, and aircraft. They are short of small stuff at the unit end. Marines, from the time they are lieutenants, are forced to be innovators. That whole mindset, having to do a lot with a little, translates into flexibility when they reach higher command. We saw that with General Pace as Chairman of the JCS, and with General Cartwright as Vice Chairman. General Jones was CINCEUR, and General Mattis commands CENTCOM. A previous CENTCOM commander was General Zinni. Fifty years ago, no one could imagine Marines in these positions.

Another advantage related to the small size of the Corps is that the officers in their year groups -- and of course, year by year, the group gets a little smaller as officers leave the service or retire -- all know each other. In a way, it's like the Foreign Service.

Q: As POLAD, did you have anything to share about the Secretary of Defense? Secretary Gates? Secretary Rumsfeld?

BISHOP: Secretary Rumsfeld had been fired, as I recall, just after the 2004 elections. While he was the SECDEF, I often saw him on television at his sessions with journalists. He had clever ways of making his points, most of which were sound.

When I got to the Pentagon, however, they were still talking about his "snowflakes" and constant requests for information, and the talk was that he failed to close on issues, that he didn't make decisions. Concerning the move of the Marines from Okinawa to Guam, the talk was that his decision that the Marines leave Futenma and move to Schwab and Guam had been made on the spur of the moment, impulsively. Since the Secretary had spoken, though, the decision couldn't be reversed. The years of agony felt by the Japan, PACOM, and Pentagon staffs as they churned and re churned on the issue -- was due to a too hasty, too ill-considered decision by Secretary Rumsfeld. That was the talk. Since I wasn't involved at the time, I have no way of evaluating how accurate this was. But I can testify that this was still in the air when I was POLAD.

Robert Gates was the Secretary of Defense while I was working for General Conway. Of course, he had his own huge staff. From time to time I dealt with people working for the Under Secretary for Policy, Michelle Flournoy.

Gates was highly respected, and he made some tough decisions, like firing the Surgeon General of the Army over conditions at Walter Reed, or firing the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff. We'll come to that soon. I attended the retirement ceremonies for some of those he relieved. Whatever one thought about his decisions, he attended and spoke at the ceremonies and was very generous with his praise. He was more than proper, he was generous. These are intangible things that count among men. He took ownership for tough decisions, but he was a gentleman too.

Q: Are there any more items on your list?

BISHOP: I want to mention one more trip with the Commandant, to Chile and Colombia. We were very well received by the Chilean naval infantry, and Chile makes a great impression. Someone whispered to me, "the Chileans are Germans who speak Spanish." I have to process that one.

The stop in Colombia, though, made more of an impression.

Colombia has the second largest Marine Corps in the world, more than 20,000 naval infantry, all trained to be river and jungle fighters.

We made the usual calls in Bogotá -- Commander of their Naval Infantry, the Navy Chief of Naval Operations, the Defense Minister. They surprised the Commandant by giving him a high award, with handsome sash and badge.

We visited the Parris Island of Colombia, the naval infantry training camp in Covenas. The Commandant was quite interested in their sniper training, and in their trail where new Colombian Marines were trained to be alert for landmines and IEDs. It was clear that the one U.S. Marine assigned there, a senior NCO, was highly respected and influential. It was a great example of "building partnership capacity."

At the Naval Academy in Cartagena, I saw that a U.S. Marine captain was similarly influential.

The Commandant told the Colombians that training our Marines for Iraq and Afghanistan, in Anbar and Helmand, meant the Corps trained for deserts, but it had curtailed training for other climates. Winter war and jungle war were being shorted. He could see that when jungle training was resumed, our Marines would need to learn from the Colombians.

The stop on the schedule that had the most effect on me was, however, a visit to Colombia's Naval Hospital.

At the hospital were some dozens of Colombian Marines, wounded in that nation's fight with the drug cartels and the cocaine manufacturers. Colombia has the world's second largest Marine Corps, and they are river fighters. The drug lords begin to process the narcotics in the Colombian highlands, and then they transport their product down the rivers to the coast, from where it can be sent to the U.S. The Colombian Marines do battle with the heavily armed drug traders on the rivers.

The Commandant, along with Ambassador Browning, met the Colombian Marines at the hospital. It was great to meet a deployed U.S. Air Force technician who helps with physical therapy and rehabilitation of those with the most disabilities. Some wounded Marines were ambulatory, some were in wheelchairs. General Conway told them that their dues of citizenship are paid in full, and they may always hold their heads high any place they visit in Colombia. I could see that this message of encouragement meant something to the Marines, who live in a society where class and color still inhibit

opportunity. General Conway gave a short and inspirational pep talk, and he gave coins out to the wounded Marines. Ambassador Brownfield explained the “coin” tradition in the U.S. armed forces as meaning -- the next time you see the Commandant, if you show him the coin, he'll buy you a drink at the bar. This wasn't quite right, but it put all the young Colombian Marines in a good mood!

We had spent most of the day before at Colombian Naval Headquarters for briefings and different social events. There you got the impression that Colombia was a very white society. The admirals and the officers were Colombians of European stock. When you visited Marines, however, whether at Covenas or at the Naval Hospital, you noticed that they were much browner, and plenty of scholars will tell you that in many parts of Latin American, color is a marker, a surrogate for class. On the whole, whiter people are more advantaged, and browner are less advantaged. You couldn't help but notice at the Naval Hospital that the burden of Colombia's war against the cartels was falling on younger, browner, less advantaged Colombians.

I arrived back home, and Jemma mentioned to me that a drug supply ring had just been broken up at San Diego State University. This was Operation Sudden Fall. Students supplying drugs on campus were hiding drugs and money under their beds in the dorm. Eighty were arrested. And it got me thinking.

In a few months, the students will appear in court, well-dressed and penitent. Some will say they only possessed the drugs and never sold any. Others will ask that their youth and promise be taken into account. Some will be represented by attorneys who advertise on their website that they will aim for sentences of restitution, probation, community service, rehabilitation or drug therapy. And columnists will rail against “a new Prohibition” or “activity that only harms the user” or a “wrong allocation of law enforcement resources for minor drug busts when there's so much real crime.” I guessed that the students would get slaps on the wrist, and indeed within six months, most of the students pleaded guilty, were placed on probation, or had to enter drug diversion programs. Some cases were dismissed.

There's a path of moral reasoning that leads to the willingness of our justice system to provide the second chance for those who only possess drugs. I'm not enough of a lawyer to trace the whole path of statutes, federal and state, and the many cases and opinions. But the legal reasoning seems deaf to the giant sound of Yankee dollars -- dollars that come from the pockets of Yankee users -- sucking the drugs into the U.S. The demand creates the supply, the coca fields, the illegal factories, the gangs, the submersibles, the speedboats, the weapons, the gun battles, and the trafficking. Policemen and soldiers in Mexico die when the criminals increase the violence to keep the Yankee dollars flowing. And Colombian Marines -- who enjoy none of the advantages of, say, college students in the United States -- fight and die on the rivers, lose limbs or sight, and spend the rest of their lives coping with the pain of their wounds. And I ask, who speaks for them?

I couldn't square the slaps on the wrist for our college students while young Colombian men, disadvantaged men, were dying. It is America's demand for the drugs that moves

cartels in other countries to supply our demand. It moves them to kill and corrupt. We twist the arms of other countries at the supply end to take vigorous action and fight the cartels, while we in our country want to emphasize education and treatment. Our young people who use drugs, and create the demand, are given the benefit of the doubt, while young Colombian Marines die. Morally, I have not been able to square this. The scene at the Naval Hospital thus stays in my mind.

My time with the Marine Corps was very rich.

Q: You finished up as the Commandant's POLAD after two years?

BISHOP: I was the Marine Corps POLAD for two years from 2006 to 2008. As the assignment came to a close, and as Tom Countryman was named as my replacement, I was two years out from the statutory retirement at age 65 for the Foreign Service. I couldn't volunteer for a normal three-year assignment overseas. I looked at the vacancies for Iraq and Afghanistan, but I didn't see that I was particularly qualified for any of the available jobs. My name went up to the D Committee a few times, but now I realize the Bureaus solicited my bids so that I could be a bridesmaid -- to fill out a list with two additional candidates to submit to the Committee along with the name of the Bureau preferred candidate.

THE AIR STAFF, THE PENTAGON, 2008-2009 **Foreign Policy Advisor to the USAF Chief of Staff**

In early 2008, then, I raised my hand to do another POLAD tour at the Pentagon. Marcelle Wahba told the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Moseley, that I would be a good fit; I interviewed; and I was selected. That I had been in the Air Force made it rather agreeable.

Q: You were moving from one service to another. I always like a compare and contrast -- the Marine Corps and the Air Force.

BISHOP: Right. As I mentioned, the Marine Corps of course is smaller. The Marine Corps expanded to 202,000 Marines during my tour at the Headquarters, and the Marines have 80 active duty general officers and 24 members of the Senior Executive Service. In round figures, the active duty Air Force in 2008 was about 330,000 officers and airmen, led by just shy of 300 generals and 250-some members of the SES.

The Marines have three communities of officers -- infantry, aviation, and logistics. They are assigned to one of those tracks out of The Basic School, attended by every new lieutenant regardless of commission source.

The Basic School is a key Marine Corps institution. Every new second lieutenant coming out of the Naval Academy, Navy ROTC, the Platoon Leaders Course that provides a gateway for students at the non-ROTC colleges to get commissions, up-from-the-ranks

Marines -- their first assignment is to The Basic School at Quantico. Even the officer who's qualified for flying spends six months at The Basic School learning infantry.

The Basic School orients every new officer to understand that whatever assignment may follow, in whatever field or specialty, the total focus of the Marine Corps, the total mission of every officer, is to support infantry Marines. The Basic School also bonds each cohort of new lieutenants, and the ties first forged at Quantico carry through for a Marine officer's whole career.

The first professional course common to all Air Force officers -- the Squadron Officer College -- doesn't have the same impact. I doubt that Air Force considers assignments to command officer training courses at Lackland or Maxwell Air Force Bases as tracks for high command, but any officer who commands The Basic Course can be extremely proud. He has been given one of the most important assignments in the Marine Corps. He has a good shot at becoming a general officer. General Conway had done so.

Each of those three tracks in the Marine Corps -- infantry, aviation, logistics -- provides plenty of avenues for advancement. Every track offers challenges, money, people to lead, organizations to run, and access to higher command, at least to three stars, down the road.

In the Marine Corps, many one-stars are assigned to support and personnel and recruiting and money jobs, but they know that they'll do that for one or two years and return to the game. They can move back into commanding a division or the Marine Corps component in a COCOM. The generals who sat around the table in the Smith Conference Room with the Commandant while I was on the Marine Corps staff have already gone on to very senior combat leadership positions in the Marine Corps.

Air Force officers don't group so neatly into three boxes, but rather in a large number of specialties. In the Air Force, the general officer ranks include many specialists, even from the non-rated career fields, though they are unlikely to command numbered air forces or become Air Force component commanders at the COCOMs.

The Marine Corps is very intense. Readiness for combat is every officer's goal, the leadership culture is traditional, and it emphasizes decision.

The Air Force's leadership culture is more managerial, partly because it is only aircrews that face the prospect of combat, and partly because over the years the Air Force's relationship with industry led it to import many managerial concepts. You'll recall my mentioning that when I was at the Squadron Officer School, the backbone of our leadership and management training was the Saul Gellerman films, civilian films.

Organizationally, the Marine Corps is bundled into MAGTFs, Marine Air-Ground Task Forces, "Mag-tafs." For a while they were called MAGLTFs, Marine Air-Ground-Logistics Task Forces, "Maggie-tafs." Battalions, brigades, regiments, the expeditionary units afloat, divisions, and Marine Expeditionary Forces are all variously scaled MAGTFs. Every MAGTF brings together Marines from all three tracks.

Occasionally, you would hear Air Force people complain about Marine aviation located in a theater. Air Force doctrine is that all aviation in a theatre should be commanded by one air officer who will prioritize and assign missions. Marines resist this. It's because their aviation -- helicopters, fighters, STOL aircraft like the Harrier, and the new VTOL F-22 Osprey -- has trained exclusively to support Marine infantry units.

When I moved to the Air Staff, I had to think whether I was committed to a professional view of this issue. (I had taught the Air Force concept at the Academy.) I came down to "don't mess with the MAGTF." Because Marine infantry and Marine aviation have trained together, because the Marines have built their whole doctrine around the MAGTF, it's a wise disposition of Marine Corps air power to keep it together with the other Marines.

In the postwar period, Commandants always came from the infantry, and the ACMC characteristically was an aviator. While General Conway had come up through the infantry, his two ACMCs -- General Robert Magnus and General Jim Amos -- were aviators.

One last difference: At every Commandant's morning meeting in the Smith Conference Room, the general commanding Marine Corps recruiting had a seat at the table. I learned quite a lot about recruiting by listening to the reports from Boomer Milstead and Rick Tryon. Once again I thought of Plutarch -- "nothing fattens a horse so much as the king's eye," or in this case, the Commandant's eye. At the parallel Air Force gathering, the weekly staff meeting with the Chief of Staff and the Secretary, recruiting was not in the room. I recall one briefing during my year on the Air Staff.

Getting into my new job on the Air Staff, I found that besides these different service patterns, there were differences between being the Marine Corps POLAD and the Air Force POLAD.

The Marine Corps is part of the Department of the Navy. I would see the Secretary of the Navy here and there, and I would be in some meetings that he chaired, but he "crossed my scope" only "from time to time." When you're the POLAD to the Air Force Chief of Staff, though, you're the State Department officer on the Air Staff, so that in a way you're the POLAD to the Secretary of the Air Force too. The new Secretary of the Air Force, following Michael Wynne, was Michael Donley, one of Washington's great managers and fine gentlemen.

Another difference that relates to the two POLAD positions: Marine Corps staffs are small and tight. The division of the Marine Corps Headquarters I worked with most, PP&O, with its Strategy and Plans Unit, did almost everything "international" -- the selection of foreign students for Marine Corps schools, Marine Corps foreign military sales, selection of Marine attaches, contingency plans, rollouts of new strategic concepts, and so on. This was all done by about two dozen officers in that division.

I was the only POLAD in the Marine Corps structure, except for some FSOs who were out at PRTs in Marine areas of Iraq and Afghanistan. Kyle Weston was already a Marine Corps hero. The point here, though, is that there weren't other State officers at Marine Corps subordinate commands to confer with.

As Marine Corps POLAD, I was on my own. I had no staff. On the Air Staff, however, I had a Colonel as a Deputy, a lieutenant colonel as Military Assistant, four majors assigned in the office as POLAD Fellows, and a civil service secretary.

You've asked a very large question, and this has been just a short take on it.

Q: So you moved to Air Force headquarters.

BISHOP: I was interviewed by General Buzz Moseley, and I looked forward to working for him. He had a reputation for smarts and dynamism. You may recall, though, that Secretary Gates asked for the resignations of General Moseley and the Secretary of the Air Force, Michael Wynne, in June of 2008. I was in the Pentagon building, but I wasn't "in on" Secretary Gates' decision. Deficiencies in the handling and accounting of nuclear weapons by Air Force units was the formal reason for their relief, but the corridor talk was that Secretary Gates may have had some other reasons too.

Secretary Gates was very focused on the two current fights, Iraq and Afghanistan. Certainly both the Secretary Wynne and General Moseley were focused on them too, but Secretary Gates reportedly had been frustrated by the slow deployment of Air Force UAV's into the two theatres. Secretary Wynne and General Moseley were also focused on the future of the Air Force. Both of them shared the vision that the Air Force will remain dominant only so long as it is at the leading edge of technology. The technology, though, was beginning to get very expensive. Secretary Gates had concluded that pursuing both the F-22 and the F-35 was not affordable.

They called this relief "the decapitation" at the Pentagon. The two men did not have to skulk out of the building. Their resignations were accepted, and they remained in their jobs for some weeks as replacements were named, and that gave time for the proper recognition for their years of service with dinners and parades.

At General Moseley's final parade at Bolling Air Force Base, there was a nice moment. After the troops had passed in review, the USAF Band remained on the parade ground, ostensibly to play the Air Force Song one more time. Then came an announcement -- four buglers from the Texas A&M Drum and Bugle Corps would join the band during its final numbers. Four young men marched smartly onto the field in their khaki uniforms with shiny brown riding boots. With a bugle flourish, the band began to play the "Aggie War Hymn." Need I mention that General Moseley was a Texas A&M graduate?

General Moseley stood for his school fight song, and then he walked onto the field and did what at the time I could only describe as some kind of weird tribal dance where the five Aggies locked feet and swayed back and forth. Aggies later explained to me that the

swaying imitates a saw blade hacking off the horns of the University of Texas longhorn. I guess that means their rival school couldn't "hook 'em, Horns." In any case, this fine display of spirit left everyone in a happy mood.

General Moseley's replacement was soon announced. The Air Force four-star at Transportation Command, General Norton Schwartz, would be the new Chief of Staff. This was quite unexpected. Since the Second World War, the Air Force Chief of Staff had been drawn from the "bomber generals" or the "fighter pilots." General Schwartz, in contrast, had flown helicopters and C-130s in the Special Operations Command. Later he was the COCOM for Transportation Command. He was a pilot and a warfighter, but not from one of the traditional clubs. I never heard anyone say, however, that Secretary Gates had not chosen the best man for the job. And I thought breaking away from the traditional fighter and bomber clubs would have a wholesome effect on the Air Force.

General Conway and General Schwartz were good friends, and General Conway saw that it would be best if I were "on seat" at the Air Staff when General Schwartz arrived. He agreed to let me go from Marine Corps staff little early in order to occupy my new desk a few corridors away on the Air Staff. Actually, I was General Moseley's POLAD for some weeks before the change of command, but the job began in earnest when General Schwartz became Chief.

It's interesting to compare General Conway and General Schwartz. General Conway is your central casting image of a charismatic military leader. He's about 6'5", and even though he's a physically large guy, there's no ounce of fat on him. He has a striking command voice. He seldom used profanity. He didn't tell off-color jokes. He and his wife Annette, with their Marine Corps sons, modeled family commitment to the Marine career. He aimed his career for command, doing all his time as he rose through the system in infantry units and in key command billets training Marines. When he would step up in front of Marines -- and I had the opportunity to see him doing so dozens of times -- ten seconds into the talk every Marine knew General Conway was a charismatic leader, utterly dedicated to the Corps and to them. He had a good way of sharing Headquarters thinking with Marines, telegraphing changes that might be in the works.

General Schwartz is also 6'5". He has a thin build. The timbre of his voice is different than General Conway's -- he is more soft-spoken. He too avoided swearing and off color jokes. He didn't affect the fighter pilot swagger. He and his wife Suzie were great role models for Air Force families. He has large hands, which he used to good effect when he stood before groups of airmen, figuratively pulling them into his confidence. If it took General Conway about 10 seconds to make an impression on a gathering of Marines, it took General Schwartz a minute or two. No airman who heard him, though, had any doubt of his sincerity, and his professional commitment to the Air Force and to them.

One of the things I noticed about General Schwartz is that while he was in his aircraft he would wear his flight suit. As the aircraft approached its destination, though, he would change into his utility uniform. Here he was unlike General Moseley. When Buzz wore his flight suit on all occasions, he was communicating that he was a fighter pilot. General

Schwartz wanted to show that he is the leader of the whole Air Force, the wrench turners and the bomb handlers and the security forces included.

My Deputy was Colonel John “Jeff” Shivnen, a former Olmstead Scholar with degrees from the Air Force Academy, the University of Grenoble, and Harvard -- and a fighter pilot.

My first Military Assistant was Major James Mitchell, an acquisitions ace on a Pentagon tour. He warmed right up to international affairs, and he had the steadiness I always respect. It happened that due to the Air Force's deployment schedules, he had to deploy to Afghanistan right from our office. General Schwartz and I met him at Bagram AB where he was helping the Special Forces get what they needed.

Major Mitchell was replaced by Lieutenant Colonel Tracy “Chevy” Szczepaniak – USAF Academy graduate and Georgetown history ABD; pilot; just returned from Pakistan. Her sterling credential was, of course, that she had taught history at the Air Force Academy too.

With this way more robust staffing, we produced briefing papers for all the Chief's meetings with foreign visitors, and all his trips overseas. We often drew on Embassy scenesetters for our own papers, but they had to be much shorter, and they needed more punch.

Colonel Shivnen, who waded through the sources to prepare the first draft, joked about my slash and burn through wordy Department materials in order to produce a backgrounder that could fit on the front and back of one sheet of paper. My style was “Hemingway-esque,” he said. Hey, that's way better than Strunk-and-White-esque, which is all I had been aiming for.

The Marine Corps didn't provide any support to its POLAD, but on the Air Staff I had these fine officers linking me up with the rest of the Air Force.

Some years beforehand, the Air Force, for good reasons, had begun concentrating all its international affairs horsepower under a Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs, Bruce Lemkin. The office symbol for his division was “SAF/IA,” and by 2008 it had more than 300 officers, NCOs, and civilians assigned. Of course, Air Force FMS dwarfed Marine Corps FMS. SAF/IA controlled access by foreign Air Forces to the exercises like RED FLAG out in Nevada. SAF/IA was pretty much in charge of selecting attachés, and it had established a system of certifying officers as Foreign Area Officers and Regional Affairs Strategists. The real mover and shaker in international affairs in the Air Force was this Deputy Under Secretary.

I don't think that it's unfair to say that some tension and distrust between the Deputy Under Secretary and some previous Air Force POLADs. I heard I should be wary of him. They were offput by what they perceived was a bossy style and his desire to have full

control of everything “international.” He had expressed the opinion that if there must be a POLAD on the Air Staff, the POLAD should work for him, I was told.

I just couldn’t see any up side to having an adversarial relationship with the Deputy Under Secretary. I didn’t see, moreover, that there was any way that the POLAD was well positioned to do combat. In any duel of memos, he had 300 writers on hand to my three. Most SAF/IA initiatives on FMS had to pass through the State Department’s PM Bureau anyway, and PM cleared them with the regional bureaus, so I thought the Department was already included in any important decision loop.

Looking over his bio, I learned that Bruce Lemkin had commanded two nuclear submarines before he retired from the Navy. In my experience, submarine commanders are micromanagers because they have to be. His “micromanaging” was a problem for his staff, perhaps, but not for me. After he retired from the Navy, he had gone to work for the Korea Energy Development Organization, KEDO, and had been in the negotiations with the North Koreans, so he was not a foreign policy newcomer.

And -- it’s a small thing -- both of us had been Boy Scouts, I discovered. We might have different views on this or that issue, but we recognized that our deepest values were aligned.

The Air Force had a small network of POLADs. Some were assigned to commands from the Foreign Service. Others were retired FSOs or retired Air Force officers hired on by component commanders. The Under Secretary wanted to bring them all under his sway. I fended this off, but otherwise I was not anxious to intrude on his turf. I didn’t have any reason to challenge the Air Force’s own decisions on whether to sell old F-16s, or a radar system, or a certain missile upgrade to other countries.

In the end, Bruce Lemkin and I became and are close friends. I know that General Schwartz was pleased not to have two warring civilians on his staff.

When foreign Marine, naval, and defense leaders met General Conway, they might handle all their business in a half hour meeting. There were only a few longer “counterpart visits,” when a foreign Marine leader spent two or three days, or even a week, seeing the Marine Corps, but during the whole visit, the use of the Commandant’s time was brief. The Air Force had a different rhythm to its international meetings. Even for a relatively routine visit by a foreign Air Force chief, General Schwartz gave an hour. And when there was an official “counterpart visit,” the visitor received a whole series of staff briefings in the Secretary’s conference room, with General Schwartz at his side an entire morning. There would be five or six general officers in the room. Bruce Lemkin and I were the two civilians at the briefing table.

I remembered all the headaches of preparing briefing books that summer when I had been TDY to the Pentagon from the Air Force Academy. Now, thanks to Chevy, I had my own briefing books for all my trips.

When the Chief of Staff travels, he uses a KC-135R from Nellis AFB, so there was never any question that the POLAD couldn't fit on the aircraft. I went on all of his trips – the United Kingdom, Afghanistan, Qatar, Kuwait, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Israel, Europe, Chile, Korea, Hawaii, Guam, and Japan.

On one trip we stopped at Royal Air Force Base Fairford during their annual international air show. General Schwartz didn't make the stop in order to see the new jets or helicopters that were on display by the world's aircraft manufacturers. He attended so that he could meet many foreign air force leaders in one place at one time.

While the jets were roaring over the field, and helicopters were running through impossible maneuvers, I was in a room with General Schwartz meeting, say, the Uruguayan air chief or the Dutch air chief. Air shows challenge notetaking. The foreign air chief might say, “But let me tell you in the strictest confidence, General Schwartz,” and he leaned over to pass on some interesting, confidential point. Both the U.S. air attaché and I leaned forward to catch the sotto voce aside. That was always the very moment that a jet roared down the runway on a low altitude, high decibel pass. General Schwartz could hear, but none of the notetakers heard it.

General Schwartz needed to send Secretary Donley a report on each of his trips. I became the drafter, presenting the draft to General Schwartz before the aircraft reached Andrews Air Force Base. He emailed it to the Secretary before he left the aircraft.

There were many interesting moments during General Schwartz's travels. We were in a darkened conference room at 13th Air Force headquarters in Hawaii. A lieutenant colonel was giving General Schwartz the brief while his own general looked on. It was a well-appointed conference room, and PowerPoint slides appeared on a full screen, six feet tall, perhaps. At one point in the briefing, a busy slide showing communication and command links was on the screen. At different points on the outside edges of the slide were an enemy target, a nearby air base, satellite dishes, tactical operations centers in theatre and in the U.S., an unmanned aerial vehicle, and satellites above. In the center of this PowerPoint masterpiece was a C-130 gunship. Lightning bolts showed the communication links between all these nodes.

The briefing officer was getting excited about the exchange of information between nodes, enabling real time decision making about a terrorist target. His pointer followed the lightning bolts. And he closed by saying, “and then, the mighty C-130 *does its business!*”

A briefing *tour de force*. But then General Schwartz interrupted. “When you're Chief of Staff, you get used to a lot of briefing bullshit ...” Hearts froze in the room. The general and the lieutenant colonel wondered if their next stop would be retirement processing. “But in this case, 'the mighty C-130 does its business' -- ain't it the truth!”

During my time on the Air Staff, I'd say the largest foreign policy issue was Manas Air Base in Kyrgyzstan. Like Okinawa for the Marines, it had a high aggravation quotient.

Supplies for Afghanistan were mostly passing through Pakistan, and everyone knew this was a potential vulnerability. Transportation Command had been working for some years to develop an alternative Northern Distribution Network that delivered people, fuel, supplies, and materiel into Afghanistan from the north.

Here, the benefit of organizing Transportation Command was evident. In the old days, Navy supply officers who had to ship supplies naturally thought about using ships. The default concept for Army logisticians was to move goods by rail and truck. The Air Force had its own characteristic reliance on airlift. As a COCOM, Transportation Command joined service efforts and moved people and the goods of war ... however. By rail from the Baltic across Russia, by Korean Air Lines from Inchon to Navoi in Uzbekistan, by ship to Karachi and then by truck through one of the passes into Afghanistan, and so on.

Manas Airfield in Kyrgyzstan had become a key hub. Most soldiers and Marines traveled by air to Manas and then made a final hop to Bagram Airfield. There were plenty of technical issues connected to Manas -- airfield and refueling capacity, the size of the parking ramp, and so on. These were intertwined, though, with an array of diplomatic issues, some bilateral with Kyrgyzstan, some regional with Russia. President Bakiyev realized that our alternatives to relying on Manas were few, so he wanted more money.

State and our Embassy in Bishkek -- Tatiana Gfoeller was Ambassador -- were in the front seat on these negotiations with President Bakiyev, with Transportation Command and CENTCOM looking on nervously. The picture I received at a distance was that there was some drama when Bakiyev discussed Manas. Kathy Johnson-Casares was the POLAD at TRANSCOM, and Tammy Fitzgerald was the Foreign Service POLAD at Central Command Air Forces (in South Carolina). The three of us copied each other on everything so we could keep our bosses in the loop. I talked frequently to the Kyrgyzstan desk. We exchanged the new rumors.

General Schwartz followed the moves and countermoves relating to Manas, but I'd say the key mover in the Air Force on the issue was Lieutenant General Gary North, who commanded AFCENT. Tammy Fitzgerald was his POLAD, and he told me how effective she was on the job. Of the Air Force general officers I met during my tour, General Schwartz was the finest, but I rated General North next. He had qualities of leadership I admire, and I doubt there are many FSOs who could equal his knowledge of the region. He was an exceptionally zealous reader, and as AFCENT commander he had the standing to meet all the players in all the countries.

Q: Was the Air Force was beginning to wrestle with the problem of unmanned aircraft?

BISHOP: Certainly. If I think of the Air Force when I was an officer, in Vietnam and when I was teaching at the Academy, it was a "fly and fight" Air Force. When you thought of the Air Force you thought of planes: the bombers, the fighters, the airlifters. There were missiles, too, but the heart of the Air Force was its air wings.

Of course it's still a flying air force, but I was struck by how the Air Force -- its architecture, its inner structure, its operations, its mentality -- had changed while I was away. The Air Force of the 21st century is very much driven by the new technologies and by ISR, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. At the heart of operations is the flow of data from an unmanned aircraft over Afghanistan. Its lenses can focus on a village day and night because the UAVs have long loiter times. UAV data is moved everywhere at the speed of light -- to tactical headquarters, to operations centers at the COCOMs, to the U.S. It may be the North Dakota Air National Guard that actually has eyeballs on the screen. It may be that a UAV pilot sitting in a console in Nevada actually triggers the dropping of ordnance on a target in Afghanistan. This ability to move vast amounts of data around the world and to distribute tactical decision making has, to my mind, reshaped the Air Force.

I liken it to Federal Express. We think of Federal Express as airplanes and trucks that deliver things. But actually the heart of the corporation is its information backbone enabled by barcode technology at one end and an information network at its center. They swipe the barcode as soon as you drop your package off at a UPS store. It's the information network that directs and tracks the movement of the package to its destination, with its movement completely transparent to the corporation and the customer alike. The trucks and trains are not the heart of the organization, it's the network.

General Schwartz felt constant pressure to get more unmanned assets to the fights in Iraq and Afghanistan, and I think the Air Force met all targets. By the way, General Schwartz often made the point that the UAVs were not "unmanned" or "unpiloted." It's just that the man at the controls was not in the aircraft.

Q: I'm just wondering whether, you know, particularly if you're a fighter pilot or a bomber pilot, I mean these guys are breaking their ranks.

BISHOP: Look at the figures. The Navy is down to about 280 ships. The traditional goal of every Naval Academy and NROTC graduate was "deep draft command." To be the captain of an armed vessel under the flag of the United States -- there's a long line of people eager to command. The commission sources turn out class after class of young men and women with that aim. But only a very few will ever command a ship.

In the Air Force, the Academy and AFROTC turn out many young officers who will fly. But the number of aircraft in the force diminishes because they have become more expensive. And now with the ISR revolution, the pilot is less of an actor in the actual delivery of bombs on target.

It's a change, a fundamental change, not always a welcome change.

Let me mention one other interesting issue. By courtesy the Air Force POLAD was a member of the Air Force Executive Working Group on Languages and Culture, chaired by the senior civilian in the A-1. We can't possibly cover all the difficult ins and outs of

the Air Force's coming to grips with the need for more airmen who speak languages and more who could add cultural factors into strategic decision-making. There's enough material for a good Ph.D. dissertation.

Colonel Shivnen, Lieutenant Colonel Szczepaniak, and I had many good conversations on how the POLAD might have a voice in these decisions that touched on career development and training -- and what the Air Force's goals ought to be to shape the service in the future.

The Executive Working Group had gotten bogged down in gathering information -- at first, there had been no single button to push or command to enter on a computer to determine who spoke what languages with what degree of fluency in the Air Force, for instance, and it took time for a census of language proficiency. The Group had also gotten tangled in the question of when in a career to provide language training.

After many discussions, our POLAD circle agreed that the Air Force should aim for something bolder than had been discussed -- language fluency by every Air Force officer as a requirement for commissioning. This would have the benefit of requiring officer candidates to learn languages before they began active duty, before they faced the many demands for assignment sequencing, training, and professional military education. Language learning is easier at younger ages.

I would generalize and say that the other members of the Executive Committee lacked enthusiasm for the proposal.

Requiring all officers to be fluent in a language was aiming high, for sure. Colonel Shivnen was quite energized on the subject, and he learned that there was some loose money for a formal Air Force study that focused on the amount of language training that would be required in the commissioning sequences -- the Academy, Air Force ROTC, and the Officer Training School -- to achieve certain levels of proficiency. Our proposal made the Chief of Staff's cut, and RAND did the study. Unfortunately, by the time it was completed, I had gone to Afghanistan.

The report did not move the Air Force to establish a language requirement for commissioning, but when I saw the report after I had left the Pentagon, I saw that RAND had done a very thorough job in reviewing the entire question of language instruction and language education. RAND's research findings took discussion of the issue up to a new level with survey data, not guesswork, providing a basis for future decisions. Still, it once more illustrated the lesson that you have to be on hand to see things through. When the report was issued, I wasn't there to try and carry through.

Q: I remember visiting the Naval Academy when I was a kid. My brother graduated in 1940. He began manning an antiaircraft gun on a battleship, the USS Maryland, but after December 7, 1941, he switched over and became a pilot.

BISHOP: Battle wagons to aircraft carriers -- that was a great transformation of the Navy in his time. We've had many "revolutions in military affairs," naval affairs too.

Q: From sail to steam before that. It's always ongoing.

This is probably a good place to stop for today.

Q: Today is the 24th of March, 2011 with Don Bishop. Where do we go from here?

BISHOP: My assignments at the Pentagon in a way elided into my assignment in Afghanistan in 2009.

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN, 2009-2010
Acting Director of Communication and Public Diplomacy
Country Public Affairs Officer

Q: OK. Well, let's move on.

BISHOP: I was at the Pentagon for three years -- two years with the Marine Corps and one year with the Air Force. I spent only a year on the Air Staff because I got the call to go to Afghanistan.

Focusing on the War in Afghanistan

Q: To begin, I should ask how you felt about our involvement in Afghanistan. How was it progressing, before you actually put your feet on the ground, and then when you did arrive. What were you seeing?

BISHOP: Well, more large questions. From the Pentagon I had traveled to Iraq and Afghanistan four times, twice with the ACMC, twice with General Schwartz. Attending the briefings on the war, hearing the generals discuss the war, becoming aware of the challenges the armed forces were facing, all pulled my professional focus onto the two wars.

This began to awaken in me all my youthful ideals, still inside me from my time in the Air Force and from Vietnam. I call that part of my personality "the inner lieutenant." I had seen in Iraq and Afghanistan how the Air Force had changed, but one thing had not. It's the willingness of young Americans to turn out, to enlist, to be deployed, and to risk their lives in their country's cause. All this tugged me. I was committed to both wars.

While I was at the Pentagon, with the Marines and then with the Air Force, some things had happened that gave me some confidence that the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan were achievable.

First, the Anbar Awakening had been successful, and it made a difference at the same time that General Petraeus and General Odierno had gone into Iraq with their own urban

tactics. These had tipped the military side of the war in Iraq in our direction. This in turn would allow the governance and development parts of the strategy to kick in, as coalition, Embassy, USAID, implementing partner, and Iraqi government people could get out to neighborhoods, villages, and districts. Afghanistan is not Iraq, of course, but I thought the Marine Corps and the Army were smart enough to adapt lessons from one country to the other.

The Counterinsurgency Manual had also been published. It was not just the Army's counterinsurgency doctrine, it was Joint counterinsurgency doctrine, and whole of government counterinsurgency doctrine. Some of the drafts of the doctrine had crossed my desk when I was at the Pentagon, and it wasn't perfect. I thought that in some cases the military was expecting to easily hand off development tasks to "State" or "the interagency," and I wasn't sure that our apparently omnipotent Department was really prepared for the task. And I thought the doctrine hadn't thought through the religious dimension of the conflict. On the whole, however, I thought the Counterinsurgency Manual was an enormous advance conceptually. It would pull the "mil" and "civ" parts of American power in the same direction.

I was also affected by President Obama's inaugural address when he said, "for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken -- you cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you." *You cannot outlast us. We will defeat you.* Those were the key phrases in my mind. A Presidential promise to America and the world. If there's anything I know about counterinsurgency, it takes years, and it requires patience. The President's words meant we would stay until the job was done.

All this gave me a sense of incipient optimism. I also believe very strongly, and I feel it as much about Libya today as I did about Afghanistan, that if you wait for the perfect plan, if you wait for everything to be foreseen and arranged, if you wait to figure out the metrics before you can begin, that you'll wait forever. There's no end to dithering and second-guessing and doubt. Events on the ground, moreover, change odds and equations dramatically. What did President Lincoln say in his Second Inaugural Address? "All else chiefly depends" on "the progress of our arms."

I'll be open and say that some voices from the past were influencing me, like Tom Paine in *The Crisis*.

I once felt all that kind of anger, which a man ought to feel, against the mean principles that are held by the Tories: a noted one, who kept a tavern at Amboy, was standing at his door, with as pretty a child in his hand, about eight or nine years old, as I ever saw, and after speaking his mind as freely as he thought was prudent, finished with this unfatherly expression, "Well! give me peace in my day." Not a man lives on the continent but fully believes that a separation must some time or other finally take place, and a generous parent should have said, "If there must

be trouble, let it be in my day, that my child may have peace;" and this single reflection, well applied, is sufficient to awaken every man to duty.

And James Russell Lowell:

*Once to every man and nation,
Comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth with false-hood,
For the good or evil side;*

There was a memory, too -- of the helicopters leaving the roof of the Embassy in Saigon. You'll recall I mentioned how the defeat in Vietnam had so socked us on the Air Force Academy faculty. There are many reasons why American society lost some of its moorings in the 1970s, and why our politics has become so bitter. We all can count a number of reasons -- the assassinations of John and Robert Kennedy and Dr. Martin Luther King, the Supreme Court case of *Roe v. Wade*, and Watergate among them. But surely our defeat in Vietnam is one of the major reasons too.

The idea that a defeat in Afghanistan would set in more decades of poisonous division in our society and politics was more than I could bear. So I had to throw my weight in the scale -- to go and try and do my part to prevent a defeat.

I moved from Marine Corps headquarters to the Air Staff a few weeks before General Schwartz was sworn in as the new Chief of Staff, so I attended many of the events when he set the tone for his term. In his talks, he often closed with "Send me." He was saying that men and women in uniform think of their country's needs first, and should be eager to face any challenge, join any fight.

"Send me" could be heard in a secular way. It reminded me of the song "Center Field." "Put *me* in, Coach, I'm ready to play, today."

But of course "Send me" is from Isaiah 6:8. "And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' Then I said, 'Here am I! Send me.'" General Schwartz was using some Biblical language to accentuate airmen's sense of duty.

I might add that on the E ring of the fourth deck of the Pentagon, the Army, the Navy and Marine Corps, and the Air Force each have a corridor of offices for their senior leaders, and each of these corridors has an impressive staircase down to the third deck. A huge painting dominates each of these staircases. The Army and Navy stairwells each figure a huge battle painting. The Air Force stairwell, though, has a large painting by Woodi Ishmael of an Air Force family praying in a chapel, with "Send me" as the keyed verse from scripture.

In any case, General Schwartz's admonitions influenced me, too.

Having sensed the tipping, knowing that there was a unified strategy, assured by the President that we would stay the course, I reasoned that it is the time for the best to go to Afghanistan. We would have make our own breaks on the ground. We each have to take on a part of the task, and bend things our way. I was getting tired of endless palaver about Afghanistan. The stars were lining up to make things happen.

In the first years after 9/11, I had noticed we weren't able to decide what to call this conflict we were in. GWOT, Global War on Terrorism? Is it a war? Is "terrorism" the enemy? What do we call the foe? Terrorists? Islamists? Islamo-fascists? Jihadists? I don't discount the many debates about the name to give the conflict, and the enemy, but the fact that we couldn't decide said a lot about the conflict, I thought.

The label for the conflict that seemed best to me is "The Long War." In a way, we're in a civilizational conflict, though not in the way Huntington conceived it. The war revolves around how Islam is going to respond to the circumstances of the modern world. This is going to engage us for quite a long time. Many in the Foreign Service had deployed. It was my turn.

Q: You've mentioned a civ-mil fight, a whole of government fight. Did reality match the talk?

BISHOP: That's quite a large question, and we'll touch on it all through this session. For now, let me just say a few things that relate to my own area.

As I was feeling this general pull to join the war, either in Iraq or Afghanistan, I was paying particular attention to the military subfields that touched on my own cone, Public Diplomacy. These include psychological operations, civil affairs, information operations, and strategic communications. I knew from my reading that in the 1950s and 1960s, USIA had considered itself to be part of a national communication effort, an effort that included psywar, for instance.

Although USIA and Public Diplomacy had turned away from those ties in the 1970s, the armed forces units that had those missions still existed. We can call these military specialists "Fort Bragg" for short. Even in China, my regular reading of the military professional journals told me that in the wake of 9/11 the fields related to "influence" had become active, even agitated. There were new labels, new studies, new contracts, new ideas, new doctrines, and more drafts of more doctrine. There was ambition to jump square into what we might call the "war of ideas," an area that Public Diplomacy in the State Department considered its own. Psychological Operations even became a full-fledged Army branch -- just like infantry or artillery or quartermaster, this was a big deal -- in 2006.

While I was working on the Marine Corps staff, they were drawing up plans for what eventually became the Marine Corps Information Operations Center. With some other members of the PP&O staff, I went down to one of the "Synchronization Conferences" at SOCOM, held at MacDill Air Force Base. Every command was thinking of new

initiatives, so Special Operations Command was given the mandate to “synchronize” efforts in the war on terrorism. “Synchronize” -- it’s an interesting word. No doubt there's an approved joint definition, but I still am not sure of its exact meaning.

The conference did gather people from all the military commands that played a part in the war of ideas, or the war of influence, in one room. In theory, the conference was “synchronizing” their efforts, but I didn't see any actual synchronizing going on. Every command had its own concept. Every colonel in attendance was protecting his command's and his general's turf and programs and doctrine and concepts. This would haunt us in Afghanistan too.

The clearest long term vision came from Southern Command, then commanded by Admiral Jim Stavridis, reorganizing itself to integrate more input from the civilian departments and agencies of the USG. Though it was well received, even admired, it was evident to me at the conference that different commands were not going to yield to his vision. It was, moreover, a vision for a region whose countries were largely at peace.

My interest in how the armed forces were grappling with strategic communication and influence was a leading indicator that I was preparing to raise my hand to go myself. On one of my trips to Iraq with General Magnus, I had stopped in the Embassy's Public Affairs Section, then led by Dan Sreebny on TDY. I was a little surprised when Dan told me that PAS in Iraq was an enormous press section responding to whatever media crisis gripped Washington or the world media on a given day.

One of the last things I did as the Air Force POLAD was attend the Joint Information Operations Application Course for General Officers at the Air War College. It was an exceptionally good use of a week. IO has several component disciplines, some not very related to Public Diplomacy, but it was valuable to see how the armed forces were conceptualizing the field. The classified lectures on network threats, for instance, made my hair stand on end.

I found the lectures and talks on what I call the “electrons” part of Information Operations very useful and informative, but it was the sessions on the “ideas” part, especially psychological operations, that were most valuable. For the first time in my career, I saw Hezbollah recruiting videos and news reports. For the first time in my career, I received a classified briefing on the 4th Psychological Operations Group and its work.

I attended this course not as a Public Diplomacy FSO, but as an Air Force senior civilian, the POLAD. I learned what the armed forces were thinking about our own area of communicating with foreign populations. It also discussed issues that weren't “on our scopes” in Public Diplomacy at all. Again, this pointed to the fact that the “civ” and “mil” sides of the war of ideas or war of influence didn't do much talking to one another.

An “Uber” for Afghanistan

Q: You were at the Pentagon on a two-year tour as a POLAD. How did you manage things to go to Kabul?

BISHOP: Because I was approaching statutory retirement, I had to be paneled for a job in 2009 or 2010 at the latest, and the assignment window for most of the jobs in Afghanistan had closed in the summer of 2008. I didn't think I was particularly qualified for the few SFS jobs that remained open -- border affairs, managing PRTs from Kabul, and so on. A PAO had been named for 2009, and he was in language training. It looked like I was going to miss my chance to go to the war.

In the spring of 2009, though, I heard some news. The Embassy was to be reinforced by adding a number of Ambassadors to run the major portfolios. This was part of the "civilian surge." Those chosen for this new level of Embassy management were being informally referred to as "Ubers." One of the new positions was to be an ambassador for Public Diplomacy, public affairs, and strategic communication. There would continue to be a PAO, but there would now be an Uber too. There would also be an infusion of money into the area.

Though the expectation was that this new position for an Uber should be an Ambassador, the position was posted on FSBid, and any officer could, in theory, apply for the job. When I first heard that news, I ran things through my mind. Among the Public Diplomacy officers who had become Ambassadors, who would qualify? The list of Public Diplomacy ambassadors was not very long.

Bob Callahan down in Nicaragua would be an obvious first choice. Knowing how well he was doing there, dealing with Daniel Ortega, I thought it unlikely that he would go. After Cynthia Efird had finished up as Ambassador to Angola, she had gone to the Army War College as Vice President for International Affairs. And indeed, I heard from Cynthia that they had called her up and asked her to be the new Uber. She had turned down the job.

Having run out of Public Diplomacy ambassadors, I figured they would think that a senior Public Diplomacy officer might do. Dan Sreebny would be the obvious first choice because he had been acting PAO in Baghdad. Indeed, they did ask him, but for his own reasons he needed to retire from the Foreign Service.

It was then I realized I might have a chance at becoming the new Uber. I began talking to people to let them know I was interested in leading Public Diplomacy in Afghanistan, but I got no response. I heard they were looking for a qualified civilian, rather than an FSO, for the position. This was in the spring and summer of 2009, and I continued in my very satisfying POLAD work for General Schwartz.

The new PAO to Afghanistan arrived on schedule in the late summer, but unexpectedly he had to cut short his assignment after some weeks on the job. It happened that the newly arrived Cultural Affairs Officer also had to leave shortly after beginning his assignment.

Ambassador Holbrooke had asked the former Vice President of the Asia Society, Jamie Metzl, to be the Uber. Metzl considered the job for some time, and he even visited Kabul to get a firsthand look at the situation. He wanted the job to come with the title of Ambassador, however, and the Department wasn't willing to do that. He turned the offer down.

Ambassador Holbrooke and his staff looked at the Embassy, the surging Embassy, and found they had no Uber, no PAO, and no CAO. All the positions were vacant. That's when Under Secretary McHale's office called me to come over for a chat.

I thought my package of experience would make me a strong candidate. I had run one of the largest Public Diplomacy programs, in China. I'd had a lot of exposure to military thinking, and this was very much going to be a civ-mil fight. I had talked things over with Jemma. I was available to go right away.

Marching Orders

The preliminary conversations were positive, and I was scheduled for an interview with Ambassador Holbrooke. He had, from time to time, a little unpredictably, vetoed the assignment of career officers going to Afghanistan and Pakistan. For instance, the officer who had been assigned to be PAO to Pakistan, who had already been through language training, didn't survive an interview with Ambassador Holbrooke.

The day came. When I arrived at his office, he was behind on the day's schedule. I discovered that a large group of people from SCA and SRAP intended to sit in on the conversation. Another meeting with some visitors from an NGO had also been delayed, and we were all gathered in one room together. Ambassador Holbrooke finally came in, sat down, and said "Don, let me talk to you first, and then I'll talk to these other people."

What had been billed as an interview wasn't really an interview at all. Within three minutes he told me I was going to go. He wanted, though, to give me some marching orders.

He said, "When you think of the Public Affairs Section, you first think about the press side, the information unit." "Everything in that unit is working well under the current spokesperson. She has our confidence and the Ambassador's confidence, so you don't need to spend any of your time worrying about press and information," he told me.

"Cultural affairs, the Fulbrights, the International Visitors, English teaching," he said, "all that stuff is where you made your career. I know you managed them well to be promoted up to your level. All of those programs are doing fine in Afghanistan," he said, "so you won't need to worry much about all that."

"What I do want you to worry about -- with the focus of a laser beam -- is counter-propaganda. The Taliban are dancing circles around us in the war of ideas. When you

arrive, I need you to get hold of the enemy narrative and their initiatives, and you need to figure out how to counter it. Your main job must be counterpropaganda.”

I had bid on the Uber position and gone to interview to be the Uber, but he said, “I’m sending you out as PAO and you’ll be Acting Uber until we get somebody out there.” He turned to another member of his staff and said, “Open the job search again.”

I had just experienced a bait and switch. I would be in charge for a while, but in the long run I was to be the career number two to a recruited appointee as number one. Well, I couldn’t refuse the deal at this stage, and in any case I wanted to go. He was square with me in telling me his intentions, and he gave me some policy-level guidance on what was needed.

He then turned to talk with the members of the NGO group that had been included in our meeting. And as he rose to leave the room, he looked at me again. “Don, what is it that you want out of this assignment?”

I suppose this was where I was offered my chance to say I’d like an ambassadorship in exchange for going to Afghanistan. That seemed to be the usual quid pro quo, although the corridor talk was that there weren’t enough ambassadorships to satisfy all of the SFS officers who thought they would deserve a Mission after Iraq or Afghanistan.

The question took me by surprise, though. I hadn’t thought that I would be “owed” anything. What I wanted was the chance to go to Afghanistan and take charge of the Public Diplomacy, public affairs, and strategic communication effort, the chance to do something important on the number one foreign policy priority of the United States. That was itself the reward, and I told him that.

He and the other bureaucratic warriors sitting in the circle looked kind of surprised. Now I ask myself whether they were wondering how such a Boy Scout had gotten to the top of the Foreign Service. As he left, Ambassador Holbrooke said so that all of us could hear, “Well, if only others had that attitude.”

Once that interview was over there was a big rush. When can you be there? Everyone knew that PAS needed supervision now, right away. The department still had to panel me, I still needed the medical exams, and there were the mandatory courses at FSI. Not to mention I needed some time to detach myself from the Air Staff. It happened that Ambassador Joe Mussomeli, the new Assistant Chief of Mission, was in Washington. When I went to see him, I learned the post was soon to be inspected. He said I needed to be in Kabul the day before the inspectors arrived, October 15, three weeks from the day of my interview with Ambassador Holbrooke.

I dropped everything, with General Schwartz’s assent pulled out of the Pentagon, and was sent to Kabul in TDY status because I hadn’t even been paneled.

On My Mind in Washington -- Scale, Speed, Innovation

Before leaving, I checked in with David Sedney. I had first met him in Taipei when I was the AIT Spokesman and he was at the language school; we were at mass together on Sundays on the mountain. He was my former DCM in Beijing, and he had become a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy. He had the Afghanistan portfolio. From the few times I met him at the Pentagon, I realized that he was a real unsung hero the war, at the vortex of all the bureaucratic and policy storms for several unrelenting years!

He wished me well, and he hoped I would find a way to stay for two years, not just one, because the Embassy had so little institutional memory. (I thought to myself that it would be a hard sell to Jemma.) He also told me that I must pace myself so as not to become exhausted too early in my tour.

Thinking ahead, I had two things on my mind. One was the scale of what the Embassy was to attempt, along with the need for rapid implementation. The other was that Public Diplomacy in Afghanistan could not simply implement the ordinary lineup of ECA and IIP programs and imagine that it could have a decisive effect.

First, on the problem of scale. I recalled a speech at one of the war colleges by Brigadier General William Westmoreland, when he was assigned to the Pentagon in the 1950s. Westmoreland said that the Army faced two large personnel problems in the early part of World War II.

First, many of the pre-war Army's NCOs -- think Ernest Borgnine in "From Here to Eternity" -- did not prove effective leading the citizen soldiers who came into the Army through the draft. These NCOs were shunted aside by offering them commissions as officers in the Military Police Corps.

Second, many of the Army's pre-war officers also proved unequal to the challenge of leading an Army of millions of men, spending hundreds of millions of dollars. It wasn't exactly their fault. Their careers had been in the small Army between the wars, when spending a few thousand dollars was considered a major decision. Procurements were small and slow. When war came, many of these officers proved psychologically unready, unequal to the sheer scale and relentless pace of the World War II army. During the war, some were retired, while others were sent to small training and supply posts.

I feared that FSOs might face the same challenge -- going to Kabul from long years of small and confined duties, then suddenly given huge programs. The Public Diplomacy cone had been much reduced during the 1990s as part of the "peace dividend." After consolidation, no Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs had focused on the management capacity of the cone. With one exception, Jim Glassman, they allowed themselves to be co-opted by the Washington bureaucracy so that they were content with reshuffling or relabeling old programs while speaking big and airy words about the power of culture and exchanges and brands and Moms. Not to mention that the

cone drifted, even after 9/11, because the Under Secretary's position was unfilled for long periods.

I anticipated, then, that the largest challenge I would face would be this problem of scale. I didn't know the half of it.

The problem of scale had another dimension, the need for speed. I first heard it in Washington, and I later heard it far more often in Kabul. 2009-2010 must be the “year of decision.” The feeling was that the war must decisively turn in our direction or public support in the U.S. would erode, even evaporate.

This problem of scale -- and speed -- was much on my mind, and during the few weeks between my meeting with Ambassador Holbrooke and my departure, I didn't have a lot of time to prepare, but I took some time to re-read George Marshall's memoir of his service in the First World War. Remembering that Marshall had been commissioned into a tiny U.S. Army, and in France had had to take on responsibilities one or two orders of magnitude larger than any American officer's experience, it can be read as a long essay on dealing with the demands of scale.

Before anyone begins to laugh at my re-reading the memoirs of a military staff officer written more than 90 years ago, when I might have more profitably spent my time reading the latest think tank report, let me say that it wasn't because I imagined I was a George Marshall. I read it because I remembered that he wrote about those given unexpectedly large responsibilities in time of war.

When I had read the book while I was teaching at the Air Force Academy, a letter that Marshall had written to General John Mallory had stuck with me. He pointed out that the prerequisites of command in wartime were common sense, study of the profession, and physical strength. I thought I was OK on the first two.

He pointed to the need for leaders to always be positive, to always demonstrate care for the welfare of their people, and to be extremely loyal to one's chiefs, in thought and deed. I thought I could do this, though I needed to re-read the sentence that “in your efforts to carry out their plans and policies, the less you approve the more energy you must direct to their accomplishment.” As I've recalled my tour I realize I could be stubborn about “energy sponges” and stupid notions irrelevant to the challenges we faced. Otherwise, I understood what Marshall had meant.

Then there was this long passage. Bear with me while I read it out.

The First Army at this time required men in the key positions, of the dashing, optimistic and resourceful type, quick to estimate, with relentless determination, and who possessed in addition a fund of sound common sense, which operated to prevent gross errors due to rapidity of decision and action. The man of the conservative type, who laboriously builds up a machine until it functions perfectly, who does not instantly impress

strange subordinates with his powers of leadership, had little opportunity to demonstrate his ability; the issue had passed before he could master the situation.

In Marshall's characterization of "the man of the conservative type, who laboriously builds up a machine," I recognized myself.

Men of this type were the victims of our policy of unpreparedness. They usually prove to be the soundest and greatest leaders, like Kitchener for example, in a methodically developed organization or system, but the budding reputations were sacrificed with distressing frequency in the hurly-burly of unprepared America at war.

"Unprepared America at war." I would say that the State Department and the other foreign affairs agencies were "unprepared" for the war on terrorism. Certainly the Public Diplomacy cone was. "Hurly-burly" -- that pretty well describes the American Embassy in Kabul. I didn't see any "dashing, optimistic and resourceful" members of the Senior Foreign Service who were ready to go. So it was me.

The second large issue that preoccupied my thinking in the short period before I went to Kabul was the need to pioneer new programs. Here I was influenced by Henry Hyde's analysis of U.S. Public Diplomacy just a few months after 9/11. Again, bear with me while I read it out.

Even were it standard practice to accord public diplomacy a more prominent place in our foreign policy deliberations, few would assert that our existing programs have been effective in achieving even the modest goals set for them. I do not believe that piecemeal reforms are likely to produce major improvements. Nor do I believe that the problems we confront can be solved simply by spending more money on ineffective programs, although we must be open to the prospect of providing additional resources if needs are identified. Instead, we must reexamine our entire approach to the subject.

Congressman Hyde was addressing in his own way what Ambassador Bob Komer in Vietnam had called each agency's reliance on an "institutional repertoire." You do what you know how to do. You do what you've been doing.

Although there had been some improvements in Public Diplomacy after 9/11, they were indeed piecemeal. The most important had been the establishment of regional hubs so that the Department could be responsive to the reality of around-the-globe 24/7 news. There was a lot of talk about the social media revolutionizing communication and Public Diplomacy, but the general vision hadn't gotten very far in implementation. I had not, then, seen anyone "reexamine our entire approach to the subject." Each of the Under Secretaries had been a major disappointment in this regard, Jim Glassman excepted, and he had only received a recess appointment. He hadn't had enough time to do much.

The default attitude in Public Diplomacy seemed to be “just give us the money we've always needed, and we can do more Fulbrights, more Visitors, more English teaching, more speakers, more press, more arts events” and so on. Can anyone imagine that merely doing more, and more, and more of the traditional Public Diplomacy programs would turn the tide in Afghanistan? If so, they were smoking something.

My sense was the Public Affairs Section in Kabul, even in 2009, had a quite traditional configuration and was mostly implementing the traditional array of Public Diplomacy programs. This was consistent with the previous Ambassador's concept that Kabul must be “a normal Embassy.” Surely some increase in our Public Diplomacy programs would be helpful, and bringing all the programs to bear would too, but we must do something new.

Do something new. So easily said. So hard to do in the middle of a war. We would have to do what Secretary of War John C. Calhoun and Brevet Brigadier General Emory Upton had so decried in the nineteenth century when they viewed the cost of America's military unpreparedness. Their verb was “new model,” a reference to Cromwell's New Model Army that had overthrown Charles I. The leading principle of a prepared organization, they said, “ought to be, that at the commencement of hostilities there should be nothing either to new model or to create.”

American Embassy Kabul, a Sketch

Q: Before we talk about policy and your Public Diplomacy programs, then, could you tell us about the post, conditions, life at post?

BISHOP: I arrived on October 13, 2009. I did arrive in Kabul just ahead of the inspectors. Anyone who is interested in a snapshot of the Embassy right as I arrived in October of 2009 should read the front part of the inspection report. I thought it perfectly described the strengths and weaknesses of the American Embassy in the middle of a war. Not every analysis of every section was as accurate or insightful, but the opening portrait is excellent.

The Embassy was located within a fairly large and secure area of Kabul, a short distance from Massoud Circle. There were at least two rings of security around this area, which included several embassies, ministries, and the Presidential Palace. It also included ISAF Headquarters and a smaller Army base, Camp Eggers. We were not allowed, however, to walk from place to place within this zone until the very end of my tour. ISAF adjoined the Embassy, though, so we could pass directly into the headquarters compound through a back gate.

The Embassy compound was divided by a road. On one side was the new main Embassy building, the Old Chancery where PAS had its offices, a building for the Marine detachment, GSO buildings, and three apartment buildings. These had been built in 2005 to house people assigned to a much smaller Embassy. Now many apartments were shared

by two people. And all over the compound the shipping containers that were portable housing units had been erected in rows.

The other side of the compound had the large and sprawling prefabricated USAID building and rows and rows of container apartments, “hooches.” It was still called the “Cafè Compound,” which really meant CAFE, Compound Across From Embassy. Making several circuits of the perimeter road on the CAFE compound side was the usual form of morning exercise.

After my tour in Nigeria, whenever anyone at an Embassy complained about crowded facilities, I dismissed the talk by saying “I’ve been to Abuja.” Thirty-seven officers and one hundred FSNs in three residential houses in Abuja was my standard of hardship. Kabul was just as crowded when I arrived. As new people arrived for the surge, more containers could provide more housing. Some remaining lawn at one end of the main compound was given over to more hooches, and GSO contractors began to construct a second deck of containers on top of the units on the ground level.

Providing more office space was more difficult. Construction began on some new buildings, but in the meantime all the spaces inside the Embassy walls filled up with more and more people and more and more computers.

The Embassy side of the compound included a swimming pool, which was good for recreation and for parties and barbecues around the pool. However, Afghans working in adjacent houses and buildings could see into the compound, and I’m not sure what kind of impression the pool, lighted at night, gave them.

Always in the air above the city was a tethered aerostat. It carried security cameras so that if there were an attack or a security incident somewhere nearby, the command could have a look from above. Halfway through my tour, the RSO could also see the feed.

There was a Marine detachment at the Embassy, but the whole compound was protected by contract guards, Gurkhas.

Recreation? Walking the perimeter. Drinks at the “Duck and Cover” or once in a while at the Marine House. An occasional, very occasional, meal at a downtown restaurant, one of the well-protected haunts frequented by the foreign community like the Gandamak Lodge. Watching AFN or pirated DVDs purchased from local vendors. Some soccer and volleyball. Gossiping. Camp Eggers had an American PX, but it was a poor country cousin in the system, selling little more than toothpaste, Doritos, and Operation Enduring Freedom t-shirts. On Fridays, there were “bazaars” at Camp Eggers and at ISAF, with local vendors mostly selling local gewgaws. Quite a number of us read up on Afghan carpets and prowled the carpet vendors at the bazaars on Fridays. That was really my only form of recreation, two or three hours a week.

One of the things I missed in Afghanistan was the ability to walk along the streets. We didn’t have that ordinary way of absorbing local culture. When we did travel across town

in an armored Suburban, we were not allowed to get out along our route. Many visitors to Kabul, in the past as now, talk about the antique, jewelry, and carpet sellers on Chicken Street. Embassy people could spend a year in Kabul, however, and never have the chance to go. I particularly valued my chances to walk through neighborhoods of Herat and Bamiyan when I visited those safer cities.

The Embassy had its own contract aircraft for travel outside Kabul, "Embassy Air." The Ambassador made a trip nearly every week, sometimes twice a week. Aircraft seats were often filled up with CODELs and other visitors. I got to visit Bamiyan, Herat, and Sharana.

The time difference between Washington and Kabul was 9½ hours. We were at work while they slept, and vice versa. For us to match Washington's work hours, we were often up early or stayed late. It was one reason the work days were so long, and one reason why there was so much ambient fatigue.

In time, everyone at the Embassy was issued a blackberry. That was good, in that you could spend an hour or two away from the workstation in your cubicle and not miss an important email. That was bad, in that you could be summoned away from what you were doing to tend Washington's or the Ambassador's or the Ubers' or your boss's demands at any time. In the morning, all of us reached for the blackberry at the bedside to see what had come in while you were asleep. Every evening, you checked the blackberry one more time before finally nodding off.

Embassy people in Kabul could round out their Foreign Service experiences with a new avocation -- food critic, Andy Rooneys of the dining hall. There were two contract dining halls -- excuse me, DFAC's, dining facilities, "Dee-facks" -- on the two sides of the compound, and we all ate there three times a day. The Embassy's meals were provided by the same contractor that managed military dining facilities.

The U.S. armed forces in Afghanistan were the best nourished military forces in the history of mankind, and whether it was pancakes and omelettes for breakfast, or steak and lobster on Friday nights, or the ice cream bar, we were fed generously. Even so, mealtime chatter began with complaints about this or that. The deadly mushroom quiche. How come they ran out of Fruit Loops? How come they won't cook eggs over easy? The soldier in line ahead of me took the last burrito. Poor, poor, pitiful us!

That was the talk, anyway. All of us realized that we were being fed well. The company went over the top for every holiday, turkeys and hams and stuffing and cakes and pies. Whatever the talk, the affection for the chow hall staff -- Georgians, Sri Lankans, Romanians -- was genuine.

Q: Alright, now tell us more about the Embassy as an organization. Karl Eikenberry was Ambassador.

BISHOP: Let me say first that I consider Ambassador Eikenberry to be one of the great men of our generation. I admired his patriotism. I was in awe of his stamina. In a Mission with many fine, committed people, he stood first in line for utter selflessness. He had no vices and no vanities. I never heard him say a self-promoting word. To me he perfectly embodied the values of his alma mater, "Duty, Honor, Country." He loved Afghanistan and its people.

There's a lot to say about the Embassy when I arrived. Before that, I have to praise Steve Cristina, the Coordinator for Border Affairs, who wore an extra hat as interim temporary acting Public Affairs Officer in the interregnum between the departure of the previous PAO and my arrival. This was in addition to doing his own critical job. As far as I could tell, his judgment in Public Diplomacy was excellent.

An Immature Embassy

My own take on things, when I arrived and when I left, is that it was an immature Embassy. I got there ahead of the enormous influx of new people. When I arrived, there were about 350 Americans at the Embassy. When I left there were about a thousand. I was there as the ramp up began, as the civilian surge kicked in. We needed the people. It was an overworked and overstressed Mission, but most of all it was immature.

What I mean by "immature" is that the Embassy was adjacent to the headquarters of ISAF, International Security Force Afghanistan. General McChrystal was only a few hundred yards away. Buzzing around him were generals and generals, colonels and colonels, and hundreds of other people from many nations. The American Embassy in Kabul, then, was one of those embassies located in the same city as a major U.S. military command and an alliance headquarters.

Think about it. Seoul and Brussels are two cities where we have both Embassies and major commands, with plenty of possible overlap between their roles. In, say, Brussels, though, the Embassy, NATO, and USNATO long ago worked out the division of roles and processes, the bureaucratic procedures. The Embassy has the lead on this, USNATO has the lead on that. At what point do we integrate the views of other countries? What kind of issues go to which committees for deliberation and recommendations?

All of that has been worked out over 50 or 60 years in Brussels, and in Seoul too. The lanes were marked, the committees were established, the sequencing of national and international input was decided. None of this had been done in Kabul. The policy lanes were always topsy-turvy. Everything was in constant flux as people came and went.

Second, it was an immature Embassy because we had a severe overbalance of Americans against FSNs, and the FSNs that we did have were almost all new. There were good reasons why this was the case, because of the need to carefully investigate the background of FSN candidates. It was easier -- if you can believe it -- to get a new American to Kabul than it was to hire an FSN. It was months and months between the selection of a candidate and the arrival of that new Afghan employee at the desk, not to

mention the months and months that were used up to establish a new position, and to advertise for and select a candidate.

Among the FSN's in the Public Affairs Sections, most were young with only a few years on the job, though we had a few – I think of Taj Mali in particular -- who had worked for Uncle Sam for a few decades.

Generally, women FSNs kept their employment at the Embassy quiet, sometimes even from their family members. They did not take public transportation to and from the Embassy. Rather, Embassy vehicles took them back and forth from their neighborhoods to the Embassy.

I learned of the ambient feeling of vulnerability among the FSNs when, a week or two after I arrived, I learned that one of our women FSNs had come in on Monday to resign immediately. After filing her letter, she never returned. It turned out that her employment at the Embassy had become known to the Taliban, and she found a “night letter” posted on the door of her home. The threat was to kill her and her family if she continued to work at the Embassy. She quit rather than face that threat.

Some Americans arrived in Kabul with a feeling of ambivalence about the war. I told them to keep their doubts to themselves, and never mention them to the FSNs. In thinking over the war that wracked their society, our FSNs had all come to the conclusion that an Al Qaeda or Taliban victory would set in motion another retaliatory bloodbath. They worked with us because they understood terrorism, and they had chosen sides, our side. For them, working at the Embassy was not just employment and a salary. It was their commitment to the war, a high-risk commitment.

Take it on the authority of Diplopundit, the cost of assigning an American employee to Afghanistan was somewhere in the neighborhood of half a million dollars per year. The pay of an FSN employee might be \$20,000. My long experience at Embassies showed me that an FSN assistant or OMS dramatically increases the effectiveness of an officer at a post. Yet we couldn't get inexpensive FSN employees to make the work of our very expensive Americans have a longer reach. This was true in Kabul, and this was true in spades at the PRTs.

Shortage of FSNs, their relatively short tenure, turnover of Americans, the difficulties of traveling off compounds, and the general reluctance of our military partners to have Afghan staff at meetings made the Embassy immature in another way. We did not have the usual rapport with FSNs, and compared to other Embassies we did not effectively draw on their expertise. I think we were better at this in PAS than in other sections, but we were not immune to the general malady. It was an element in the tendency for the Embassy, and the military commands, to focus on what *we* wanted, what *we* conceived, and *our* bright ideas for Afghanistan. We surely knew the needs of the Afghans better than they did themselves!

In this regard, if Embassy people had a cold, military people had pneumonia, and people in Washington -- so full of ideas about what is best for Afghanistan -- were delirious with fever.

It as an immature Embassy, too, in its infrastructure. Most of the Americans were living in the containerized living units, the hooches. Some Embassy people were fortunate enough to have only one or two roommates. As containers covered all the available ground at the Embassy, they started building a second level of containers, a second deck of units, so to speak. Even so, some roomed with seven others in a few large "T-Hooches."

All in all, this immaturity was a considerable obstacle toward us getting anything done. There was a lot of lost motion at this Embassy compared to others, but we'll talk more about this later.

Q: Do you have any opinion on SRAP, a new organization within the Department?

BISHOP: SRAP was a new organization carved out of SCA (South and Central Asian Affairs). It's a little hard for me to judge whether SRAP was a good idea or a bad idea, whether it was a best practice or not. So much about SRAP was about Ambassador Holbrooke and his style, which also meant putting a group of highly loyal Holbrooke people in the middle of the Department. I also suppose that, in its own way, it was also an "immature" organization. No doubt those in SRAP spent some time -- or perhaps lost some time -- settling the new organization into the Department.

I met Ambassador Holbrooke only a few times in Afghanistan, but my antenna were always quivering. On one hand, he was a little unpredictable, and he could be harsh and belittling on Embassy people if something wasn't working out as he wanted it to. He was quick to criticize, his criticisms were not always warranted, and he didn't care to be contradicted when he did so. Generally, this doesn't work well in the Foreign Service environment. Second, a blunt, pushy, and abrasive personality may have worked in the Balkans, but I thought it rubbed the Afghans -- and President Karzai -- the wrong way, inducing grudges and reducing his effectiveness. This may be a hasty judgment on my part, based on only a few interactions, but as I said, my sixth sense for how people react to one another -- I mean interculturally and personally -- was feeling some negative vibes.

I sent more daily emails to SCA/PPD than I did to SRAP. This was the customary way that Public Affairs Sections at posts and Washington were connected. The Deputy Office Director, Steve Guice, had the Afghanistan account, and I found him consistently responsive. When it had become evident that PAS Kabul was going to need dedicated support in the Department, he organized it. When I worked myself into a dither about Washington's, shall we say, shortcomings, he could calm me down. He was a very good man to have in our corner.

"Command Problems"

Q: OK, back to the Embassy and its organization.

BISHOP: Still speaking of the Embassy, my initial three weeks provided a lot of rude awakenings. I need to spend some time describing the organizational environment of the Embassy because it had such an important effect on what we could, and couldn't, do.

I don't suppose you've had any reason to read the U.S. Army's three-volume history of the China-Burma-India theatre in World War II. One volume is "Stilwell's Command Problems." It bulges with organization charts and quotes from orders and memoranda that show how matters of command and organization, and the inter-service and inter-allied quarrels that the charts with their boxes and dotted lines papered over, hampered every effort.

What did Madison say in Federalist Paper 74? "Of all the cares or concerns of government, the direction of war most peculiarly demands those qualities which distinguish the exercise of power by a single hand." Madison was writing about the President's constitutional role as Commander-in-Chief, but the principle is the same for theatre warfare. There must be a single hand, a single mind, in command.

The tragedy of the CBI was that the theatre never came under the command of one guiding mind, and President Roosevelt never firmly decided between the Stilwell and Chennault strategies, and he never had a meeting of minds with Chiang Kai-shek, among many other disputes.

It's possible to read that Army volume as organizational history, offering a "case study" of failed arrangements. That's too sterile. Americans and Chinese in the field and in the air lost their lives while leaders dithered and quarreled and fought over turf.

Of course, the Embassy was part of the Foreign Service, which has its own organization, ways of doing business, incentives, patterns of career development, and habits of mind. Remember my mentioning Andrew Krepinevich's book on Vietnam? He showed that our failure in Vietnam was only partly due to the large questions of insurgency, grand strategy, campaigns, battles, and the forces of nationalism -- the matters of interest to those who write the weighty tomes on our defeat. He summed up the many factors internal to the organization and culture of the Army that set up the failure. I want, then, to talk about the "command problems," the problems of organization at the Embassy, and with ISAF, in this light.

It's possible that historians will spend some time in the future arguing over successes and failures in Afghanistan. Memoirs and recollections will point fingers. There will be many candidates for criticism. General Eikenberry? General McChrystal? General Petraeus? Ambassador Holbrooke? Ambassador Khalilzad? Ambassador Eikenberry? Jack Lew? President Bush? President Obama? Donald Rumsfeld? Feckless NATO caveats? Wobbly Euros? President Karzai? His brother? Corruption? Warlords? Pashtunwali? Denial of rights to women? The Pakistanis? For the benefit of future historiography, let me recall some things that bear on the State Department's role in the war.

Yes, Afghanistan was supposed to be a whole of government mission. It needed expertise and participation by many cabinet departments and independent agencies. That meant that Justice and Agriculture and Treasury in Washington, for instance, had to stop treating the war as an auxiliary, additional duty. They had to send people out to take charge in specialized areas and do things with the Afghans – not only a half dozen attaches in Kabul, but dozens and dozens of people to be stationed at the PRTs too.

For a long time cabinet departments and independent agencies could plausibly claim that all their people were slotted against positions in the U.S., and Congress did not increase their funding or provide extra new positions to join the war effort. This ended when at last Congress agreed that civilian USG employees sent to Iraq and Afghanistan by departments and agencies would be funded from the State Department, which was given more money for the purpose. This enabled the “civilian surge.”

The Country Team grew and grew and grew while I was there. Facilities could not be so easily expanded, and space at the Embassy became more and more and more crowded. As for the people part of the surge, the departments and agencies, even when they were assured the people would be funded, had to work hard to actually find people to deploy to Afghanistan.

Take the Department of Agriculture, for instance. Different PRTs needed farmers, foresters, animal husbandry folks, agriculture extension people, seed experts, you name it. Agriculture’s people at Embassies, the Foreign Agricultural Service, were largely marketing experts. Farm experience wasn’t needed in FAS. Agriculture had to sieve through its entire personnel system to find the needed experts, and then they had to be induced to volunteer for Afghanistan.

Agriculture couldn’t do this right away, and the need was for today, not tomorrow. Much to Secretary Gates’ chagrin, Defense once again had to fill the gap. Members of the Indiana National Guard got telephone calls – are you a farmer? If the answer was yes, they were put on the list to be recalled for Afghanistan, not to fight with their Guard unit, but to go out as agricultural advisors. They did an admirable job, but their deployment showed that eight years after 9/11 Uncle Sam’s departments and agencies were not organized for war.

There’s one other intangible about the work environment at the Embassy to mention. The traditional system of using the cable both for communication, that is, reporting, and as a management tool had broken down. This was a problem all over the Foreign Service, but it was particularly acute because of the scale and pace of what we were doing.

Ten or fifteen years ago, the Foreign Service was still a “cables” culture. That applied not only to reporting but to management too. The discipline of cable releases by section chiefs meant that Embassy counselors knew what the line FSOs were doing. Requests for action or information, money matters, policy recommendations, or policy decisions all

had to go into cables, which were released by section chiefs, and Washington's replies were received telegraphically.

This was too cumbersome in Afghanistan, and people were too overworked. Everyone was communicating with each other, and with Washington, by email. Surely some classified information was being passed to Washington via unclassified email, but that was the small problem.

As PAO I was often surprised to learn of initiatives that junior officers had been working up with Washington counterparts for weeks or months, without my having been briefed or even copied. I was not interested in micro-managing programs, indeed it was impossible, but under the old cable system PAOs could easily give on-the-spot guidance as programs were worked through. This was not so when everything was being done by email.

The Country Team

Q: You mentioned the Country Team. How effective was it?

BISHOP: Back in the 1960s, in the time of *The Ugly American*, there was a wonderful mystique in the words "Country Team." In a few Embassies, as when David Merrill was in Bangladesh, it approached that old ideal of a multi-dimensional, multi-experiential, multi-Agency decision making and strategizing group. In most embassies, however, the Country Team is just the name of the senior staff meeting. This was the case in Afghanistan, where real decision making and strategic choices were in the hands of the Ambassadors shura, and with General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry, SRAP and the Secretary in Washington, and at the White House .

That said, meetings are an important tool in Foreign Service work, and I might spend some time talking about the weekly Country Team meetings in Kabul.

There was no classified space large enough for the meeting, so while I was in Kabul the meetings were held on the second floor of the Old Chancery in the one conference room that had not been subdivided to fit the additional people coming in for the civilian surge.

Hung on a wall facing the conference room was a handmade Afghan carpet. The center element in its design was President Obama's portrait, with Malia's and Sasha's portraits woven in the corners. The carpet had been woven by an Afghan admirer, but everyone noticed that the two girls looked alike because the artist had taken a photo of one and flipped it to represent her sister.

As 8 a.m. approached, attendees headed to the rest rooms for final pit stops, knowing they would be unable to move from their seats for the next hour and a half or two hours. Anyone who arrived after 7:55 was going to have to stand the whole time.

Ambassador Eikenberry ran a highly organized and regularly sequenced meeting. To his right and left were the Deputy Ambassador, Assistant Chief of Mission, and the other Ambassadors. The other senior officers in the Mission -- Embassy section chiefs and agency heads -- sat around the rest of the long conference table, their designated seats displayed on a video slide. The chairs at the sides of the room were filled with officers in the next level of supervision and various notetakers. A one-star from ISAF always attended. For the greater part of my tour, it was Marine Corps Brigadier General Kenneth McKenzie. Colonel McKenzie had been the Commandant's Military Secretary while I was the POLAD at Marine Corps headquarters. Vice Admiral Bill Harward, in charge of detainee affairs, was also a regular participant.

The meetings always opened with the Ambassador reading the names of American service members killed in the last week. It set a serious tone, and the moment of silence helped us think through the stakes in our work.

Farewells and hails were the next item on the schedule. Every departing person got some personal recognition, and each new arrival was introduced. So were TDYers. This showed Ambassador Eikenberry's fine regard for people.

The meeting then heard from the four Senior Civilian Representatives -- from RC-East, Dawn Liberi; RC-North, Doug Climan; RC-South, Frank Ruggiero; and RC-West, Brad Hanson. They "attended" by video link or by telephone. More times than not, the communications didn't work for all of them, or the lines went down in mid-report, and the staff aide in charge of bringing the SCRs on line felt the heat of many critical looks.

So far the meeting had gone on for 30 or 40 minutes.

Then the section and Agency chiefs seated at the table gave their reports. The reports were functionally grouped. The list was so long, each report could only run two or three minutes. As usual, the Station Chief said, "nothing for this meeting." When all the section chiefs and agency heads at the table had reported, the Ambassador asked those on the sidelines if they had anything for the meeting. From our group, Caitlin Hayden, Tom Niblock, and Sandy Raynor regularly attended.

There might be one or two presentations on topics of general interest, perhaps 5 minutes each. It might be a progress report on the building of new hooches, or the scheduled arrival of new people.

After the reports, the screens showed the schedule of coming visitors -- CODELs, cabinet members, STAFFDELS, senior military commanders, and so on. This was so everyone could be adjusting their own schedules with the visitors in mind. "What's he want this time?" "She was here only four months ago!" I remember the Embassy also tracked Air Force Reserve judge advocate Colonel Lindsey Graham's training stints in Afghanistan.

The last phase of the meeting was reports by the Ubers -- conspicuously omitting Acting Uber Don Bishop and, later, permanent Uber David Ensor -- followed by the ACM, by

the Deputy Ambassador, and then the Ambassador's comments. At the Country Team, I was just the PAO.

The shortest the meeting ever ran was 94 minutes. Usually they approached two hours.

Again, though, the “Country Team meeting” in Afghanistan was for information sharing, not for conceptualizing and strategizing. I don't recall any discussion at all of the large issues that were being debated at the highest levels -- negotiation with the Taliban, night raids, the policy on opium poppies, the decisions and perspectives that drove USAID programs among them -- at the Country Team meetings.

The Top of the Chart

Q: What about senior Embassy leadership and management?

BISHOP: On the Embassy organization chart, there was Ambassador Eikenberry; there was the deputy ambassador, Frank Ricciardone; there was the Assistant Chief of Mission, Joseph Mussomeli; and there were two Ubers. Ambassador Tony Wayne was the Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs, and I was (Acting) Director for Communication and Public Diplomacy.

At this top end of the Embassy's organization chart, I was notionally the fifth person in the Embassy. There was also an empty box for a Director for Law Enforcement and Legal Affairs, but the position wasn't filled. Hans Klemm arrived toward the end of my tour as a third Uber but with a different set of responsibilities.

Ambassador Holbrooke had told me that as Uber I was to bring together everything in Public Diplomacy, strategic communication, counterpropaganda in the mission, and to make sure that our programs and ISAF's fit together. I used the word “align.”

I can say it modestly. There was a great distance between his vision and what was actually the case on the ground.

In Washington, I had been told that our group of five (or six) made up the Embassy's senior team. When I arrived, however, I found that all the senior policy deliberations were made by what was informally called the “Ambassadors shura.”

Q: Shura -- Arabic for a tribal council.

BISHOP: Yes. They had never found an ambassador to be the Director of Communication and Public Diplomacy, not Bob Callahan or Cynthia Efird, and they wouldn't agree to make Jamie Metzl an Ambassador. Any Ambassador would have been in the decision circle, the shura.

When I arrived, Ambassador Mussomeli told me that not being an Ambassador, I would not be in the circle. Indeed I would not have a direct report to Ambassador Eikenberry or

even Deputy Ambassador Ricciardone. I would report to Ambassador Mussomeli. I could see him when I needed to, of course, but we would meet regularly for 30 minutes each week.

For me to send a memo to the Ambassador, it needed to go through Ambassador Mussomeli and then Ambassador Ricciardone, and sometimes Ambassador Wayne too, before it could go to Ambassador Eikenberry.

Moreover, when I attended any meeting in the Embassy, I was introduced as “Don Bishop, the PAO.” At the Country Team meeting, I was not seated with the other Uber, but I took the seat for the PAO. The heads of the Embassy sections (ECON, USAID, Borders, say) that reported to Uber Tony Wayne all kept their seats at the Country Team table, but when David Ensor came in as Uber, I had to give up my seat and sit at the side. This not something you can make a fuss about.

It took them eight months to change the organization chart in the Embassy's canned briefing to acknowledge that there was a Director of Communications and Public Diplomacy, not just a PAO. I fumed over the Front Office's inability to make a simple organization chart change in a PowerPoint, even after David Ensor had arrived. Coming into the conference room early to meet a CODEL, I once threw a copy of the briefing at one of the Ambassador's Staff Assistants, I was so torqued.

But again, this small act of seating, and the large act of putting two other people on the chart between Ambassador Eikenberry and me, showed more than a lack of agreement on the role of the Uber at the Embassy. It also showed that Embassy leaders didn't consider communication and Public Diplomacy to have the same priority as economics, development, law enforcement, and so on. For decades, the leadership of the Foreign Service and the Department had been talking the talk about the importance of Public Diplomacy. In Afghanistan, they weren't walking the walk, weren't giving me a seat in the decision circle.

Worse, I wasn't given any support for coordinating or aligning the work of all the public diplomacy and public affairs people in the Embassy.

Here's the wording of the Embassy announcement of my responsibilities:

The responsibilities of the Acting Director of Communication and Public Diplomacy include: ensuring unity of action in communication and public diplomacy in the Mission across agency lines, aligning the communication activities of the Mission and the U.S. military commands in Afghanistan, and expanding efforts to improve Afghan capacity in government communication and media work.

All Mission sections and agencies engaged in public affairs, public relations, media training, media development, government and media capacity building, awareness campaigns, media buys, and strategic

communication will inform the Acting Director of Communication and Public Diplomacy of current programs and assure coordination with the Director as programs are developed.

I think I can say I was never, not once, informed of other Department or Agency programs as the announcement intended. I only received information if I asked for it, and even then few details were provided.

To recap, then, there wasn't even recognition that the person who'd come out as Director for Communication and Public Diplomacy had any particular standing in the Embassy besides being just the PAO. Our supposed partners at ISAF didn't seem very eager to work together, and they knew from my seating at the Country Team that I needn't be taken seriously. Whatever Ambassador Holbrooke imagined was the way things were, or ought to be, in Kabul, the reality was different.

One more thing bugged me. All of the Ubers and all of the other section chiefs had one or more American OMSs working for them. When Embassy leadership had written out their expansion plan, they knew these senior officers would need the kind of support an OMS provides. However, the PAO was not given an American OMS. The lame excuse was that PAS doesn't work with classified materials like other sections. The Public Affairs Officer in the middle of a war, at the fastest expanding Embassy, with the most money to spend in the history of Public Diplomacy, didn't rate an American OMS.

My predecessor had been told that an FSN secretary would do. Of course that ignored the tremendous delay in hiring any FSN in Kabul. My predecessor had taken one of the FSN English Teaching Specialists and dragooned her -- much to her distress, and the CAO's -- into doing OMS duties. When I wrote out my need for additional personnel in October, my first month in Kabul, I put an OMS for the PAO as the number one priority. Of course, as we'll discuss, that request never reached Washington until the end of February.

I'm sorry to be so "in the weeds," but the administrative arrangements at the Embassy affected what we were trying to do.

What Ambassador Holbrooke Didn't Know

Q: What about the "marching orders" that Holbrooke had given you?

BISHOP: When I arrived I found that Ambassador Holbrooke had been uninformed about several things. This is because, I am afraid, he was too often "on transmit," talking and bossing more than listening. His personal style did not encourage frank feedback.

The Information Unit

The Information Unit in PAS was in the hands of an exceptionally capable spokesperson, Caitlin Hayden. She was simply terrific in the function of hammering out the press guidances that were needed two or three times a day on breaking news. She was Civil

Service, but she had worked at the NSC, and she had been part of the policy process in Washington at the highest levels. There was no person quite like Caitlin Hayden in the Foreign Service. Her thumbs and fingers moved over the keys of her Blackberry like lightning. She had real policy moxie.

The FSNs in the unit were doing media monitoring and some daily translations. Otherwise Caitlin's "Press Office" was completely absorbed by events, not just involving Ambassador Eikenberry but all the three other newly assigned Ambassadors, the Ubers, too. Each of them assumed they were still deserving the Public Affairs support due an Ambassador.

One of the Ambassadors, for instance, was frequently the Embassy senior officer at a ribbon cutting or an MOU signing in Kabul. He often made changes to his prepared remarks in the car on the way to the ceremony. Caitlin or an AIO were charged to record his remarks and make every correction to the text before it could be released to the media.

He demanded full control over every word in every press release. All his press releases began with his full title and name, and the public benefit was only discussed in later paragraphs. This was shining the light on himself, not the project. He wanted the press release to be formatted so that the key sentence of his remarks was placed in a box at the top, even before the headline and dateline. None of his remarks had any punch because they were so full of soporific USAID-speak. As soon as he arrived back at the Embassy, he hectored Caitlin for the corrected text and the press release, and refused to allow distribution until he personally reviewed every last word of the copy. Of course, with each passing hour, the chance that the media might use the release diminished. He was very proud of his "press release strategy." His concept seemed to be that Public Diplomacy was the same as publicity. My take on his "strategy": Amateur hour.

I got a preview of things to come at my first Country Team meeting. One of the last to speak was the CLO, who mentioned that it would soon be Breast Cancer Week. Her office would organize a breast cancer walk for Embassy people around the Embassy's perimeter, and she urged employees to think about turning out for the walk.

At their end of the table, Ambassador Eikenberry's team of Ambassadors started brainstorming. Why not let the Afghan Ministry of Health know, they might send a representative, they would learn about how Americans raise public awareness of health issues. Perhaps the Minister would want to walk too. Let's invite the Afghan media to cover the walk so that we get some good publicity. And everyone looked at me. A CLO event was now to become a major public affairs initiative.

I said something about "let me get together with CLO and talk over what we might do," but someone commented out loud that this implied I had doubts about whether this was a good idea.

Indeed I did have doubts. My major doubt was -- is breast cancer awareness a major goal that will turn the tide in the war? My minor doubt was -- how can I contain this exuberance so that while we support the event we can have a proper economy of effort? If the Minister of Health were to be involved, this would take a lot of time with calls and letters and diplomatic notes and speeches -- all to be done by PAS, presumably. Caitlin didn't need yet one more event, especially if the event had no real resonance in Afghan society. And I was quite aggravated by the whole scene. I hadn't even had my in-call with the Ambassador so that I could get his sense of strategic priorities, and I was being told, in public, to get with the program, meaning publicity.

What could I do? I said "yes, we'll get right on it," but I was not happy. Marines were dying. Soldiers were being maimed by IEDs. We need to get inside the minds of the Taliban, inside their decision loops, and I'm being told to organize press coverage for a Breast Cancer walk?

In the end, the CLO had to cancel the event for unrelated reasons. In the end, it came to nothing. But it showed me the state of Public Diplomacy thinking at the Embassy -- publicity.

Caitlin's main burden was the steady stream, the torrent, of CODELs and cabinet secretaries. Because of the surge, everyone in Washington was suddenly coming to Afghanistan, just as everyone had come to Beijing when I was there. Our guidance was to drop everything else when top visitors came from Washington. The Embassy would give each VIP full support, to make a good impression, and to assure their support when decisions were made in Washington. We were to show that we were communicating the visitors' concerns -- either to the American public or to Afghan officials, as they desired.

In this regard, one other aspect of the Embassy's immaturity was that it had not established a visitor control unit that was equal to the task. There was a constant demand for sections to provide control officers and escorts to accompany the visitors in Kabul and around the country.

Visitors liked the treatment, and when they returned a second time they asked for even longer schedules. Too many of them were "war tourists" with Embassy people as their tour guides, interpreters, escorts, baggage handlers, press officers, and factotums. They flew in helicopters and moved around in convoys guarded by soldiers. They were important! What's not to like? Ambassador Eikenberry eventually had to set firm time limits on visits -- a day in Kabul and a day elsewhere was the standard.

All of this completely soaked up the time of Caitlin's AIOs and the other members of her team like the photographer who doubled as the webmaster. It was all she could do to run a "Press Office" rather than an Information Unit. Many other tasks that usually belonged to an Information Unit at an Embassy -- like working with the Voice of America or RFE/RL -- weren't getting done. The Press Office was working wonders, but it was always close to exhaustion. It needed more people.

For instance, we all knew that support for the war in Afghanistan was declining in the NATO countries, and Public Affairs Sections at different Embassies in Europe wanted to send journalists to Afghanistan to get a firsthand look at our progress. The Press Office had been organizing one “NATO Tour” per month. These tours for about a dozen journalists absorbed a lot of American officer time. It wasn't just that an AIO had to break away from the Embassy for a week on the road with the journalists. All the organization work was ours too -- the coordination with PRTs and the military commands, scheduling of flights on Embassy air, interviews with Afghan officials. It was a lot of work, but the tours had positive results in reports and columns and features in the European media.

Everyone knew that the NATO tours were effective, and notionally it would be helpful to do more. SCA/PPD, without asking us, took some of the SRAP money and made it available to European posts to send their journalists to Kabul. We began to get cables from Embassies telling us they were ready to send a dozen journalists. As in, we in Europe will find journalists, use your money for their tickets, and put them on the aircraft. You in Kabul will organize their tour, the journalists will file stories, and *we* will take credit for *our* initiative on *our* evaluation reports while *you* in Kabul do all the work.

I simply had to say “no.” It was an extra effort we couldn't handle. The burdens on Caitlin and the Information Unit were already too large. My no-go did not go well with various PAOs and Ambassadors in European countries. Ambassador Eikenberry had to run interference for us in a few cases.

I mention the NATO tours in order to say that expectations for Public Diplomacy or strategic communication were running ahead of our actual capacity in Kabul, what we could manage to do. It was a constant problem, and the only solution -- building up our organization -- was not something that could be done in a few weeks or even a few months.

When I arrived, Caitlin's Press Office also had the responsibility to liaise with the Army's psychological operations. This was surely to be part of the “laser beam” focus I was to give to “counter-propaganda,” but the only person Caitlin had been able to spare was a Presidential Management Fellow, part time because she would be pulled into the press events too. Erin Hart was doing a terrific job, and she was well and favorably known at Task Force 41, but we needed someone more senior, and we needed more people working with the psyops commands.

Q: While we're speaking of the media, and press guidances, was it while you were in Kabul that the two cables on President Karzai were leaked?

BISHOP: Oh, yes. As I recall, the two cables with the unfavorable evaluation of President Karzai had been sent to Washington in November of 2009, and they were leaked to the *New York Times* in January of 2010. Caitlin Hayden received plenty of media inquiries, and she was in the loop on all the drafting of guidance in Washington, but otherwise PAS wasn't much involved.

The leak was enormously harmful. Both Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal had frequent contact with President Karzai, and I gather that General McChrystal had not seen the Embassy's cables before they were sent. So it put stress on the personal relationship of the two top Americans in Afghanistan, though I hasten to say no interpersonal stress between the two was ever visible to me. Whatever that stress, however, Ambassador Eikenberry's relationship with President Karzai can only have been wounded.

Looking at the copies of the cables on the *New York Times* website, the newspaper had been given hard copies, and the copies came from SRAP. That doesn't necessarily mean that Ambassador Holbrooke leaked them, but someone on his staff must have. I cannot imagine how anyone figured that leaking the two cables could be helpful in the war, or in the national debate.

The Department announced that it was investigating the leak. I've never seen a report of their findings. I'm retired now, but when the individual is identified, I want to be in the Department courtyard when the person is drummed out of the Department, expelled in dishonor as the wretch he is.

Q: How about the relief of General McChrystal?

BISHOP: I'm sure Admiral Smith and his public affairs staff had a series of bad days. We at the Embassy were only a few hundred yards from the General's office, but I didn't particularly hear any "inside stories." I made up my mind not to accept any request to have a *Rolling Stone* journalist shadow anyone at the Embassy!

Cultural Affairs

Ambassador Holbrooke was also uninformed about the Cultural Affairs Office. He had told me all was well, but it wasn't. For some months there had been no Cultural Affairs Officer, only junior officers as "Actings." They were doing absolutely the best they could, working from 8 a.m. every morning to 10 p.m. at night. Many of these young officers had never worked in a Public Affairs Section, so they didn't have experience with their portfolios, and they had had no opportunity to come to grips with the larger sense of how the programs should go. The officer who was to replace the departed-early CAO was not yet in Kabul, so I had to provide some of that guidance and supervision.

Because they were junior officers, moreover, the Washington tail had begun to wag the Afghanistan dog. As I arrived, for instance, I discovered that the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs was planning to send a jazz trio to Afghanistan. It would, in the typical USIA way, go around to different cities. This was a follow-on to a trip made a year earlier.

Those in PAS who had been involved in the previous performing arts program moaned. The musicians came along with an ECA escort. The ECA escort didn't speak Dari or Pashto, didn't know Afghanistan, so PAS had to actually do all the work, in Kabul and in

the other cities. PAS staff had to advance the visits to each site, scout the venues and the lodging, worry about local electricity and security, make cash payments to cover any local costs, and they had to join the group for the whole time they were in Afghanistan. The trip had been an energy sponge, and the only Afghans it touched were those who attended the performances, a few hundred in each of a few cities.

Using performances as Public Diplomacy tools in Afghanistan was always problematic because you wouldn't want to advertise an event at a certain place or time. That made it too much of a target, a soft target. You could arrange performances, but you couldn't build up an event with advance publicity to increase the number of people who would attend.

I cancelled the tour. That it had been scheduled at all showed the importance of having a PAO who could say “no.”

Another worldwide Washington program that had been implemented in Afghanistan was YES, formally the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study Program. Each year, 25 or 30 young Afghan high school students were sent to the U.S. for their junior year of high school. The American Councils for International Education was the Department's partner.

Any Public Diplomacy or consular officer in the field could have predicted what would happen. When they reached the U.S., the students would be overwhelmed by the abundance of American society compared to what they knew in Afghanistan. They would thrive in the atmosphere of American schools. They would become aware of American higher education, and the counselors at their host schools would talk up their admission to a U.S. college or university. Host families would begin to think of ways to provide a new life, a life in the U.S., for the new Afghan member of their family. Families back home in Afghanistan would support the student's staying in the U.S., away from the war.

Add to this a wrinkle in Canada's law on refugees and asylum. A foreign citizen arriving at the Canadian border, if under the age of 18, can be admitted as a refugee without formal hearings. Afghan relatives who lived in the U.S. or Canada arranged for YES students to travel to the Canadian border. They were coached on what to say so that they would qualify as refugees.

Every year, the number of YES students who jumped to Canada increased -- to more than a third of each year's tranche, as I recall. The numbers were well known, but it was hard for the Department and the Congress to admit that a program named for two prominent Senators was flawed, at least for a country at war.

Washington was unwilling to curtail the program, but finally the scandal of the numbers of non-returns became clear, and the program was ended for Afghanistan, partly to protect the program in other countries. This was a program that had needed a PAO to say “no” before it was launched in Afghanistan.

Again, the YES program was a case study of Washington urging one of its template programs be implemented in Afghanistan. While it was operating, however, PAS spent a large amount of time on a program for a small number of young people.

When I arrived, I found that my Public Diplomacy people were often in a defensive crouch. I attribute this to the legacy of pinched budgets, the years of underfunding Public Diplomacy. Public Diplomacy people had shrunk down their aspirations, their thought of what they could do. It seemed they could not shake off their accustomed zealous guarding of every dollar. From time to time, USAID or other sections of the Embassy, or ISAF, had a need that could only be met from PD funds. Too often, our people were saying, “no,” *they* are not going to get *our* money. The Political Section, for instance, wanted to send women Parliamentarians on a Voluntary Visitors' program to the U.S., but I heard from the PAS staff, “That’s *our* money for *our* exchanges.” This was one more reason I had to spend time on the Cultural Affairs side.

All that said, I was happy to implement the traditional exchange programs, but I did not regard them as war-winning. They would not “move the needle” during a single “year of decision.” Implementing the traditional programs in Afghanistan because “that’s what PD sections do” -- another way of saying, to use Bob Komer’s words, “play out our institutional repertoire” -- had an unintended consequence. They tied down Foreign Service Americans that I could not put on other programs. We did Fulbright and YES, but we weren’t getting inside the Taliban communication loops.

Failing the Field

So far I’ve mentioned the problems in Kabul. There was also continued aggravation over the deployment of officers out to the field. I must be honest and say we never got this right, and I can understand why our colleagues in IPA, Interagency Provincial Affairs, the section of the Embassy tasked to build up the field, were aggravated with PAS. It should not have been.

We weren’t getting volunteers -- FSOs or 3161s -- to work at PRTs when there were jobs available in Kabul. I also thought that we had to get Kabul right first, and to get the national programs running right before we sent people to the field. Eventually, the number of field officers increased, they were given grants warrants, sizable funds were set aside for them to spend, and FSN positions were created. It took a very long time, though, an effort that ran past my own tour.

So, I needed to spend quality PAO time on the Information Unit. I had to do the same on the Cultural Affairs side. When could I get around to focusing on Public Diplomacy at the PRTs?

Again, Ambassador Holbrooke had been uninformed.

Counter-Propaganda

Turning to his main charge to me, to give “counter-propaganda” my “laser beam” focus.

After I arrived, it was some time before I could be fit into Ambassador Eikenberry's schedule for an in-call. One evening I was walking across the compound at the same time he was coming from the opposite direction, and we paused to chat. We had served together in Beijing when I was Deputy Public Affairs Officer and he was Defense Attaché. I mentioned that I hoped we could discuss the counterpropaganda effort when we met, telling him that Ambassador Holbrooke had given me the charge.

Ambassador Eikenberry said, “Counterpropaganda? We don’t use that word here. I know that Richard talks about it all the time. I’ve heard him. But, no, that’s not what we’re about.”

Ambassador Holbrooke was fixed on counterpropaganda. Ambassador Eikenberry wouldn't use the term, though he was comfortable with “strategic communication.” That, however, was a word they didn't like in Washington, as Vikram Singh would remind me on the telephone. I had a hard time processing this. At two ends of the war, the Washington end and the Afghanistan end, there was no agreement about what to call the effort in the “war of ideas” or “influence.”

Q: Was it basically the same?

BISHOP: No. Yes. Maybe. It all depended.

In talking with you about the overlap or the compatibility of “counterpropaganda” or “strategic communication,” I'm engaging in some academic post-game analysis. The point I was making is that I had to speak about “counterpropaganda” when I talked to SRAP, and not use the word at the Embassy. The disagreement over words showed a lack of agreement in Washington and in Kabul about what our part of the Embassy was supposed to be doing. I was somehow supposed to finesse this. It was drag on what we were trying to do.

I thought of “counterpropaganda” as having two halves. The first was to study the Taliban's narratives, characteristic language, and Islamic appeals, for instance. The second half was to figure out, and then figure out how to communicate, our own narratives, language, and appeals. This was several conceptual notches up from Public Diplomacy as publicity for what the Embassy was doing.

This might or might not be the same as “strategic communication,” depending on who you talked to. The Army's psychological operations thinkers would understand the “counterpropaganda” mission I've just described. The Army's public affairs people, I observed, used “strategic communication” in a different way, though, assuring that everyone on our side said the same thing, from the White House down to a battalion. The public affairs officers also meant that deeds and words must match.

Armed forces people in Afghanistan who were working in this area were not quite unified in their conceptual approach because they had come from many commands with many different concepts, and the individuals may or may not have been tuned in to each and every new nuance in DOD, JCS, and COCOM thinking -- on "Stratcom" or "influence" or "information operations" -- that had been taking place. To use the SOCOM term, our armed forces colleagues were not conceptually "synchronized."

Military people talked a lot about "messaging," and this surely was helpful, but it was certainly not the sum of "counterpropaganda" or "strategic communication." Admiral Mullen understood that strategic "communication" had to be two-way, a dialog not a lecture, and this brought him up to the level of USIA thinking. But I never saw his insight integrated into the military effort. If there was an overlap between the two concepts, it had to be worked through.

Not to mention that many of the people assigned to communication in the commands had no background in the field. They were dutiful people told to take on tasks that few had been exposed to or prepared for. For instance, one of the Air Force officers who worked traditional communication at ISAF came to Afghanistan from the faculty of the Air Force Academy, where she taught English. She was a quick study, to be sure, and she did the Academy faculty proud. But she had not been studying these problems earlier in her career.

The "Mil" Side of "Civ-Mil"

Q: Tell me more about civilian-military coordination.

BISHOP: Well, there are a couple of different parts of that. If we talk about Afghanistan as a civ-mil effort, you did have two organizational cultures. As far as I could tell, there were good relations, good "Handcon" as the Marines would say, between Ambassador Eikenberry and General McChrystal, but as you moved down their organizations there was more inertia and more friction.

One of the reasons that the Embassy needed an Uber for Communication and Public Diplomacy was the need for a senior officer to be the Embassy's counterpart to the ISAF Director of Communication, Rear Admiral (upper half, so a two-star admiral) Greg Smith. He had Admiral Mullen's confidence, and he was going into his fifth year in the CENTCOM theatre. He had come to Afghanistan directly after some years in Iraq. Even though his career had developed as a public affairs officer, he was in charge of both efforts, psyops and public affairs, at ISAF.

I got over to see Admiral Smith a few days after I arrived on TDY. We had a good cordial conversation. The fiscal year had hardly begun, but he let me know that all of his FY2010 money was already committed. I learned that he was focused on his military priorities. I gathered the impression that he had been so disappointed over the years, working in Baghdad and then in Kabul, so unimpressed with the State Department -- all promises, no delivery -- that he expected the same from me. And, after all, I was only the

“Acting” Uber, waiting for Ambassador Holbrooke's number one man, whoever that might be, to arrive.

I found that although I could reach out and see him, he rarely asked for any help or coordination, and he didn't have anything he wanted to do together, with the exception of the communication towers project because it needed our money, and at a later date the Security News Desk that we'll discuss. His interest in the towers was, though, episodic.

Bureaucratically, then, there wasn't much coordination between the “mil” and “civ” sides in this area that embraced communication, Public Diplomacy, strategic communication, psychological operations, influence, and so on. We were both in the same “battlespace,” to use the favored military term, the battlespace of ideas and influence, but we certainly weren't “one team, one fight.”

The formal way in which our two sides were supposed to work together was through something called the Information Initiatives Working Group. Before I arrived, Ambassador Wayne had formed eleven national working groups. These were civ-mil groups with occasional international participation. There were groups on economic development, borders, gender, governance, health, and so on. Admiral Smith and I were on the chart as co-chairs of the Information Initiatives Working Group. It met every Sunday, but he never attended any of the meetings.

Over time, the Group had simply become an information-sharing meeting. Our Public Diplomacy staff gathered with the colonels, majors, and captains from some of the nearby commands. We let each other know what we were doing. It wasn't, however, a group that steered the civ and mil sides in the same direction.

One example of lack of coordination still astounds me. At one of the Country Team meetings, Dawn Liberi, the Senior Civilian Representative in RC-East, participating by telephone, mentioned offhand that they would soon be unveiling their strategic communication strategy. I emailed her the same day asking her to share their plans, and I followed up with other emails over the next weeks. She never replied.

Then, one day we heard that RC-East, then in the hands of the 82nd Airborne Division, was launching a huge media campaign to gain recruits for the Afghan Army. They had chosen the Tolo Group as their partner, and there were slick television ads, radio spots, posters, and billboards promoting Army recruitment.

It happened that the 82nd had on its staff a reservist from an advertising firm, and he developed the campaign very professionally. The 82nd Airborne paid for it all using its own Stratcom money, several million dollars. I thought it was a fine initiative, but neither the Communication Division of ISAF nor Dawn Liberi at RC-East gave us any heads up.

On one hand, this was not unity of effort. There was also a dollars-and-cents cost to this lack of alignment. Uncoordinated “Stratcom” media buys by uncoordinated American military, American civilian, international, and NGO actors meant a lot of money was

sloshing into what was still a small media market. For television and radio time, it was a seller's market, the Afghans knew it, and costs for air time were increasing every month. Indeed, Moby and other networks had expats on their staff whose only job was to prowl for clients among the foreigners in Afghanistan. They knew that the organizations that had money for Stratcom rarely talked to one another. They had a better picture of the totality of media buys that I did.

I've mentioned the Information Initiatives Working Group as a vehicle for weekly civ-mil coordination. I should mention one other vehicle, the ROC Drill held, if I recall correctly, in the spring of 2010. When I first heard about the "Rock Drill" I wondered if we were somehow tarriers in the old song about the railroads. I recalled, however, that I had occasionally heard the term used at Marine Corps headquarters. Each time the term was mentioned, eyes rolled, voices groaned, and I thought it must be some kind of root canal. In a way, it was as painful.

Major Gallagher helped me understand the ROC Drill concept. Imagine that the 82nd Airborne Division is going to have an exercise, and it involves a new concept of operations and sequenced movement of units. The idea of the ROC Drill, the Rehearsal of Concept Drill, is that all the officers of the division or brigade or battalion assemble on a football field. In other settings, Navy SEALs might assemble at a swimming pool. A small unit might hold a ROC Drill around a sand table. Field, pool, or sand table -- they represent the area of operations. I like the football field scale.

As Major Gallagher told me of Army ROC Drills -- while everyone looks on, some participants are placed at one position on the field, as if they were a company that had just jumped in. They move in the designated direction. Another small group moves onto the field from another direction, representing, say, arriving infantry in Strykers. In a timed sequence they join up, while two more fellows on the field representing a Special Forces unit do this or that. So it's a kind of pre-game rehearsal involving leaders that focuses on the coordination and timing of movements.

Army talk is that the final ROC Drill itself is less valuable than the preparation for the ROC Drill. Every unit and every leader has had to study the plan, coordinate with counterparts in the other participating units, and think through such things as timing and coordination of fires ahead of time. It's the pre-planning that makes the ROC Drill successful.

General Petraeus and Ambassador Holbrooke agreed that there should be a large meeting to coordinate the military and civilian sides of our common effort in Afghanistan -- this was our ROC Drill. General McChrystal and Ambassador Eikenberry would round out the command table. All the senior Embassy people, and the top military commanders, would be in the room, and everyone would review together each part of our effort. This took the form of two days of PowerPoint briefings.

I suppose the main timing and sequencing problem in this ROC Drill was how soon we civilians could begin to "build" after military units did the "clear" and "hold." ISAF had

prioritized all the districts of Afghanistan by their need for governance work, and the development sections of the Embassy were well into a wrenching effort to take their national programs into the districts. I'm sure that USAID's Bill Frej and IPA's Scott Kilner were having daily migraines.

As I recall, the Embassy had about a month to prepare for the ROC Drill. We had to show we were delivering and would deliver on governance, development, law enforcement, and every other part of the effort. We had to demonstrate full and close collaboration with the armed forces. Everything had to be briefed on PowerPoint, and all over the compound people had to come up to speed on their presentation skills. To get ready and practice, at the Embassy we had several all-hands meetings that lasted two or three hours each. This was turning out to be a real energy sponge.

As for Public Diplomacy participation in the district program, we didn't have much to offer because we had no people to deploy, but we were ready to help with money, and GMIC was scheduled to open regional branches that would increase the Afghan government's media relations presence.

On the first day, David Ensor and Admiral Greg Smith had to present progress and collaboration in Communication with a special focus on the communication towers project. This was because everyone still remembered one of Ambassador Holbrooke's public temper tantrums on the lack of progress on the towers, a little before I arrived.

With his experience on television, David was completely at ease on the platform, and Admiral Smith was an experienced and confident briefer. They had worked hard on their script and their slides, and I think that the briefing went well because of their excellent presentation skills at two podiums on each side of the screen. As I watched the briefing, I thought it was quite smooth and a tad optimistic, but at the time not all of the thorny problems on the towers were yet revealed.

Ambassador Holbrooke asked one question, to the effect of -- are you *really* working together on this? Admiral Smith replied, "rest assured we are joined at the hip." I thought this was ... I'm searching for a diplomatic euphemism here ... stretching things considerably. The purpose was to get through our portion of the ROC Drill without a Holbrooke eruption.

Military Information Support Team

Q: I presume you had one of the Army MIST teams at the Embassy.

BISHOP: Yes, a standard vehicle, around the world, for civ-mil collaboration at Embassies is the use of a deployed Military Information Support Team (MIST) from Fort Bragg. PAS was assigned a team from the 4th Psychological Operations Group at Fort Bragg, seven or eight soldiers. There were three teams in succession, headed by three captains, while I was there.

The doctrine is that MIST teams are to work under Public Affairs Officers, and the PAO and the team leader work out mutually agreeable priorities and projects. This works well at Embassies when the MIST teams are deployed to countries where there are no U.S. military commands. In Kabul, though, the teams were a small group of PsyOps soldiers in an area where hundreds of their colleagues worked at different commands.

I felt that when they were right next to ISAF, and when Task Force 41 was just down the road, with all these other PsyOps people around, the Embassy's MIST team was always doing things with the people they knew, things that would advance their standing in the career. I never felt that the Embassy's PsyOps team was being used effectively, and in the first half of my tour, there was no one on my staff who could take on the task of supervising the MIST team properly.

When our own STRATCOM unit began to take shape, at least on paper, the first head was an Army Reserve colonel detailed to the Public Affairs Section. On the chart, it made sense for the MIST team to be in this cluster, and it made sense for the Colonel to have day to day supervision. In the end, though, that contributed to the same problem, that the MIST team was marching more to its own, military drummer than to ours.

When I arrived, I found that several successive MIST teams, with PAO approval, had worked up an elaborate plan to develop media training centers at six universities. They were frequent visitors to the campuses, they had developed a curriculum, they had made up lists for new buildings, cameras, video, printing presses, and so on. Their plan was advanced, and detailed. I asked, "what's it going to cost?"

They said, "we're going to pay for it all, except that we need \$300,000 from you. Our authorities don't allow us to repair buildings, but you can. Because of this authorities problem, we need your \$300,000."

I said, "Go. Spend."

When I returned in November, I learned that the team had reviewed the costs, and Fort Bragg had changed its budget priorities. I learned the total cost of the project would be about three million dollars, and Fort Bragg could no longer provide any of the funds. Of course, we were going to receive some big bucks thanks to Ambassador Holbrooke, so again I said, go ahead.

When I left Afghanistan, the price tag had reached \$10 million. Perhaps we can say diplomatically that the dramatic rise in costs reflected poor staff work by the early teams.

Fort Bragg's withdrawal of funds had another effect. It shifted the burden of contracting onto us, adding one more multi-million dollar project to our plate. More on this a little later.

I mention this to show that MIST had produced half a plan. That made it even more clear why we needed our own project managers.

When I arrived, MIST was working a few small projects. One was the reprint of a booklet of American and Afghan poems, something nice to have on hand. The booklets were printed, and the first were to be handed out to a group of students we were meeting at the Embassy. The students, reading the English and Dari, immediately pointed out several translation errors. It was an embarrassing moment. MIST had a good idea, but they had not internalized the need for perfect translations and edits.

On another occasion, we were with the Deputy Minister of Education showing him another MIST product, and he pointed out that President Karzai's name was spelled wrong in Pashto. Experiences like that impaired my confidence in the MIST team's projects.

The “Civ” Side of “Civ-Mil”

Q: So far you've mentioned the problems of civ-mil coordination existing on the military side of our effort. How about on the civilian side?

BISHOP: OK, certainly!

On the USG civilian side of the war effort, there were a number of communication programs that needed to be aligned. PAS, USAID, and DEA had the largest. PAS couldn't achieve strategic effects on its own. Working together, we might make some impact. We would never know, though, because the efforts were running independently.

Ambassador Holbrooke expected the Uber to unify all the USG civilian Public Diplomacy, counterpropaganda, and strategic communications efforts in Afghanistan. This was a correct Washington insight that foundered on the rocks in Afghanistan. We can talk about USAID first.

As much money as I had, money beyond the dreams of avarice for a Public Affairs Officer, USAID had between three and four billion dollars to spend. In our area of communication, every USAID contract included from three to seven percent of the money for public affairs by the implementing partner. I often inquired about the use of the money, but never once received any information. I wasn't much worried that the contractors were somehow off the reservation, but a comprehensive view of what was going on in the world of ideas needed to include what the USAID contractors were about. They were, however, a black box.

Before I arrived, Ambassador Mussumeli had decided that having two major public affairs clusters in one Mission – PAS and USAID's Development Outreach Communication – didn't add up to unity of action. His solution was to co-locate both in one set of offices, at the PAS end of the Old Chancery. It was a sound idea.

Everyone in PAS sized down to make room for our USAID colleagues. The USAID Director, Bill Frej, was on leave when I arrived, but after he returned I went over to see

him. “Boy, this is great.” “The first time ever.” “What wonderful synergies.” He nodded his head.

I then made two main points. The first was that because the war would be won and lost among Afghans, both PAS and USAID efforts had to strongly focus on, lean in the direction of, Afghan publics. We would do what was necessary for Washington visitors and the international media, but our main effort should focus on the Afghans. My second point was, “believe me, I will have their ERs in absolutely on time. I will make them look like the greatest public affairs people in the world, to help their careers out.”

He leaned back in his chair. He let me know he had signed on to co-location, that his people would sit in our spaces. But he had not signed on to control. He said, “This is a line in the sand. I won’t agree. Washington will have to order me to do it that way.” He also shared with me that “Look, we have public affairs people working here in order to tell to be able to tell Congress and the people of the United States what we do.”

Continued appropriations for development depended on this public affairs work, he told me.

Bill Frej is a friend, and I will be the first to admit that after Ambassador Eikenberry, Bill carried the heaviest and most exhausting load in the Mission, even heavier than Ambassador Tony Wayne’s. He had a brutal year, and this was one brief conversation as he got back to his daily combat over budgets and contracts and constant carping and ignorant second-guessing from all directions, but mostly from the direction of Washington. He was what Teddy Roosevelt called “a man in the arena,” and all he got for his effort was abuse by stay-at-home critics, and small-minded naysayers in the Embassy. But the conversation told me that he hadn’t thought through this communication part of the counterinsurgency imperative – a focus on the Afghan people, and leaning all our resources in that direction.

So, there was no agreement on the right audience for public affairs in the Embassy. The USAID Director wanted his DOC people to continue to tell USAID’s story to the American people and to Congress. Just as there was no meeting of minds between SRAP and the Embassy about counterpropaganda or strategic communication, there was no meeting of minds between State and USAID on communication.

All that said, the USAID DOC team split their time between the offices they kept in the USAID building and our premises, and co-location did indeed have benefits. The team chief, Steve Susens, and Caitlin Hayden effectively teamed up on media tours. Steve was another man in the arena, in Teddy Roosevelt’s sense.

More on USAID. I recall that during my consultations in Washington I had gone over to USAID for consultations. They convened about a dozen or 15 people in a room to meet me. During that two-hour meeting I don’t recall them mentioning their efforts to build up the Afghan media. They had provided \$20 million over a few years to fund an organization in Afghanistan, InterNews, that trained the independent media. InterNews had patched together a radio network that broadcast in northern Afghanistan. That was a

proper focus on building up Afghan capacity in the media, but no one thought to brief me on their effort.

In addition to USAID, DEA also had about \$20 million of its own money to spend on information campaigns. They were described using those words in the National Drug Control Strategy. I asked the DEA Director in Kabul for some information on those programs. He denied that he was conducting any information campaign, and he never shared a word about what they were doing, which media they were using, what air time they were buying, which messages they were communicating. He told me the National Drug Control Strategy had carelessly used the word “information” when he actually was only conducting an “education” campaign. Translation: Go fly a kite, Mr. Acting Director.

In the strategic communication mix, the influence mix, the battlespace of ideas or whatever you want to call it, there was PAS. You had some other sections of the Embassy like USAID and DEA. You had the armed forces commands. I've talked about the lack of alignment. There were also the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Both had very high listenerships. In Afghanistan, RFE/RL was “Radio Azadi.”

Both USG broadcasters had bureaus in Kabul, and Caitlin Hayden dealt with the bureaus like she did other broadcasters. More importantly, both of them had Dari and Pashto services which had sizable listenerships. The two services were a major force in the battlespace.

Both of them had their own relationships with the Afghan ministries that governed broadcasting. Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA), the government's network, turned over its 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. time slot to VOA. Both VOA and RFE/RL paid to broadcast programs using RTA antennas at different times when RTA was not on the air.

In addition, the Voice of America had built an enormous tall tower right on the border with Pakistan in Khost. They had built it there to broadcast in Pashto. West of the tower, Afghans tuned in to the signal. To the east, the signals and programs were reaching into the tribal regions of Pakistan. So this was broadcasting with strategic importance.

There was, however, no tie-in between the broadcasters and the Embassy or the armed forces in Afghanistan, no policy coordination at all. In accordance with its Congressional mandate, and with the meaningless toothless nonsensical “MOU” between the State Department and the Voice of America that had been signed by Secretary Powell, Voice of America journalists are not part of an Embassy, not subject to NSDD-38 approvals, don't travel on diplomatic passports, don't submit country clearances, and are not supported by the Embassy lest a relationship compromise their journalistic independence. OK, I got that. That applied to the journalists and even to their bureaus.

The management of both the Voice and RFE/RL had, however, arrogated those privileges to themselves also. Their view was that they could come into Afghanistan on their own,

could negotiate directly with the ministries, and they could manage their operations and deals from Washington without telling us anything.

We would receive polite emails from them letting us know of their travel, or we would receive calls from the hotel when they arrived, but they were always worded to inform us but not to ask permission. They considered themselves exempt from the rules that applied to all USG employees in Afghanistan. They traveled around on their own with no regard for the usual security precautions. And they made their own deals. When the top VOA or RFE/RL brass came to Afghanistan, they might invite us to a dinner at the Gandamak, and during the social talk they would mention to us some of what they were doing. That was their idea of coordination.

What they were doing was good, and they were effectively playing an inside game with the Afghan ministries. But there was never any coordination or never any unity in their plans and ours. We had no details. They were doing good things, but it bothered me that they were just completely free agents in the war.

Are you getting the big picture here? In the area of communication, there was no unity of effort among the many USG organizations in Afghanistan. Rather there was organizational disarray.

There was no way to get around it. Without unity of effort, counterpropaganda as I defined it, as Ambassador Holbrooke intended it, was beyond what we in PAS could accomplish on our own. The only chance of counterpropaganda or Stratcom's making a *decisive* contribution would be if all of the actors on our side were working together.

There were particular problems in the Information Unit and the Cultural Affairs Unit. There was no Strategic Communication (or, if you will, Counterpropaganda) effort by the Embassy. Other USG agencies were doing their own thing. There wasn't much collaboration with ISAF. These could be reversed, in time, with good leadership and with more people, but the many individuals and organizations with public affairs, public diplomacy, or communication in their portfolios -- and money in the bank to spend -- weren't agreed on basic premises and didn't seem to have unity of action as a priority.

In our Public Diplomacy playbook were plenty of programs that could be used to counter Taliban propaganda, different programs for different audiences, and my predecessors at the Embassy had been building up the programs. The Army was spending some millions gathering information that could be part of a "counterpropaganda" or "strategic communication" effort. But no one on our side, the Public Diplomacy side, had had the time to do the necessary reading and analysis that would be required to unify our use of programs into a single "counterpropaganda" effort. The military commands didn't seem to be asking us to join them in the effort.

Conceiving the Challenge

Q: OK, well let me ask sort of the big one. You know, I see the TV shots of Afghanistan and a bunch of guys, elderly men in turbans sitting around. What the hell can you come up with that would get to them? I mean we are fighting people or engaged with people who are preaching the Koran as the holy word of God, and they have the knowledge of how to administer God's word. What do Americans sitting in Kabul do?

BISHOP: For this, I have to lean back and take a few slugs of coffee. There are several parts to what you have asked.

First, the men. Most of those men are illiterate. And so there's a special challenge that if you're communicating with them, trying to have any impact whatsoever, you've got figure out how to reach them. The old USIA approach – talk to journalists, editors, professors, government officials, and “opinion leaders” – wasn't going to work. Almost all the traditional USIA programs presumed a literate society.

Broadcasting would be one way to go. This was behind our effort to try to extend the reach of local Afghan broadcasters. VOA and RFE/RL were part of this effort, and so were the military's tactical radios, the RIABs, Radios in a Box. There were many programs to provide hand-cranked receivers to people who lived in areas without electricity.

In PAS we focused on helping the private Afghan broadcasting networks. This would take a long time to describe, but for now here are some wave tops.

In my judgment, the network owners might be divided in their own domestic political affiliations, but they were surely on the right side in the war.

We wanted all their news and entertainment programming to reach more people, especially in the Pashtun areas that are the heart of the insurgency. Their broadcasts would inform, would lay groundwork for support of the government, would allow listeners to hear a variety of Islamic voices. My sense of things was that in these ways, their broadcasting would implicitly support national unity. We in PAS didn't have to supervise their “messages,” and we could rely on their commercial competitiveness to increase the number of voices Afghan men would hear.

And, even in a rigidly patriarchal society, men listen to their wives. The same broadcasts would reach inside the Pashtun compounds, and sequestered women would learn that, gosh, women in Kabul can move about without men accompanying them. I am not into social engineering, and we didn't need to monitor every program for a proper take on gender roles. The reach of broadcasting into the compounds would work benign adjustments in family and community life. We could allow husbands and wives to negotiate their own small social changes.

Because the insurgency was concentrated in the Pashtun areas, not so strong in the Dari-speaking regions of Afghanistan, we especially needed to help Pashto broadcasters extend their broadcast reach. More on this as we continue.

The second way to influence your men in turbans was governance programs. Not many rural Afghans had been touched much by the Afghan Government and its services, and so the counterinsurgency approach of, say, building a school, opening a clinic, providing services, comes to bear on an area's leading men.

Also, the men are members of a tribe. The tribes had been decimated -- had lost some of their influence -- over the years in Afghanistan, much more than they had in Iraq, but the men still have a tribal affiliation and allegiances. Also, they are Muslims and they have been, and are, the receivers of religious ideas and messages. Tribal affiliation and religiosity provide two openings to influence those men.

When I arrived, not much communication -- by the Embassy or the armed forces or NATO -- was focused on the tribal or religious communication networks. There were no appeals through those traditional dimensions of the Afghan character. More on our TRADCOM, "traditional communications," as we go on.

Q: Well, did you see the Taliban as the enemy as opposed to al Qaeda or --

BISHOP: Gosh, there's been a lot of political science ink used on this question. Here's the Cliff Notes version. President Obama spoke of al Qaeda as the enemy. Al Qaeda nested in the embrace of the Taliban. The enemy are also the Taliban, and as Al Qaeda has weakened, it's the Taliban who have become the primary enemy. If the Taliban succeeded in once more controlling Afghanistan, Al Qaeda would regroup and once again use Afghanistan as a sovereign base for their operations.

Money is a Weapon

Q: You haven't talked much about money, funding, so far. All these issues of organization, or the unity of action you have been talking about, presumes money. I don't know any details, but I've heard the military had plenty of money for strategic communication. What was happening for Public Diplomacy at the Embassy?

BISHOP: Yes, the funding. How many hours do we have?

In Washington I had heard all kinds of figures about the money that would be available for Public Diplomacy in the civilian surge. Arriving in Afghanistan, I found the entire situation was as clear as mud.

The regular ordinary Embassy budget for Public Diplomacy in Fiscal Year 2010 -- which began in October of 2009 just as I was arriving -- was \$1.4 million. This was the "Public Diplomacy allotment," or the "P allotment," or the ".7 allotment," the sum that had been called "the going rate" in the USIA days. That \$1.4 million was a little more generous than normal for a country with a population of 23 million and a Public Affairs Section with seven Americans, 18 FSNs, and a Military Information Support Team (MIST).

Afghanistan was not, however, a “normal” country, and \$1.4 million was totally, ridiculously inadequate for the missions that were being given to us.

Everyone told me that more “SRAP money” was coming our way for Strategic Communication. The figures I heard were \$72 million for FY2010 and \$113 million for FY2011.

When I went in for my first call with Ambassador Ricciardone, I mentioned this money. He rolled his eyes. “Oh, God. Yes, Richard just pulled the money out of his ass. He asked for it and got it, how I don't know.”

Things clarified slowly. The money would come to us from a couple of different pockets, but it was mostly “fifth year money,” meaning it was drawn out of some funds appropriated five years previously but not spent.

From the supplemental, we would receive \$23 million in straightforward Public Diplomacy money, a big fillup in our \$1.4 million account. After it arrived, it could be spent by the PAO using his ordinary authorities. This money, however, would all disappear if not spent by September 30, 2010. By “spent,” I mean that it had to be actually expended or committed to a signed and approved contract or grant.

The rest of the money was to be reprogrammed ESF money. Again, it was money with a firm expiration date. The money had been originally appropriated for USAID. Ambassador Holbrooke had waved his wand to reprogram it for Public Diplomacy, but the money was with USAID and it would take some time for it to be transferred to State and to our Public Diplomacy accounts. The transfer would require a Congressional notification, a “CN.” To move the money required legislative assent. No one mentioned to me at the time that the ESF money would come with all the USAID strings -- plans, the submission, interim reports, the mandatory allocation of a certain amount of the money for women's programs, final reports and so on. This was all to be revealed in the future. This money also would disappear on September 30, 2010.

Unless there had been some spectacular use of money in one country during the early Cold War, no Public Affairs Officer in history had been given \$72 million to spend in less than one year. Assuming we could get organized to begin spending in earnest in December of 2009, leaving, say, 300 days in the Fiscal Year, that meant we had to spend \$240,000 per day. We had to think big, and to move fast. This was the problem of scale and speed that I had been thinking about since I first been given the nod for Afghanistan by Ambassador Holbrooke.

I discovered a few things. One, except for the 1.4 million, the money hadn't arrived. Second, the money was color coded, so to speak. Only ESF money could be spent for some programs, and only Public Diplomacy money could be used for others. Washington would not allow us to mix money from the two pockets, and it became quite a difficult management proposition to track this.

Third, because of an old rule, never updated despite years of inflation, SCA/PPD had to approve every grant over \$10,000. Vikram Singh told me that “I had complete discretion” over grants of less than \$10,000, as if this was an extraordinary grant of confidence. My son the attorney has complete discretion from his company to offer legal settlements up to \$20,000. This meant, of course, that it was Washington that had the ultimate say over whether we in Kabul could or couldn't do something.

Let me mention one more example of how Washington rules and Kabul needs were completely out of synch -- representation money. As you know, it's Congress that sets the State Department's worldwide budget for “representation money,” what civilian companies would call “the expense account,” money to pay for a lunch with Afghans, or hold a reception.

Our PAS representation budget was a little more than \$4000. This was to be divided among 20 Americans over a year. This amount was simply -- a joke. I had had \$4000 to spend on food and drink each year in Taegu, a single-officer post, 25 years earlier. In message after message, the Embassy asked for more representation funds. We were growing from 300-some Americans to 1000 in Kabul alone. Of course we needed more money, but it never came while I was there. It still leaves me speechless!

Perhaps this is the place to say one more thing about the money. The whole time I was in Afghanistan, I worried that some of our programs would yield few results. I also worried that some of the money we granted or contracted might be lost to corruption or squeeze. As I have mentioned, no PAO had to spend \$72 million in a year, and our shortage of staff meant we could not give every project the vigilance it needed.

To an individual taxpayer, and to me too, \$72 million is a lot of money. Before coming here, I googled that amount to see what that kind of money buys, and it showed me how small the sum is compared to public spending in the U.S.

There are nearly 100,000 public schools in the United States. The bill for renovation of three -- count 'em, three -- schools in Tolland, Massachusetts, was \$72 million. The construction of one bridge over the Mobile River was \$72 million. One free agent received a \$72 million contract from the Carolina Panthers.

In the big scheme of things, we were being given pretty small potatoes. If we talk about motivating behavior, and moving the needle, in 2007 the advertising budget for one company, Johnson & Johnson, was \$2.4 billion, more than thirty times the budget we had been given to fight our part of a war. Don't forget that Americans spend about 700 million dollars -- ten times our money -- on sugar-free chewing gum each year.

The Blue Plan

That was the money situation, as briefly as I can describe it. There was another, related, maddening issue, the Afghanistan Communication Plan.

When I met the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Judith McHale, in October of 2009, she gave me a hard copy of a PowerPoint briefing for communication and Public Diplomacy in Pakistan. It was not a text or a paper, but a PowerPoint briefing of about 40 slides. She told me that the PowerPoint was the “Pakistan Communication Plan” that she had shown to Secretary Clinton, to President Obama, and to Congress in order to free up the money Ambassador Holbrooke had secured for Pakistan.

Under Secretary McHale told me that she needed an Afghanistan Communication Plan so that they could do the same thing when they briefed the Secretary and Congress. The money for Public Diplomacy in Afghanistan – those big sums that “Richard” had pulled out of his ass, to use Ambassador Ricciardone’s phrase – couldn’t reach us without a Congressional notification. A lot of the money was in USAID’s budget, not ours. “We can’t go to the Hill for the Congressional notification until we have the plan to show them. It’s up to you to write this plan.”

To help me get started, she told me, they had taken the Pakistan Communication Plan PowerPoint and modified it for Afghanistan. I noted they had done a “global replace,” changing each mention of “Pakistan” to “Afghanistan.” They deleted the map of Pakistan and inserted a map of Afghanistan. They updated some figures on population, literacy, media listenership, and so on. “Here’s your draft,” she said. When I looked at it, the “global replace” had changed the proper nouns “Pakistan” to “Afghanistan,” but the adjective “Pakistani” still appeared in the text.

The framework of this “plan” wasn’t too bad. It laid down what I call four plain vanilla objectives, four objectives that could be used anywhere. What I liked about them is that they were general enough to allow us to do just about anything.

Objective 1 was “Expand Media Outreach.” This could cover all of our information and Public Affairs activity. The key to success, in my mind, was that the expansion should focus on, or “lean” in the direction of, the Afghan media.

Objective 2 was “People to People Ties.” This covered all the standing exchange programs, Lincoln Centers, and whatever we might do in the area of culture. Whether we scaled steady, or scaled up, we could fit what we wanted to do under this rubric.

Objective 3: “Build Afghan Communication Capacity.” This could include communication towers, support for publishers and broadcasters, media training, and effort to help the Afghan government develop its ability to deal with the local and international media.

Objective 4 was “Counter Extremist Voices.” This could embrace our response to Taliban charges on incidents, as well as thinking through how to counter and discredit the enemy’s “narratives.”

But ... the plan I was handed had no mention of any U.S. military commands because there were no U.S. forces in Pakistan. My counterpart as Uber in Pakistan, Larry Schwartz, had free rein to work up the implementation of his plan with the Ambassador -- one Ambassador -- and with the Department. In Afghanistan, any plan had to include the NATO and U.S. commands. The plain fact on the ground was that the armed forces had more money and people in the communication battlespace. Any “plan” that didn’t factor in this reality was worthless.

Let’s say that I couldn’t exactly provide a “laser beam focus” on “counterpropaganda” – or anything substantive in the way of ideas – without getting the money headed our way. Writing this plan became an unexpected top priority.

Not to worry, I was told. The Department planned to deploy a six-person S/CRS team to PAS in Kabul, and these S/CRS people had all been trained to write plans. They can do most of the work as soon when they get there, I was told.

My meeting with Under Secretary McHale was in October, and the S/CRS team did not assemble in Kabul until December 4.

From time to time in these interviews, I’ve mentioned occasions when my mind, what’s the phrase, was “boggled.” This was one. They proudly handed me a PowerPoint briefing for another country – see how much work they have already done for me, all the heavy lifting! – and told me to write what must be a full strategic plan, a plan that must gain the approval of not only the Embassy, but the hard graders over at ISAF, perhaps the NSC deputies, and survive the scrutiny of Congressional funders.

I think Secretary McHale thought we could send back something in a few weeks. It took a few months. Once I was back in Kabul, Kirk Wolcott and I took the skeleton briefing and its four objectives and rewrote everything for Afghanistan. Ours was a slick PowerPoint, highly advanced by Foreign Service standards. But as soon as we brought in our S/CRS colleagues and our military counterparts, the plan had to become an “effects based plan.”

It wasn't enough to, say, support the visits of Administration principals and communicate their views throughout Afghanistan. It wasn't enough just to sponsor broadcasts or programs. An “effects based plan” had to define Afghan behavioral outcomes. This meant that the plan had to resolve deep issues in Strategic Communication. It had to promise to measurably move the needle, when no one in Public Diplomacy had ever gotten a good handle on metrics. The Public Diplomacy cone had hardly addressed these issues. Our armed forces colleagues had wrangled over them for several years.

Everyone accepted the four basic objectives, and they were good enough to align our everyday, everyweek, everymonth programs. Adding the requirement that the Plan be effects based considerably raised the bar. Our armed forces colleagues gathered to review an interim version of the Plan. Jonas Wechsler was leading the meeting. The uniforms

nearly walked out because we were just beginning to come to grips with what were to them old issues.

All while this was going on, we were working on programs and projects to spend the \$72 million. We had good initiatives waiting for funding, local partners ready to launch, but our big money was still held by USAID. Used to the Public Diplomacy method of operations, which allows PAOs to shift money from one funding line to another, I was ready to fund any program from any pocket of money made available to me. We had the word power to describe any program any way needed – a Public Diplomacy program, a Strategic Communication program, an exchange program under Fulbright-Hays?

No one had told us, however, that SRAP had a neater concept. Of the four objectives, two could be funded using Public Diplomacy money and two could be funded using the ESF money. We lost a few weeks rewriting the basic plan to conform to this unnecessary Washington ruling.

There's not time enough to go through all the wrangles and headaches associated with writing the Afghanistan Communication Plan. The Pakistan Communication Plan, in PowerPoint format, had been good enough to slide by the White House and Congress in the summer of 2009. By the beginning of 2010, the demands on the Afghanistan Communication Plan had multiplied. They nearly overwhelmed us.

From my time as a POLAD, I had been persuaded by General Jim Mattis's criticism of effects based planning, which for anyone who has an interest in this was published in the August 2008 issue of the Army War College's *Parameters* journal. According to General Mattis, EBO:

- assumes a level of unachievable predictability
- cannot correctly anticipate reactions of complex systems (for example, leadership, societies, political systems, and so forth)
- calls for an unattainable level of knowledge of the enemy
- is too prescriptive and over engineered
- discounts the human dimensions of war (for example, passion, imagination, willpower, and unpredictability)
- promotes centralization and leads to micromanagement from headquarters
- is staff, not command, led
- fails to deliver clear and timely direction to subordinates
- uses confusing terminology and is difficult to understand.

Every criticism of EBO by General Mattis applied to the Afghanistan Communication Plan. General Mattis's criticism had not, apparently, reached S/CRS, the ISAF Communication Division, R, or the Congressional committees.

The demands on the plan were too ambitious. I must salute an Army officer who was our primary liaison with the ISAF Communication Division, Major John Gallagher -- another selfless "Duty, Honor, Country" graduate of West Point -- for getting us across the finish line in a week of sleepless nights. The final sprint, the final writing was his, and wonder

of wonders he managed to get the military chops from Admiral Smith and General McChrystal. The final “Blue Plan” had the State Department, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan, and ISAF seals on the front page.

In the strategic communications community, the Blue Plan has its share of critics, but many are “critics” in Teddy Roosevelt’s use of the word at the Sorbonne. Sure there are some good conceptual objections to what we produced. None of the critics were there, however. And none of them had to produce a plan on express, under pressure, in order to free up money that was needed yesterday. We had to have the Plan to get the money.

We got through the process and checked off the box, but it was more time lost on paperwork. I was months into my tour, and we still didn’t have the money. The deadline, the end of the fiscal year, was getting closer and closer. The amounts of money we would have to spend each day got larger and larger. We had come to agreement with quite a number of grantees to launch programs, but we couldn’t sign. They couldn’t understand our delay.

Delay, delay, delay. Wait for the Embassy to tie ribbons on the personnel requests. Our money imprisoned waiting for Congress, which waited for our Plan, with changing goalposts. The various USG contracting agencies would not sign on to build the towers until we had the money in the bank. They had been burned too many times, starting up projects on the assurance that money would come.

The Plan finally reached Washington with all the chops, and there was more delay waiting for SRAP to brief the Congressional staffers. One staffer hadn’t made it to the meeting, and he held up the CN until he could be briefed. And when the Congressional staff finally approved moving the money out of USAID and into our Public Diplomacy accounts, we learned that the paperwork to transfer the money took additional weeks. If I recall correctly, we finally received the funds at the end of March. That left six months to spend it before the money disappeared on September 30, 2010.

Let me bare my soul a little here. I was one of the officers in Public Diplomacy who had spent the most time thinking about PsyOps and Information Operations. I was doing “dialog with Islam” even before 9/11. After 30 years in Public Diplomacy, I had a professional feel for things that would work, and things that would not. I could judge what programs were energy sponges, and which would have strategic effects. I had standing with the armed forces. I was ready to make decisions even before every ribbon was tied on a plan. My attitude was – accept this. I’m signing for money. I’m starting things. I’m doing it. When the plan catches up with me, that’s fine. But I’m not waiting on a plan.

Well, that was my attitude, and dammit that was the attitude needed for Public Diplomacy to help win the war. Needless to say, my attitude ran up against the Foreign Service’s, and the Department’s, and Washington’s way of doing thing. For decades, the Foreign Service, foreign policy, foreign assistance, and Public Diplomacy have become “over governed.” Do you remember my mentioning that phrase I had first heard during a

briefing at EUCOM when I was POLAD? Any real initiative is strangled by coordinations and multiple approvals and strings on money.

Year after year, the Foreign Service has produced longer plans, written longer papers, written more justifications and reclamation in its diplomatic way, jumped more hurdles, briefed more Members of Congress and their staffers from more and more committees. This is what one political scientist called “demosclerosis,” but I call it “tied down like Gulliver.” “Suffocated by process.” “Chained.” “Burdened.” “Smothered.” “Overwhelmed.” “Drowned in bureaucracy.” “Jerked around.” “Paralyzed.” “Beaten into subservience.” “Numbed.” “Strangled by paperwork.” “Leached of initiative.”

So, we wrote a plan. I doubt it has yet been revised. I also doubt that it really guides the effort in Afghanistan. The plan was done to serve a specific need, to put something in the hands of Congressional staffers. I suppose I can say I was a mover and shaker of the Afghanistan Communication Plan, but it embarrasses me to say so. The process was larger than any of us. Once the military was involved in the planning, it had to attain a level of sophistication that no one in the Foreign Service could deal with. Even with the plan, we had no way to monitor the plan, measure the plan, metric the plan. In my mind, the whole exercise was planning run amok. We did the same things after the plan was published as we had beforehand. We did things by the seat of our pants, on moxie, on experience, on feel. There was no other way.

Q: Well, doesn't it point out that in all these things, something that is planned in Washington to deal with a fluid situation in a different culture just doesn't work.

BISHOP: I needed you. I needed you in Kabul to say this, to speak this reality. Or in Washington.

You're hearing some of my frustration as I tell this.

A few more things about the Plan. It says “Afghanistan Communication Plan” on the cover, but it came to be called “The Blue Plan” because we shaded the cover and all the slides in blue. I did this because it was being called “The Vikram Plan,” for Vikram Singh of SRAP. Under Secretary McHale had handed me “the Vikram Plan.” Over the telephone we were queried about the status of “the Vikram Plan.” He had a role in writing the plan at the beginning, but with so many people adding their contributions over the weeks and months, I didn't think the plan should be personalized. It wasn't supposed to be Don's plan, or Kirks's plan, or John's plan [John Gallagher], or Sandy's plan [Sandy Raynor], or the Vikram Plan. So I added the color and changed the name. Perhaps there was a small homage to the Color Plans before World War II.

Q: During this interview, I've heard you speak of SRAP, SCA, and USAID, as well as ISAF. What was the role of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, “R”?

BISHOP: I mentioned that Judith McHale had given me the first draft of the Afghanistan Communication Plan, and from time to time I heard from her in Afghanistan, usually through members of her staff.

I wanted her as an ally in providing Washington support, especially with IIP and ECA. She had been to Pakistan, but not to Afghanistan. I thought she needed to see what we were doing in Kabul at first hand, and one or two times a visit to Afghanistan was chalked in on her schedule. Each time, however, events in Washington or Kabul intervened, and the travel was postponed.

She needed to visit Afghanistan for a number of reasons. One, a day of first hand impressions is worth a month of emails. Second, once “Judith” had met “Karl” and “Stan” in the field, she'd think of herself as a team player. Third, I wasn't sure she understood the challenges of communicating in a largely illiterate society, nor the scale of what we were being asked to do. Fourth, she needed to meet Admiral Smith and get the full series of briefings on what his Directorate and the various Psyops commands were doing. This would help her understand that we weren't the only people in the “battlespace” for “influence.”

When we in Kabul were thinking through a possible schedule for her, the first idea mooted was for her to visit Kabul and, for her trip into the field, to go to Herat to see the Lincoln Learning Center.

No way. I vetoed this. She would see two relatively secure cities and meet elite English-speaking people. I wanted her to visit a hardscrabble area of Afghanistan like Paktika province, notice that there were no women in sight, and see an Army unit and its associated PRT at a Forward Operating Base. She needed to see a RIAB. In other words, I wanted to yank her out of a comfortable distant view of things, and see the real challenges.

I was explaining to an R staffer on the telephone that she needed to come and see Public Diplomacy in the field in Afghanistan. He let me know that she already had made overseas trips and already knew what Public Diplomacy people do at embassies. She was always reluctant to fly, so she didn't need to make a long trip to Afghanistan to simply to “see and learn.” She only made overseas trips for the formal launch of a big program, or perhaps conclude a negotiation to push a reluctant Ministry of Culture or Ministry of Education to join a large Administration initiative. Presumably followed by a photo op, I thought to myself.

I lost all respect for her after that conversation, and gave up on trying to get her to come.

People

Q: Please continue down your list.

BISHOP: Now -- “the people part.”

Programs, expansion, money -- all needed people. I'm sure that the senior officers in every part of the Embassy shared a conviction that this was one of the hardest nuts to crack.

The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Human Resources, Stephen Browning, came to Kabul while I was there -- to get a look at the situation at first hand. I could really feel his pain, having to staff up both Iraq and Afghanistan at the same time. At a breakfast, he told several of us that he had come to this conclusion about the staffing challenge. Among Foreign Service Officers, 1/3 had already been to Iraq or Afghanistan. 1/3 could be induced to go if the Department offered the proper money and assignment incentives. And 1/3, it was clear to him, had decided that they would avoid serving in either country. His estimate sounded right to me.

When I arrived in Kabul, the permanent American positions in PAS were ten: Acting Uber/PAO, DPAO for Press, IO, two AIOs, DPAO for Operations, CAO, two ACAOs, and a Field Programs officer. Tom Niblock was "on seat" as the Advisor to the Government Media Information Center, but due to some personnel sleight of hand long before I came there wasn't such a position on Washington's list. The IO and CAO positions were both vacant when I reached Kabul. The section had been reinforced by one Presidential Management Fellow and an English Teaching Fellow, and three Embassy spouses were working on our staff, one as the Embassy photographer and webmaster. There were 18 FSN positions.

There was also the MIST Team, then led by Captain Neely Ambron and Sergeant First Class John Lutz. And USAID's Development Outreach Communication unit was headed our way under Ambassador Mussomeli's plan to co-locate PAS and DOC.

The section was a little misshapen by ad hoc decisions made in the past. We had, for instance, two DPAOs, Caitlin Hayden and Kirk Wolcott, which had flowed from the unexpected arrival of Caitlin to take charge of the Press Office just after Kirk Wolcott had arrived as IO. They had both been sent out to do the same job. Kirk thus left the Information Unit and became the Deputy for most everything else. I found him my most versatile officer, with a near unlimited ability to crunch through tasks. I came to rely on his breadth and judgment.

Note that my list so far omits anyone to work "Stratcom." A handshake between Ambassador Eikenberry and General Petraeus had set an Army Reserve Colonel in motion to work in our section as a third DPAO for Strategic Communication. The email handshake didn't count for much in the Army personnel system, we found. An active duty Colonel could have been sent to us promptly, but the assignment of a Reserve Colonel for an Embassy assignment required the approval of the Secretary of the Army. You can guess how many hoops had to be jumped before Colonel Sandy Raynor's arrival.

Similarly, working in the office and residing in a hooch was an English Teaching Fellow, Jarred Langlois. In other countries, ETFs work and live at a local university, but because

of security concerns Jarred was with us at the Embassy. This was an ad hoc arrangement that had been worked out between the Embassy and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs because the Washington panel that selected ETFs did not want to place a Fellow at risk. When a subsequent Management Counselor noticed that we had an ETF living on the compound and eating at the dining hall, we had to spend valuable time persuading him not to change the arrangements.

Making a long and tortured story very short, when I left we had 39 Americans and 20 FSNs on our list, counting the MIST and DOC. You can tell by that figure that it was easier to get Americans than FSNs. Behind the new figures were many lists; position descriptions; the Computer Assisted Job Evaluation, CAJE, process; and negotiations with the Embassy Front Office, Personnel, and Washington. There were always hitches caused by people who wanted everything done by the book, who went crazy trying to reverse or regularize decisions that had been made ad hoc under pressure in order to get things done.

During my Washington consultations, I had told SCA/PPD and SRAP and R that “if there’s anything I know about spending money, it’s that you have to have people at post to make it happen. You not only need people, you need an organization. You have to have grant writers, and accountants. You have to have project officers that can talk to grantees and monitor the projects, you have to have people to collect the receipts. And I don’t see any of these people on the organization chart in Kabul.”

I was assured that Washington understood the need to build up the organization so that I could spend that much money.

During the summer of 2009, before my arrival, Kurt Wolcott in PAS and Vikram Singh of SRAP had sketched out an organization chart for an expanded PAS on a tablecloth. It had the Information Unit and the Cultural Affairs Unit, of course, but PAS should also have a large Strategic Communication Unit. The latter unit would include project managers. During my initial three weeks of TDY to Kabul, I went over this chart carefully with Kirk and refined it.

This new Strategic Communication Unit needed two kinds of people. It would need “thinkers” who would immerse themselves in the worlds of Taliban, and Afghan, thinking and begin to skull out our “counterpropaganda” or “strategic communication” response. The “thinkers” would also tap in to the knowledge and expertise that was over the wall at ISAF in its intelligence and psychological operations clusters. Ultimately we wanted to do more than respond, of course. We wanted to take the initiative. This group needed some regular Foreign Service officers from the Public Diplomacy cone.

It would also need “doers,” project managers, officers with large grant warrants, and so on. Here, some of the individuals could come from the Civil Service, or be 3161 appointees.

So, that was the people plan. I couldn't give "counterpropaganda" or "strategic communication" the laser beam focus that Ambassador Holbrooke intended without some dedicated people. It wasn't something that our officers in Kabul could just take on in their abundant spare time.

Not to worry, I was told. Washington understood that it would take time, a few months, anyway, to get "thinkers" and "doers" on the staff. In the meantime S/CRS would deploy a team as a temporary fix. John Herbst had indeed formed it up. I met the six individuals - Jonas Wechsler, Jeannie Lee, John Arczynski, Richard Cote, Erin Tariat, and Aaron Teeter -- in Washington. They were the cavalry being sent by Washington to meet this need.

I had never had six people to spend money before, and the group had an interesting mix of backgrounds. When they got to post, we would start together, and see what happens. They were promised to be there November 1. The last member finally reached Kabul December 4. This was a preview of how slowly things moved.

A month in Afghanistan is an eon. All the pressures were building up on me to spend the money, and I didn't have anybody to do it. It wasn't for lack of ideas. I needed partners, agreements, grants, and money. I needed people to work out the details of large ideas. And I needed people with whopping big grants warrants. The highest warrant I'd ever held personally was in China for \$100,000. Two members of the S/CRS team had warrants for \$200,000. But we were talking about projects that would cost millions.

The question of who would be able to sign large grants vexed us for some time. Eventually Steve Guice allocated some of our Public Diplomacy money to hire three WAEs in SCA/PPD, and Merrie Blocker became the main stalwart of our large grants in Washington. (I think of her as an unsung heroine in what we did.) In time this became quicker and easier, but there were some collisions at the beginning.

Q: You mentioned 3161 employees. Do you have any view on how well that personnel appointment authority worked out?

BISHOP: I have mixed feelings. On one hand, the career Foreign Service just didn't have enough people to take all the new positions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the 3161 appointments provided bodies.

However, the people who came were quite a mixed bag. There were not so many 3161 applicants that fit our needs. None had the breadth of an FSO, or had an FSO's familiarity with how the different parts of an Embassy worked together. Typically, the kind of resumes we saw came from unemployed journalists -- you'll recall that the print and broadcast media in the U.S. were shrinking. They might work out as an Assistant Information Officer at the Embassy, where they could be in a Press Office among others who could teach them the ropes, but they weren't necessarily a good fit at a PRT, where a Public Diplomacy 3161 had to perform a broad range of duties.

I recall one instance when we were about to hire a journalist as a 3161. The resume looked good. The candidate had been interviewed in Washington. We intended this individual to go to RC-East, and we sent the resume to Dawn Liberi. She googled the applicant's name and came across his blog, full of sentiment against the war. She intuited that what the applicant wanted from a year in Afghanistan was material for his next book. The hiring didn't go through.

So, although I don't have any better idea, I don't consider the 3161 appointments to be a "best practice."

Q: OK, pick up where you left off on the problem of getting people.

During the three weeks that I was TDY in Kabul, I submitted three successive lists of needed people – version 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0, tweaked versions and refinements of the same list. We needed more people in press, and we needed more people in culture. I needed to create a whole executive shop to be able to handle the money. We needed to add specialists in English Teaching and Information Resources, and we needed an archaeologist for the historic preservation. I needed an American OMS! We needed more people assigned over at the Government Media Information Center, and we needed people for the unit that would address STRATCOM. I needed all those program managers and I needed thinkers.

When I returned to Kabul at the end of November, I found the lists had never been sent to Washington. The Embassy's personnel shop was overwhelmed by the lists coming in from all the sections and by Washington pushback, which took the form of asking for elaborate justifications for every single new position. (This was driving Ambassador Eikenberry crazy.) We were asked to go through our requests with a fine tooth comb and submit our very last final request by New Year's Eve. I submitted version 5.0. When the Personnel shop put together all the submissions, coming to hundreds of additional people, even Ambassador Mussomeli blanched at what he knew would be Washington screaming murder.

The Embassy's response was to negotiate with ourselves rather than with Washington. In December, Ambassador Eikenberry had told us to ask for what we really needed. In February, we were told to cut our requests by a third.

The trimmed list, version 6.0 I guess, finally reached Washington on February 26. As I said previously, in Afghanistan, each month is an eon. We gave up four eons – November, December, January, and February – wrestling over personnel requests. Only in the late spring and early summer did the first arrivals reach Kabul.

Let me be clear about this. Everyone at the Embassy – the Ambassadors, the Personnel unit, section chiefs -- busted their guts on these requests. Everyone worked extra hours and gave up days off to cross every "t" and dot every "i" on the requests. Washington, working regular hours during five day weeks, was on another schedule. I mean the Department, and I mean Congressional staffs whose approval was needed.

They lived in a different world. They were applying their peacetime rules to a war, and they were exporting all the need for justifications and details to us, gumming everything up. I hated their smug and satisfied reliance on procedure and justification, imagining themselves as guardians of established procedures. This screwing around in Washington, their indecision, their turf concerns, really aggravated me. You can tell I am still hot around the collar remembering this, and no doubt people in Washington had their own set of problems. No doubt this shows I was beginning to feel pressure and frustration too.

We were supposed to be winning the war *in Afghanistan*. In PAS we were supposed to be winning *Afghan* hearts and minds. Yet here we were, spending our time fighting, doing battle with *Washington*. Every moment wasted in writing yet one more justification to Washington was time lost for understanding the Taliban, or really building the communication towers, or networking with the tribes and elders, or thinking through a narrative, and so on.

I know this can all be justified by the messiness of our constitutional order -- prerogatives of the three branches, separation of powers, checks and balances, oversight, stewardship of the taxpayer's money, and so on. Who am I to challenge the spending rules of the Senate Appropriations Committee? Who elected me?

Many of the demands placed on us at the Embassy, however, really derived from Washington partisanship, as individuals used the war to score points, to advance single cause politics, or to wrap their opposition to the war in other guises like procedure and authorities. Or they derived from the protection of bureaucratic turf.

What was it that "Cardinal Altamirano" said to "Father Gabriel" in *The Mission*? "The courts of Europe are a jungle in comparison to which your jungle here is a well kept garden." That this even comes to mind as a film parallel bothers me. Art imitating life.

A second movie showed another side of this. In *Zulu Dawn*, the 1970s movie about the Battle of Isandlwana in South Africa in 1879, there's a short scene. The British troops have crossed the Tugela river into Zulu territory, and an African laborer drowns in the crossing. The British Quartermaster sergeant is recovering the five rounds of ammunition the dead bearer carried on a cartridge belt. I've copied out the dialog.

LIEUTENANT: Stinking business, Mr. Bloomfield.

QUARTERMASTER: Look at that waste. Five rounds ruined, Mr. Harford. Each round has to be accounted for.

LIEUTENANT: Something has to be done.

QUARTERMASTER: If they'd been put back in their boxes, boxes banded and screwed down properlike, as his Lordship ordered, nothing would have happened to them, sir.

LIEUTENANT: I'm talking about our drowned natives, Quartermaster!

*QUARTERMASTER: "Natives" is not on my invoices, Mr. Harford.
"Ammunition" is, and has to be accounted for. And brass cartridge cases
returned.*

Another case of art imitating life.

I suppose the eyes of American commanders since the beginning of our nation have had to look two ways, one way on the enemy, and one way on Washington. It may be a personal fault, a personal failure on my part, that I was so upset by the demands coming from the Department, Congress, and the White House. If so, however, it stemmed from a lack of people to do all the jobs in Kabul and also to feed the beast in our nation's capital.

Arrival of David Ensor

Q: Yes, I am hearing your cri de coeur. Well, how long did you remain the "Acting" Uber?

BISHOP: You'll recall that Ambassador Holbrooke had sent me out as PAO and as the Acting Uber, but he also set in motion another search for an Uber from outside the Department. It was about Christmas time that I heard a new Uber had been identified -- David Ensor, the well known television correspondent for ABC-News, who had also worked at PBS and CNN.

I moped for a day or two about my coming demotion to number two, then I started to make plans for his in-calls and briefings. I understood that my job, now, would be to make him succeed.

And gosh, we needed everyone we could get. I was understanding what David Sedney had told me -- that I should pace myself, conserve my energies. Because of the sheer press of work in Kabul, so many shortcomings to remedy, so many meetings, so many crises, so many emails demanding instant answers, I had worked without a stop for more than a few hours off week after week. The blackberries were killing us with their 24/7 demands. As 2009 closed, no one at the Embassy was taking any time off. Friday was just another day. I could feel myself wearing down.

David Ensor arrived, and he was absolutely a wonderful choice. He had executive capacity. He had broadcasting experience that nobody in the Foreign Service has, and it was clear to me that our Public Diplomacy had to heavily rely on broadcasting. We could do things with print, yes. We could do things in culture, yes. But the main effort had to be in broadcasting. He had that firsthand experience, and he had contacts all over the industry.

For instance, when he said, “we have got to make a film about the Afghan Army,” he knew who to ask to find out who would be the likely candidates to bid on producing it. When he had the inspiration that we needed to provide some TV trucks to local networks, he knew whom to call to figure out just what capabilities they should have.

He did not have any of the usual Foreign Service suspicion of armed forces thinking on influence, strategic communication, or information operations. At the same time he knew that we weren’t going to prevail by bombing the Afghans with “messages.” He didn’t have the other attitude either, that this was all cloud nine stuff. He saw that what we were doing should be, if it wasn’t exactly the center of our war effort, it was in the core.

Within a week, he and I understood that we saw things pretty much the same way. We were of the same mind on the importance of Afghanistan in what I call the Long War. We knew we had to succeed. David was unfazed by any of the typical macro doubts. He was aware of them, and gave them due consideration, but in the end, he knew that doubts had to be cast aside. In other words, Ambassador Holbrooke did choose the perfect person to come out and lead the whole effort.

David became the Uber, the Director of Communications and Public Diplomacy. I was now the PAO. He decided to have three direct reports – me as PAO, Colonel Sandy Raynor as Deputy Director for the new STRATCOM cell, and Tom Niblock as the Advisor at GMIC. In that division of functions, I took all the traditional Public Diplomacy functions, and I was his Deputy for the entire effort.

Some Ensor memories: Once in a while he’d see a train wreck coming, or he’d see something that would require Washington intervention. He’d get agitated, though not on an earthquake scale, not angry in any way, but he’d say “My hair’s on fire. My hair’s on fire.” We all knew we needed to move smartly when David Ensor’s hair was on fire.

By this time, we had a proper CAO, Brian George. Brian was an FS-3 officer in an FE-OC position, supervising the largest Cultural Affairs budget in the world. I was amazed, happily amazed, by his drive and capacity. An ace had joined our staff.

With Brian supervising the junior officers who had the line ECA programs, we were in a much better position to make headway. Steve Hanchey also came in to lead our English teaching programs, and archaeologist Laura Tedesco grabbed hold of cultural preservation. Anne Frej and Lea Cristina were two spouses who had substantial, if shifting, portfolios too.

Rounding out our American staff on the second floor of our building was Angela Gemza. Angela had come directly to Afghanistan from Iraq. Her advertised portfolio was to supervise programs outside Kabul, in the field. It hadn’t quite worked out that way. When the CAO position was vacant, she had to be Acting CAO, or take on one of the Cultural Affairs portfolios as a crisis deadline approached. She had to take on some large swallows of castor oil flavored with bile -- uncertainty and unpredictability while she wanted to build up the field program. Much of the bile was generated by the uncertain

“lanes” between her job and the Embassy's Office of Interagency Provincial Affairs, IPA, tasked to get more people out to the PRTs.

Let me pivot, then, and turn to things we did, and things we set in motion. Even without full civ-mil unity of effort, even without USAID and DEA, we had programs, ideas, money, and good people. Let me run down my list.

Traditional Public Diplomacy Programs

Let me talk first about the slate of traditional Public Diplomacy programs that we were implementing -- Fulbright, International Visitors, Lincoln Learning Centers, speakers, and a few others. These programs were in place when I arrived. Because these were the things that Public Diplomacy people have been doing since time immemorial, or since the founding of USIA in 1953, at least, they were well supported by the standing bureaucracy in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The State personnel system had ACAOs in place in Kabul because these were template programs, and the system knew how to post and fill these positions. Our ACAOs even had language training, which to my mind had not been really necessary, but it shows how “the system,” the bureaucracies and fiefdoms in Washington, could accommodate implementation of the tried-and-true standard template Public Diplomacy programs.

These legacy programs, developed over the decades by USIA, were investments in the future of U.S. relations with countries around the world. They exposed the participants -- academics, future leaders, students -- to the U.S. and to new ideas. I had always considered them to be mid- or long-range programs, providing payoffs from ten to thirty years after the actual event, though occasionally there could be a more immediate result in the case of an International Visitor.

I was happy to implement them, and we needed them in the program mix, but I did not regard them as war-winning, if war-winning was defined as programs that would “move the needle” during a single “year of decision.” Fulbright and International Visitors were two-step programs, meaning that professors would teach students and Visitors would learn some best practices in the fields that they might eventually apply in their work. They were elite programs. Each year we affected between one and two hundred Afghans -- carefully selected Afghans, yes, but still a limited number, when the crisis called for reaching thousands and tens of thousands now.

They did have a purpose in the war, though. If the mantra for Afghanistan was “clear, hold, build, transfer,” they bore on the “build” and “transfer.”

Exchanges

When I arrived, Kabul had approximately 40 International Visitor slots and 30 Fulbright scholarships for undergraduates. We were also sending some additional dozens of Voluntary Visitors. Providing some of our SRAP money to Washington gave us some

additional slots, and extraordinarily, ACAO Danielle Harms persuaded Washington to provide more, about doubling the size of both programs. All in all, we sent about 120 Afghans to the U.S. under these programs. For the 60 Fulbright spots, she received 1200 applications and interviewed 175. This is a lot of work!

What were simple steps in the process in other countries could be amazingly difficult in Afghanistan. Just getting visas was a hassle because Afghan names and birthdates were only casually recorded. Some participants came from far provinces, and they lacked money to travel for visa interviews, so PAS had to arrange their travel on Embassy Air. Then the Department, in a worldwide initiative, rolled out a new online visa application form in English only. Most participants in Afghanistan could not access an electronic copy of the form on the internet, and many had to be personally talked through the application because they didn't read English.

“The Regionals”

I need to frame some of what follows by discussion the worldwide use of “regionals” in Public Diplomacy. Within its ranks Public Diplomacy has always had a small number of specialists like Information Resource Officers, once upon a time called Librarians, and English Language Officers.

There were only a few dozen of these officers in each specialty, so when they were overseas they were assigned to the largest programs but also given “regional” responsibilities.” The Regional Information Resources Officer in Bangkok, for instance, might travel to Malaysia, Singapore, and other countries once or twice a year.

Let's talk about Regional Information Resources Officers first. Over the decades, it was the RIROs who came to “own,” so to speak, the American Corners. This was good and bad. It was good in that the PD generalists in Public Affairs Sections, increasingly tasked to do too much, had some reinforcement. It was bad in that the RIROs characteristically thought of the American Corners as libraries, rather than making the attempt to reconceive them. Between their jobs and families at their home post, and travel to a number of other countries, when did they have time for reinvention, anyway?

The nearest Regional Information Resource Officer to Afghanistan was stationed in New Delhi. I had been to the enormous American Cultural Centers in India with their fine libraries, really the last traditional USIS libraries. If there's anything I knew about the India program, it was that the RIRO was kept happily busy in India with a large professional staff and a huge budget doing what RIROs love to do most, be librarians.

In our Lincoln Learning Centers, we had the largest network of Centers outside the American Corners in Russia, and we had one of our ACAOs tending the network full time. The ACAO also tended the NGO that hired the Directors and ran the programs. I was OK with the occasional visit of the RIRO from India, but I was vexed by the lack of consultation with me as PAO. The RIRO came in and out, leaving behind taskings for my

staff, giving the impression that he set policy from afar, but while I was in Afghanistan the IROs never joined a strategic discussion of what the LLCs might do.

Perhaps you can sense I didn't have much use for "regionals." Their visits were too short, and their regional templates didn't always fit our needs.

English Teaching was another "regional" program. The RELO for Afghanistan was also located in New Delhi. We potentially had more money to spend on English Teaching than the rest of the world's RELOs combined, and Afghanistan had become the most important foreign policy priority of the United States. We needed our own English Language Officer.

When I returned to Washington after my initial TDY, I visited the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to make the case. Alaina Romanowski was the Deputy Assistant Secretary. She outlined the facts. Worldwide there were 29 RELOs. Each had a "region." The only way to provide a RELO to Afghanistan would be to pull one person out of one of those regional positions. (I thought to myself, think of the disaster to our English Teaching strategy in Paraguay, Uruguay, and Bolivia!) She would not do it. All I could persuade her to do was recruit a specially qualified English Language Specialist as a 3161. The person we eventually got was a good man, but I am still dumbfounded by the don't-mess-with-our-business-as-usual attitude in ECA.

One more "regional." The Library of Congress has offices in a few American Embassies, Islamabad included. Their main work is to collect foreign materials for the Library's collection. The LOC employee in Pakistan had visited Kabul a few times before I arrived. My take was she was playing Lady Bountiful, meeting with Afghanistan's senior librarians to think grand thoughts. Each time she had visited, an ACAO and an FSN had to accompany her to all her meetings. The Afghan libraries had some unique resources that needed preservation, yes, but I didn't see how episodic visits by the LOC employee would lead to any real progress. She had no funding, and even if we had provided money, she had no time -- not enough time to spend in Afghanistan supervising the project when her main duties were in Islamabad. She was too light. We didn't have time to waste on a "nice to have" project being run at a distance by another kind of "regional." I may have bruised her feelings when I fended her off.

So now that I've gotten some of my heartburn with "regionals" out of my system, I can go on.

Lincoln Learning Centers

Let me preface my discussion of the Lincoln Learning Centers in Afghanistan by first talking about USIA's American Libraries and Cultural Centers and the facilities that in time replaced them, American Corners.

The forebears of USIS Libraries were the American Centers and Libraries established during the occupations of Germany, Austria, Japan, and Korea. USIA also inherited the

Binational Centers established by Nelson Rockefeller in the era of Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy in Latin America.

In the 1940s and 1950s there were a number of justifications for the Libraries.

Justification one: USIS Libraries were a way to reach rising influentials as university students or as young professionals, when they were still impressionable and reachable.

Two: Libraries were most successful when they were located near preeminent national universities. Three: Foreign societies usually did not have lending libraries, and the availability of circulating books at USIS Libraries made a powerful democratic statement.

Four: A USIS Library was a full-control venue. On short notice, a program or speech could be arranged in a USIS Library even when local governments opposed our policy, and when local institutions were skittish about American initiatives or American culture.

Five: Perhaps into the 1980s, USIS Libraries had books on the United States that no other Library in a nation possessed. This justification, however, no longer applied once the internet made available more information than any scholar could absorb.

There was one additional justification -- a forgotten justification, now -- for the original American Centers in the 1940s and 1950s, a justification that applied to Iraq and Afghanistan. In post-war environments, it takes time to rebuild the social and cultural infrastructure of a society. In Germany and Japan the original American Centers hosted local dramas, local poetry readings, and local art exhibits because there were no other venues to support the local reconstruction of a normal (and democratic) cultural life.

Speaking bluntly, American Corners were developed in the early 1990s when USIS posts were forced to give up their Libraries. I've mentioned that I had to close the Library in Dhaka in 1996. We could no longer afford the \$30,000 a year it took to buy new books and periodicals, and USIA had to let go staff after the end of the Cold War.

PAOs, IROs, and area directors prolonged the retreat from libraries as long as possible. In the poorest of the LDCs, lack of internet access justified delays in closing them. In South Asia, where large budgets and low staff salaries allowed a few posts to sustain their libraries even when central funding was no longer provided, some continued on life support.

Elsewhere, the libraries that remained became limited access Information Resource Centers, and the former librarians were tasked to become outreach specialists. They should patrol the internet to find the latest think tank study on tariffs, say, and make sure that officials in the Commerce Ministry should see it. Given the funding problems, this kind of issue- and elite-focused program was actually a good one, but over the years I found the Information Resources people weren't happy with it.

So much of the USIA spirit resided in Libraries that decision makers at posts and in Washington eventually agreed to develop and support a network of "American Corners." So great was the longing for the comforts of traditional Public Diplomacy that all agreed to organize and support these anemic shadows of libraries when the real institutions could no longer be maintained.

Unsure of the way ahead as the ground shifted under their feet, the former Library Officers, now Information Resources Officers, were comfortable with a new role as managers of American Corner networks, with a small book collection as the core of the new Corners. The generous funding of the initial American Corners in the former Soviet Union, using SEED money, provided a flash of glamour, but obscured their poor prospects elsewhere.

Now, to Afghanistan. My predecessors had begun to set up a network of American centers called “Lincoln Centers.” There were eight in operation when I arrived. ACAO Beverly Mather-Marcus had the conn.

They were far more robust than American corners. They had small- to mid-size library collections, internet access, and enough space to hold programs. The main difference between a Lincoln Center and an old American Cultural Center was that we placed management of the Lincoln Centers in the hands of an NGO so that there were no Embassy people, Americans or FSNs, with offices in the Centers. This allowed the Centers to begin operation without all the security precautions. If the Lincoln Center were near a PRT, there would be Americans in and out for programs.

They were “Lincoln Centers” when I arrived, but one day we received word that the attorneys at The Lincoln Center in New York City had noticed that our little libraries in Afghanistan were using their sacred name, and we were told to cease and desist. It's beyond me how one institution could legally monopolize the use of two plain English words, “Lincoln” and “Center,” and enforce it worldwide, but we were advised to bow down and grovel before the awesome presence of The Lincoln Center. Our Centers became “Lincoln Learning Centers.” You can tell what I think of the almighty attorneys in New York. They don't have enough to do, obviously. They may live in the Big Apple, but they had small, ungenerous minds. End of editorial.

SRAP had provided enough money to continue expanding the network, and we set a goal to open ten more Centers. Two more were about to open as I departed, and sites for others had been selected. Jeff Ellis and then John Crosby eventually doubled the size of the network over the course of a year after he was given the portfolio.

Our LLC's had book collections, but internet access was a greater draw, we found. We had to respect local practice regarding the mixing of young patrons of both sexes. Young men used the workstations on one side of the Center, and young women the other side.

I gave the green light to offering the use of the facilities by local organizations, and we backed up the offer with small grants for events like poetry festivals. So we moved forward by going back to the past -- conceiving of our Centers as local cultural institutions too.

English Teaching

Over the years, the English Language Officers in USIA had developed a number of programs that fit the reality of reduced funding and ambitions. The glory days of direct teaching were mostly memories. They gave workshops for teachers, supported national English teaching associations and attended the meetings, served as resource persons that could discuss the various English teaching theories and approaches when asked by local educators, and circulated *English Teaching Forum* magazine. If money were available, they organized Access programs, which funded local organizations to teach English to local young people, preferably girls and the disadvantaged.

As I mentioned, Kabul had no English Language Officer assigned, but the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs had sent one English Teaching Fellow, Jerrad Langlois. He had learned his trade in the U.S., but he had a good package of relevant experience teaching at Bilkent University in Turkey. Among other projects, he was spending time at Kabul Medical University, helping the medical school get ready to begin instruction in English in only a few years.

Jerrad was the only available English Teaching hero, and we have several good talks about how to dramatically increase the scale of what we were doing, speedily. We brainstormed.

In China I had been impressed how American universities, anxious to establish programs for Chinese students in China, had experimented with a dozen different models of delivering a degree package. Establish a branch campus, perhaps, sending profs from the home campus to teach -- in English or with interpreting. Or offer a degree program in cooperation with a Chinese university. Or have the students take three terms worth of course work in China, and finish up at the school in the U.S. for one term. Or give the students a term's worth of study materials, and meet at a location in China or near China for an intense, round-the-clock week of lectures and workshops. And so on.

Sending Afghan English professors or English teachers to the U.S. was not a good option because of the temptation not to return to Afghanistan. Bringing American professors to teach in Afghanistan wasn't good either because of the costs of security.

Jarred thought it might be possible to have his alma mater, Framingham State University, well known as a powerhouse in ESL teaching, send professors to Kuwait or the UAE. We could send the students from Afghanistan there for several short bursts of study. This would have been a novel Public Diplomacy arrangement. Another possibility was to send Afghans to study in India for longer or shorter periods.

As Jarred was contacting U.S. schools and working up concepts, a USAID contractor offered him triple what we were paying if he would join their project. I couldn't stand in the way of such ambition, so we lost him in the Public Affairs Section.

Eventually ECA did help us hire Steve Hanchey as Kabul's English Language Officer. When he arrived, Steve and I picked up the brainstorming where Jerrad and I had left off. Steve had the needed flexibility to see that we needed to do things that hadn't been tried

before. He “got it” about speed and scale. He couldn't focus on planning for new initiatives right away since the Access program needed attention, and because it went through another round of expansion. It was after I left, then, that he was able to shape the second of the options I had first discussed with Jarred and then with him -- sending Afghan teachers in large numbers to India.

Whenever I thought about the “India option,” I shook my head a little. How could Uncle Sam be funding Afghans to learn English the Indian way? I could foresee Afghan students adopting Indian habits of speech and expression, not to mention the Indian accent and gestures and word choices. And of course South Asian English has been more influenced by British than American English. Sending Afghan students to India ran against the characteristic Public Diplomacy pride that we should teach American English.

Well, war requires the casting off of old habits and dispositions. The important strategic effect was to increase the number of competent English teachers and English speakers so that Afghanistan could be more open to the world, and that more Afghans could get jobs that needed English. India's proximity and low cost meant we could send many more Afghans there, in a shorter time, than with any other arrangement.

I'm not up to date on how large the program has become since I left, but I think it was the right decision for us to decide shape Uncle Sam's support for English teaching in a new way, a new modality, that would deliver results faster. So this was a traditional Public Diplomacy program that we “new modeled,” in Emory Upton's sense of the word.

“New Model”

Let me turn, then, to the programs that were not templates.

The Government Media Information Center.

When I got to PAS, I found one thing working wonderfully, the Government Media Information Center.

GMIC was perhaps our equivalent of JUSPAO during the Vietnam war. Tom Niblock realized that an important part of building the Afghan government's capacity for the future was that they needed to have their own spokespeople, their own media centers, and their own public affairs functions. Tom Niblock had me visit GMIC my first day on the job.

I realized that USAID had actually done a great job in developing the independent media. Kabul was full of TV stations, radio, newspaper, and magazines. There were Afghan stringers for all the world's media.

But USAID had not focused on the other necessary half of a democratic media environment. All the independent media have to be able to talk with the government, with the President, the ministers, and other government officials. No one at USAID or among

the other donors focused on the development of the system by which ministries had spokespeople and regular press conferences. Tom Niblock had seen this need, and he got the nod from the Embassy to set up a Government Media Information Center, parked on the Afghan government organization chart as part of the Presidential Palace.

Tom, a political officer with an unorthodox series of assignments, had been PAO in Afghanistan when no Public Diplomacy officers wanted to go. He had stayed in country in a series of other jobs. I'd been told stories about him in Washington. Tom, all he does is ask for more. Tom, he's sucking up to the Afghans. Tom, he's not a real Public Diplomacy officer. Tom, there must be a reason he has stayed in Afghanistan year after year. Tom, he's really working with the Afghans, not with the Embassy. And so on.

Visiting GMIC with Tom, I could see in a moment that all that talk was way off base. What he was doing was a miracle. It was wonderful. He was the Embassy's "Advisor" to the Center, but it was clear that he had pointed the Afghan Director and staff in good directions, turning *his* vision into *their* long range plan. He had the right interpersonal touch.

GMIC had its own compound, a facility with offices, satellite communication, training classrooms, interpreting booths, and a press conference hall. His staff of 80 were training journalists, spokesmen, and government officers. Fresh college grads were working at GMIC as interns. It was the single most impressive thing I had seen. What was quite noticeable was that it conformed completely to counterinsurgency doctrine. Afghans were in the lead. The staff development program was training the first generation of Afghan government press officers. President Karzai was so bought into GMIC that he soon appointed the GMIC Director, Waheed Omer, as Presidential spokesman. As far as I was concerned, Tom had a blank check.

During my tour, GMIC expanded, increased its use of technology, trained local journalists, and developed a program to certify government spokespeople. The whole operation moved to a new Center. Government ministers began to meet the media regularly. Administration principals and the Ambassador gave their press readouts to the media at GMIC. So did Admiral Mullen and other military commanders.

One incident that proved the value of our investment in GMIC comes to mind. It was from October of 2009. Inflammatory rumors that U.S. troops had burned a Koran after an IED attack were sweeping Kabul and several northern provinces, but the Governor of Wardak province, who had been on site during the police investigation of the incident, had heard nothing of the sort. Tom Niblock, after a lot of shoving of small-minded, regulation-citing U.S. Army people, got Governor Fidai on a flight to Kabul.

In a press conference at GMIC right after he arrived, he recited the findings of several Afghan investigative teams and discredited the rumors. He showed journalists an interview of local investigators on video. He authoritatively cited recent incidents when insurgents had burned Korans. That drove a stake through the heart of the rumor. He might have said these same things in the province capital, Meydan, but his testimony,

reported by local journalists, would not have had a very long reach. He needed to speak his piece in Kabul. Without Tom and GMIC, the rumors of the Koran burning might have festered into a real incident.

GMIC's Security News Desk

Civilian casualties caused by NATO operations were a continuing problem. Most occurred at night during Special Forces operations. When there were civilian casualties, Afghan local officials communicated the losses up their own province and ministerial chains, and the President might be contacted directly. In the afternoon, President Karzai might hold a press conference denouncing NATO and the U.S., and calling for an end to night raids, even before he heard the American side of the story. The President's agitated criticism would be communicated throughout Afghanistan, the Muslim world, and to Europe and the U.S.

Bad news sprints, the truth crawls. The ISAF commands took all reports of civilian casualties extremely seriously, but it might take some time for ISAF to dispatch an investigation team to learn the facts on the ground. Occasionally, the investigations revealed U.S. and NATO failures. They also might show that the version of the story that reached President Karzai was incorrect, exaggerated, or twisted by Taliban disinformation. Dead "youths" might be mature men. "Innocent bystanders" might be found with weapons.

From the public affairs point of view, the stories got out of hand not only because of the President's rush to judgment, but also because Afghan ministries, the Afghan forces, the Palace, and NATO were not communicating with one another.

Tom Niblock had long noticed this problem, and he was socializing the idea of a single Security News Desk, to be located at GMIC, with the Afghans. In his concept, representatives of the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of the Interior, and the National Security Council should work 24/7 at one location, and all inquiries on any incident should be referred to the Security News Desk. ISAF would also staff the organization. GMIC would represent the Palace. Gathered in one place, the Security News Desk team could gather information from all sources, receive all media inquiries, and make cleared statements.

While Tom was working this, another incident occurred, and President Karzai again prompted a media storm with some intemperate remarks. Admiral Smith was seized with the same idea as Tom's -- to establish a single crisis point of contact for the media.

Admiral Smith asked Tom and me to come to his office, and he showed us the plan for the crisis center that his staff had drawn up. He hoped to move a container to the GMIC compound, wire up unclassified and classified systems, and staff it with ISAF public affairs specialists by the end of the week.

Tom cautioned that we had had no Afghan input on the idea, that in his own inquiries he had encountered bureaucratic resistance to a single center, that ISAF could not simply order something to happen at GMIC because it belonged to the Afghan government, not to the Embassy or the command, and that more American uniforms at GMIC would begin to erode the standing of GMIC as an Afghan institution. He saw, however, that his idea for a Security News Desk and Admiral Smith's need for a single point of contact were two responses to the same problem.

Admiral Smith grasped Tom's objections and agreed to let him keep working on the idea. It took some weeks to bring all the Afghans on board, but the Security News Desk did come together as planned, with a positive effect.

Communications Towers

Q: You had been told about a cell phone towers project when you were in Washington. How did it go?

BISHOP: Yes, during my consultations, I learned that the extension of cell phone coverage in Afghanistan must be a top priority. There were new commercial networks, and the number of cell phones in use had risen at an astonishing rate, but cell phone coverage did not always reach into insurgent areas, and if it did, it wasn't 24/7. Critical to the whole effort would be building a chain of new and high communication towers, useful to extend the reach of cell phone coverage and the reach of local broadcasting. These towers would be placed on U.S. forward operating bases so that they would be secure against attack and could operate around the clock.

USFOR-A had conceptually patched together an interim program that would use shorter towers on wheels, "wheelie" towers, COWs, Cell on Wheels. Various electronic boxes, repeaters, antennas, and so on could be hung on the towers. Once erected, military commands could mount communication equipment on the towers. So could the Department of State, meaning us, and so could Afghan cell phone providers and local broadcasters. DOD money could be used for towers that were mobile.

The use of these shorter and mobile military towers would extend the reach of cell phones and broadcasts some, but higher towers were needed to extend the reach of the signals -- the reach of ISAF and Afghan government messaging, and the reach of cell phone and broadcast signals -- for a larger strategic effect.

Cynthia Efird had told me that she had been given a fairly thorough introduction to the towers project when she was being courted to become the Uber. No one in Public Diplomacy had ever built towers or this kind of physical infrastructure. We had always been focused on what was broadcast, the ideas, the content, not on the technology of broadcasting, the electrons. Congress had already been sold on the towers project, however, and the money was headed our way, she was told. The complexity of the project was one reason she had turned down the offer to be the Uber.

During my consultations in Washington, I received only the briefest of introduction to the cell phone towers project. The picture I was given was that the State Department, rather than DOD, was to receive the money for the towers because DOD money could not be used to build permanent facilities, but ours could. We had to fund the towers because of quirks and asymmetries in legal authorities.

When I arrived in Afghanistan, I learned that the military side of the project was being worked by Task Force 41, the psychological operations command for U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A). The wheeled towers were on ships on their way to Afghanistan, but everyone was eager for us to build the tall towers. Task Force 41 had the plan, and they had a notional map of planned locations, but they could not use DOD funds. I had been given the impression in Washington that my job as PAO would be simply to sign over the funds, and the Army would put the towers up. This proved a highly optimistic view. It might be more properly described as deceptive.

I gradually realized it was up to us to make things happen. Task Force 41 had a concept for the towers but not much more. They did not actually have a list of sites where the towers were to be placed. There were no specifications or engineering drawings. They had not done anything about a contractor or a contracting agency. No FOB commander or installation civil engineer had been informed of the project in order to set aside some land.

It wasn't just where the tower will go, but will the electrons interfere with the air traffic control, will the tower encroach on helicopter approaches to the landing pad, would the towers interfere with other communications, and so on. There were no site or soil surveys. There were no cost estimates. No one had thought about informing the Afghan government about frequency usage. Task Force 41 seemed to think we were going to do all of this.

The main problem I foresaw was in contracting. The towers had to be built by private contractors, not soldiers. That put us into the world of big time contracting, big warrants. John Arczynski visited the contracting units in Kabul, and he didn't find much enthusiasm for taking on one more project.

Q: Well also, I would think, you know, just thinking of cell phone networking contracts here in the United States, this is big bucks.

BISHOP: Yes, big bucks certainly. I wasn't yet even thinking about how Afghan cell service providers might use the networks in a business way. At this point, we were only thinking of the installation and building phase. Later, David Ensor waded through the business and policy effects of the project.

The whole project was way beyond the experience of anyone in the Foreign Service, except for some USAID people. Fortunately, John Arczynski on the S/CRS team was a Civil Service project manager for new Embassies in OBO, and he had a good sense of the

series of hurdles we had to clear, but one man doesn't add up to "depth" even though we apparently had "deep" pockets, money to spend.

The project was a constant headache. I think that if someone had said to me, "Don, build towers and a cell phone network," I could have done it. But I couldn't have done anything else. John Arcynski could have done it, better and faster than I could have, but he couldn't have done anything else. All of us were juggling too many balls at once to give it the sustained focus that it needed. I needed a towers czar.

I never felt that Washington understood the magnitude of the project they had conceived. They had a large main idea. "Cell phones are good. Cell phones liberate. Cell phones connect Afghans to the rest of their country and the world. We need to build cell phone towers to reach unserved areas and to have 24/7 service. Don, we will give you money." But they didn't give us the people or expertise.

Even so, Colonel Sandy Raynor, retired FSO Gary Pergl who had come out as a 3161, John Arczynski and the other members of the S/CRS team, and Greg Young (on TDY in Kabul from the Procurement Executive) attacked the problem.

We had a hard time finding a contracting agency to do the work -- it sounds simple and straightforward, but it's not, and the agencies like the Corps of Engineers in Afghanistan were already overbooked -- but we discovered that a USAID contractor had the right experience and the right contracting vehicle to get us started. Admiral Smith sent out an all points bulletin to operating base commanders to be ready for tower construction. We prioritized a list of locations and decided the first tower should go up in Kandahar. John slogged through the contracting announcements of the project, and he set in motion site and soil surveys. Sandy Raynor took a group of hopeful bidders to the south to look at sites by helicopter.

As we moved forward on the project, there was an unexpected eruption from Washington. We were justifying the tower project as a Public Diplomacy effort because the civilian cell phone networks and Afghan broadcasters could place boxes on the towers to extend the reach of their signals. Task Force 41 also intended to mount some equipment that would be more effective on our tall towers than on the shorter COWs. This raised an issue. It's an appropriations rule that State money cannot be used to supplement military spending. A corollary was that Defense could not utilize a State platform for any of its purposes because that would illegally mix State and Defense appropriations. The question of different legal "authorities" that so vexed General Petraeus and Secretary Gates was being revealed.

When I heard this, I thought to myself that we were quite a long way down the road on a project that SRAP had been promoting for more than a year. Why hadn't anyone raised this issue earlier? This could be a real monkey wrench in the works. Not to mention that the rule, strictly applied, was boneheaded, plain downright stupid, in what was supposed to be a "whole of government" fight.

A conference call was scheduled. We had to explain what we were doing to L. It was perhaps the most astonishing conversation in my career.

Before David Ensor could voice any of his soft spoken words to open the conversation on a calm basis, an L attorney in Washington shouted into the phone. Literally shouted. “Stop! Stop! Listen to me! Before anyone says a word, the law is absolutely clear! No money can be spent on military projects! You want to use these towers for both civilian and military purposes! They want to place their equipment on our towers! This is forbidden under the law! Absolutely!”

We spent the rest of the conference call on small discussions of what was intended, but her top-of-the-lungs vehemence had thrown everyone off kilter. I wasn't privy to all the subsequent Washington conversations and maneuvering -- I am sure Ambassador Holbrooke became involved -- but we heard some days later that Harold Koh had reviewed the project, and he ruled it could go ahead.

The contracting firms that bid on the project to build the towers employed Afghans for the actual construction work, and few had security clearances or military access cards. There would be hassles to get them on the bases, and they would have to bunk off the installations, which increased costs for security. Their experienced men were Dari speakers from the north, which added another reason for security.

Compressing a lot of agony into a few sentences, the first tower had not gone up by the time I left Afghanistan, but as I left, bids were coming in from the contractors. I didn't get to attend a tower ribbon cutting, but things were in motion. I say again, though, that SRAP had no idea of how difficult was the task that was handed to us. As I think it over, Ambassador Holbrooke and his team never grasped that towers are not built in days, but years.

Social Media

Q: You've talked about cell phones, but not the social media so far. What were you doing in this area?

BISHOP: I was not skeptical about the dramatic change in the communication environment from the millions of cell phones being used in Afghanistan, and the effort to build the towers was part of our effort to hasten those changes.

For the social media, though, I was a skeptic. Internet penetration was extremely low. So were literacy rates. Bombing cell phone users with stratcom “messaging” using tweets had been proved to be ineffective. I also thought that bringing radio and television inside walled Pashto compounds would be more transformative.

Few Afghans were looking at our Embassy website, but there was no shortage of viewers outside the country, judging our Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communication by our

web presence. Was it trilingual? How many days did it take for us to use new photographs? What about our Facebook, Flickr, and Twitter accounts?

In the end, Caitlin and her team had to devote considerable time to these visible “social media” tools not because they were moving the needle in Afghanistan but because people in Washington constantly harped on them. We got high grades from DiploPundit, but the effort took away staff time from higher priorities.

One of Ambassador Holbrook's staffers in SRAP made *our* social media *her* personal crusade, and she was anxious for us to launch more cell phone initiatives. She never let go. Somehow she had been permitted to email the Secretary directly, and I was distressed to learn she was making promises to the Secretary about cell phone initiatives in Afghanistan, initiatives we in Kabul would have to launch.

Embassy Islamabad had, a little before I arrived in Afghanistan, launched a \$20 million cell phone project, Humari Awaz, that provided millions of free calls to cell phone users there. The SRAP staffer constantly trumpeted this program, even though there were many in Washington who judged it an expensive failure.

Not coming from the social media generation, I didn't have any good ideas of my own on what kind of cell phone initiative might help win the war. I was pleased, though, that Caitlin Hayden and Kirk Wolcott had the same skeptical view of the Islamabad effort.

It was David Ensor who had more experience and a clearer vision, one finally brought to fruition a little after I left with the Paywast program. David thanked me, however, for holding the line against uninformed enthusiasms in Washington, allowing a proper program to be conceived and implemented in Kabul without time and money lost replicating the Islamabad program.

Pashto print media

I've mentioned my conviction that the weight of our communication program needed to bear on broadcasting, radio and television. But I didn't think any society could eventually become stable without a vigorous print culture too. There were plenty of daily newspapers and weekly and monthly magazines published in Dari, but there was no daily newspaper in Pashto. I was interested in spending some of our money to foster the print media. We didn't want to invent something from whole cloth, as USAID had with InterNews. Rather I thought we could provide additional funding to some local publishers to allow them to expand the circulation of their newspapers.

One communication group had some small Pashto publications going, and they gave us a proposal to launch a weekly Pashto newspaper that would circulate in the South. Their proposal was sound; they had their own stable of writers; and they were ready to launch within a few weeks.

This was within a month or two after my arrival, before any of our money had arrived. I gave them some initial funding drawn from our small Public Diplomacy money, hoping for the bulk of the SRAP money to arrive soon. This was before we grasped the full procedural agonies that would be imposed upon us and cause delays. Our partner launched the newspaper, and was then justifiably upset when we could not follow through with the rest of the money. Eventually the money arrived, and the project continued, but we had lost headway, and their enthusiasm for a partnership with PAS was impaired.

Someone raised the question -- how will we insure that this newspaper's editorials and articles all support the Government and U.S. policy? We couldn't have U.S. money propagating errant opinions!

I thought this over, but I waved away this concern. First, we had no one to review what they published. Second, our initiative was less about today's messaging than it was about building up the independent print media in the Pashto-speaking regions. It was about giving people more material to read. It was about providing jobs for journalists, editorial writers, columnists, and even poets, supporting the opinion-forming and creative sectors of Afghan society. That was the payoff, the objective, of supporting the newspaper.

Whether every story, editorial, or column supported President Karzai or ISAF was not our main goal. I assured that copies were received by our FSN translators, so that we could notice if the paper somehow went off the reservation, so to speak, but otherwise I wasn't interested in watching over their work like a schoolmarm with a red pencil, or guiding their opinions. A free press is supposed to be ... free.

Literacy

"Communication" in Afghanistan confronted one fact -- low literacy rates. Lieutenant General Mike Caldwell, out at the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan, encountered this in the training of new Afghan Army recruits. He had to add some weeks to basic training to give the new soldiers some basic literacy.

This was one reason we so had to focus on broadcasting. Increasing literacy takes years of national effort. I learned that USAID was in the initial stages of developing a program, but it would be many months before they could complete all the steps necessary to develop and harmonize a plan with the Ministry of Education, and award a contract.

In Washington I had been briefed on the books for young readers prepared by Scholastic, Inc. They had done books in Iraq, and it would be relatively easy for them to prepare Dari and Pashto editions. They had already illustrated the books in such a way as not to violate any Islamic sensibilities. As I recall they had 150 titles, and their execution concept was to get the Ministry of Education to choose 120. They needed Ministry buy-in so that it would be the Ministry that would distribute the Afghan editions when they were delivered. They also wanted the Ministry to look over the texts and the translations to make sure everything was appropriate.

I didn't think these books would by themselves increase literacy, and certainly not increase it soon. But I thought the arrival of attractive volumes could give Afghanistan's students and teachers a nice dose of enthusiasm by providing new and attractive material.

This project took a little more time than I anticipated. There were some contracting delays on our part, and institutional delays in the Afghan Ministry of Education. I hear that the final agreement with Scholastic was signed in February of 2011.

Just as I left, new ACAO Jeff Ellis got wind of an NGO in California preparing bilingual Dari-Pashto children's books. Jeff encouraged them to submit a grant proposal, which he told me was also signed before the end of 2010 -- for 2.5 million bilingual books.

Broadcasting

I've spoken of a focus on broadcasting, so a few words about the radio environment seem appropriate. Radio Television Afghanistan had the most extensive network. A large number of small stations and networks had opened for business in the years after the defeat of the Taliban, but their broadcast signals rarely reached into the countryside. The two leading private networks were Tolo, broadcasting mostly in Dari, and Shamshad, a Pashto-language network. The two CEO's, Saad Mohseni and Faisal Karim Faisal, were well known in the international community, and by the Ambassador.

Among foreign radios, VOA and RFE/RL had the most credibility and the largest listenership. BBC had a strong presence.

USAID had patched together a small network of struggling local stations across the north of Afghanistan. Another network, again with limited reach, was organized by the NATO psychological operations command, CJPOTF. The Special Operations command under USFOR-A, CJSOTF, had another small network. The USAID, NATO, and USFOR-A networks were running independently of one another. They weren't sharing programming.

Finally, strung across southern and eastern Afghanistan were U.S. forces tactical radio stations -- RIABs, Radios in a Box. The "box" could fit on the back of a truck, or it could be set up in the room of a building. The "box" included the transmitter, generator, basic mikes and cassette players for announcers and DJs, and a small pole that could raise an antenna about 30 feet high. Usually, the signals could be heard by people within five to ten miles of the RIAB.

Each RIAB was "owned" by the U.S. commander for his tactical area of operation. There were one or two young Afghans hired to run the station.

Looking at this welter of efforts, two things were evident. First, this was an area that cried out for alignment, but with so many commands, nations, and companies involved, it wasn't going to happen. Second, the previous U.S. initiatives had mostly developed radio.

Three, the Pashto areas remained underserved. That was one reason why the communications tower project was so important. We could do more, however.

I always wanted to foster private sector, or “enterprise,” solutions, not establish government entities. We didn't need another imported broadcasting solution, another network run by Embassy or USAID or military people or the Afghan government. We needed to help the independent but struggling Pashto-language broadcasters. Again, all the stations and networks were run by people who were committed against the Taliban.

Rather than sprinkle money across the many Pashto-language broadcasters, it was better to place our money with the leading television network, the one already expanding the reach of its signals, and establishing local stations, in the east and south. That network was Shamshad. We aimed to first give them a million-dollar upgrade to their studios in Kabul, and then support their expansion efforts.

All this was easier said than done. Because old key equipment at Shamshad's television studio was failing, they needed the money for the upgrade sooner not later. Again, this was one of our early projects, and we ran into the maze of federal regulations that governed spending by contracts or grants.

My staff was divided in its advice on whether the vehicle for providing the funds to Shamshad should be a contract or a grant. Just this issue made me hesitate for some weeks. I finally decided in favor of the contract mode because I thought the additional oversight of the project by a USG contracting agency -- we were initially going to use an office in Germany -- would provide additional safeguards.

The contracting agent made an error, however, in communicating with Shamshad directly on some of the provisions of the draft contract before we had had a chance to socialize them with network management. They were quite surprised, for instance, by the routine contract provisions on the employment of women. I'm sure the Shamshad people generally assented to the notion that in time Afghanistan should offer more opportunities for women, and indeed there were women working at the network, but not many. The wording of the contract draft, drawn from USG boilerplate, seemed to tell them, however, that they would have to come up to equal treatment overnight, and they balked, angrily.

By the time we got this far, we had an additional hero on our staff. Greg Young came to Kabul on TDY from the Office of the Procurement Executive, one of the Department's top people on grants and federal procurement regulations. He let me know that it would be possible to achieve the same ends by using a grant rather than a contract. We went with the grant, and Shamshad got the money for its new studio.

As I look back, I see that my initial decision to use a contract was a mistake. My mistake was the cause of what I hated the most, which was delay. I must, however, own up to it.

Do you remember that when we thought about supporting a Pashto-language newspaper, we talked over whether we needed to assure that it supported our policy? While we were

discussing the Shamshad proposal, the same concern was raised. Again, I didn't see us in the business of monitoring a television network for content, and it only took ten seconds to realize there was no way we could do so anyway. While we were working on the contract option, thinking of the VOA charter, I wrote out a paragraph that we respected the network's journalistic integrity.

I have one more thing to mention about our working with Shamshad. When we were socializing our concept with Washington, we included a daily broadcast schedule in an email, to show that this was an established network with news, talk, entertainment, dramas, and so on. Someone in Washington noticed that there was time on the schedule for daily prayers, occasional sermons, and call-in programs where imams would suggest to listeners how to apply the teachings of Islam to their everyday and family problems.

We were told that Uncle Sam could not possibly support a broadcast network that included these religious programs because it would violate the separation of church and state!

We sent in a reclama! After thinking things over, Washington had a suggestion that might resolve the problem of separation. If the religious programs constituted, say, ten percent of programming time, we could reduce the amount of our grant by ten percent so as not to subsidize the religious programs. I was simply dumbfounded by this dopiness. I'll have more to say about applying the "separation of church and state" to Afghanistan in a little bit.

Q: Tell me about those boxed radios.

BISHOP: RIABs, "Radios in a Box." They were small all-purpose radio stations. I suppose the transmitter hardware could fit on the back of a pickup truck, but RIAB meant not just the transmitter but everything associated with it that made up a small station. They could be mobile during an operation, warning local people to stay away from the fighting, for instance. Usually, they were at a Forward Operating Base. Their signal output ranged from 30 to 300 watts. A 100-watt RIAB might reach 15 miles.

The radios belonged to the tactical commander -- Army, Marine Corps, NATO. From a FOB they not only spread military messages, but the stations could interview the American commander or Afghan officials. There were a variety of different arrangements between the owning units and the Ministry of Culture's official in the province or area -- the Ministry of Culture controlled RTA, Radio Television Afghanistan.

I'm sure the RIABs were doing good work, but I could see some lapses. No one at ISAF was ever able to give me the number of how many RIABs there were. The commanders liked having the radios, indeed they were quite possessive about them, but often the RIAB was tucked under a lieutenant who lacked punch on the staff. The radios were not networked, so that programs on one were not shared with others. They didn't have any standard way of accessing programs or spots from the three networks that I mentioned.

They had uneven tables of equipment. The DJ at a RIAB might not even have a cell phone to be able to conduct phone interviews.

I had the chance to get a close up look at a RIAB when I visited PRT Sharana in Paktika province. It was run by the deployed battalion of the 25th Infantry Division from inside their small base next to the Province government headquarters. The transmitter would indeed fit in the back of a pickup truck, but it had been placed in a room on the installation. A short antenna reaching upward from the roof of the building allowed the signal to be received for ten or fifteen miles. What I remember most, however, was how tired and frayed the young Afghan who ran the RIAB was. Two Afghan employees were authorized to run the station, but hiring a replacement had been held up, and the Afghan broadcaster was working more than twelve hours a day doing the work of two.

Brian Ferinden, a Public Diplomacy FSO who was working in Jalalabad, let me know that the RIABs in RC-East were similarly un-networked and lacking materials.

Every time I spoke to someone at ISAF about improving the effectiveness of the RIABs, or networking them, I saw them roll their eyes. The RIABs belonged to the tactical commanders who would jealously guard their prerogatives and their sole ownership. I offered a number of suggestions of how to enhance their effectiveness without challenging the command arrangements. One -- ISAF could develop a checklist. (Are there two DJs? Check. Do they have cell phones? Check. Do they receive copies of spots and programs from CJPOTF and CJSOTF? Check. And so on.) Two -- how about gathering the DJs for a conference in Kabul, which PAS would pay for. They could share best practices, we would bring in some trainers to give pointers, and hortatory pep talks by General Petraeus and the Minister of Culture would brace them up.

I was whistling to the wind.

David Ensor had another idea, which he wrapped into his other activities with the Ministry of Culture. It was to develop an audio and video library of copyright-free material -- spots, programs, documentaries -- that could be used by any broadcaster who applied. The RIABs could have the materials too. The agreement was signed with the Ministry before I left, but I didn't have a chance to see it come to fruition.

Broadcast Trucks

I was with David at a market when in a conversation with a vendor, asking what he watched on television, David learned there was no sports broadcasting on television in Afghanistan. He and I realized immediately that this could be a game changer. Think of the wholesome effect it could have among young people, say unemployed young men -- thinking about how our team from Kandahar will be playing against Kabul. This was not "message"-focused Public Diplomacy. It was rather a kind of Public Diplomacy that thought in terms of setting in motion social changes that would make Afghanistan more stable. His was a powerful insight.

What was needed were broadcast trucks. David's contacts in broadcasting helped him find a few experts who advised him on what trucks would need in the way of hardware, and training, to be able to cover news events and sports matches. He then set in motion the long slog of notices, bids, and contracting.

Field Programs

I mentioned before that it proved difficult to expand the reach of Public Diplomacy to the field -- to the Regional Commands and to the PRTs.

I knew this was a substantial need, but when I arrived I found that only a few of the PRTs actually had approved positions for a PD officer. I added a Public Diplomacy position for every PRT to our comprehensive list of requests, and I added the same number of positions to our FSN list so that every deployed-to-the-field American would have an FSN assistant. The personnel officer told me that mine were almost the only requests for FSN slots. Everyone was focused on the thorny problem of getting new positions for Americans approved.

As I mentioned, the requests -- for Americans and for FSNs -- never were sent to the Department until the end of February. Washington then told us to break the list into a series of tranches, meaning that deployment would stretch out over a year, when all were needed now.

There were some collisions between PAS and the Embassy's Interagency Provincial Affairs office, tasked to fill vacancies and drive the civilian surge in the field. In the division of labor that had been worked out before my arrival, it was SCA/PPD that handled recruiting and placement of Public Diplomacy 3161 employees for field posts.

It wasn't easy to recruit people for the American positions in the field, especially when so many positions in Kabul were open too. We didn't receive many applications, and not everyone who applied was suitable.

There was the normal tension between the Embassy and field posts, parallel to the question of who, after 1999, sets priorities for Public Diplomacy people at consulates. Specifically, are the PD people in the field there in order to implement Washington's global initiatives, the Embassy's national programs, or the PRT's initiatives? I leaned in the direction of respecting the autonomy and local knowledge of those at the PRTs, but I'm not sure those at the PRTs saw this. When we did get someone deployed to the field, I understood it must be the SCR's or the PRT commander's prerogative on how to use the person.

At one time, though, the Senior Civilian Representatives at RC-South and RC-East barred the Public Diplomacy people at PRTs from communicating directly with us, apparently in an effort to solidify the chain of command and to assure that the SCR had full control of everything going on in their region. I had to work out an organizational solution with

Scott Kilner, the head of IPA. PD people in the field could directly communicate with us so long as they copied the SCR and IPA.

What we in Kabul thought was needed was a person who approximated an old BPAO, familiar with the Information and Cultural Affairs sides of Public Diplomacy. What the SCRs needed first was someone to handle the press who came their way. Visits by journalists to the Regional Commands were by now frequent, and setting up briefings and visits to development projects, along with answering media inquiries, made for a full-time job. In the south, for instance, David Feldman and Bay Fang spent the lion's share of their time on press officer functions.

As for money, with or without a Public Diplomacy Officer, each PRT had someone, military or civilian, tasked with Strategic Communication, even if the individual was not an FSO or a 3161. We were ready to fund their proposals using Public Diplomacy grant funds, and Angela Gemza (and later John Crosby) did good work in making the field aware of the money and in forming a committee in Kabul that would review grant requests on an express basis.

When Operation Moshtarak began in Helmand province in February, 2010, David Feldman, working out of the British PRT, recommended that we participate by funding a telephone call-in Center to be managed by the Afghan Police. Local people could call the police to get up to date information on any dangers, and perhaps might provide useful information. I seem to recall that the cost would be about \$70,000. I liked the idea, thinking it would get PAS into direct support of ongoing operations, and get all of us used to the need for speed.

The project collapsed when, at the last minute, the Embassy's B&F Office would not allow the cash to be taken to Helmand unless it were in the hands of an approved funds courier. We had an officer to put the money in the hands of two British officials at planeside in Kabul, and an American officer to meet the plane when it landed, but that did not meet the formal requirement for chains of receipts by authorized American personnel. Procedural cautions trumped an operation.

University Journalism Centers

Earlier I mentioned the MIST team's plan to establish journalism training centers at six universities. This is the plan that escalated in cost from \$300,000 to \$10,000,000.

When Fort Bragg would no longer fund the Centers, the burden of contracting also shifted to us, though the MIST team, by now under the command of Captain Joshua Vines, could help. We wanted the equipment and a new building to be a package. The contract process ran through drawing up the specifications for a building and an equipment list for print, radio, and television production, an announcement on contracts.gov, a conference call with those companies that expressed an interest, reviewing the bids, and selecting a contractor. In the end, David Ensor selected a local firm about a month before my departure.

I thought the original plan, whatever the cost, relied a little too much on the provision of facilities and equipment. It looked to “training” the members of the Department on how to use the equipment. What was missing was “education,” to mesh this infusion of equipment with the university's journalism curriculum.

Journalism education was a larger project than providing equipment and training Afghan professors and students to use it, and neither PAS nor the MIST to accomplish using our local resources. One approach might have been to fund an NGO or contractor for a project to review the curriculum with the Afghan faculty and make changes. I thought it would be better, though, to draw on the old USIA playbook and fund long-term university-to-university partnerships between Afghan and American schools. What I liked about university-to-university partnerships was they could continue over several years and build enduring ties between Afghan and American educators and schools. I remembered how much Texas A&M had contributed to Bangladesh over the years.

Again, this is a project that ran past my own tour. We began discussions for the first of the partnerships with the University of Nebraska at Omaha and the Journalism Department at Kabul University. I've heard that agreements have also been signed with San Jose State, the University of Arizona, and Ball State University.

“Eagle Four”

Many people in the Mission, Ambassador Eikenberry included, had the idea of using some of our strategic communication money on a police drama. We joked among ourselves that you could tell the age of the advocate by the suggestion. We didn't hear that anyone wanted an Afghan “Dragnet,” but we heard about an Afghan “NYPD Blue” or an Afghan “Law and Order” or an Afghan “24.” Even an Afghan “Starsky and Hutch.”

We asked some of the networks in Kabul for proposals, and Tolo Television had the best concept. This was our initial foray into sponsoring, so to speak, a television series, and it was one of our early large grants, and it took a few months to shake out an agreement with Tolo.

Seeing how USAID sponsored the highly successful television series, “On the Road,” helped me think through what we wanted from a police drama. “On the Road” featured an engaging young Afghan Charles Kuralt who traveled the rebuilt national circular highway, introducing Afghans to their own country and countrymen. I joined USAID people reviewing the first program in the series.

As our young traveler went down the highway, he was always saying, “and, oh, off to the right there's the new fertilizer plant built by USAID” or “these highway workers are being paid by USAID under their food for work program.” I told the USAID project team that the obvious plugs for USAID would discredit the program with viewers, and besides, giving a plug to USAID programs was the least important aspect of the “On the Road” series.

The important “messages” in the program were all implicit. It introduced Afghans from one region to the rest of their countrymen, let them hear other accents, see the foods in the different regional markets, see farmers growing different crops, hear different local stories and poems. The program was implicitly supporting national unity. It communicated the idea that foreign assistance to rebuild the road was something that made for a better Afghanistan.

It was, moreover, playing a role to build and strengthen the Afghan media. It gave jobs to camera crews and video editors and production assistants. It introduced a new kind of programming. It gave viewers new things to talk about.

As USAID conducted its multiple reviews of every “On the Road” episode, deleting and adding scenes and lines, I knew we could never do the same with “Eagle Four.” We had no people and no time. I knew we should go ahead anyway.

First, I believed that Tolo's management was committed to the nation, to the government if not always with President Karzai, and to winning the war against al Qaeda and the Taliban. Their police drama was not going to undermine our common goals.

Second, I feared that too much involvement in the dramatic process by every Tom, Dick and Harry in PAS and/or the law enforcement clusters in the Mission would ruin the show's appeal. We didn't need scriptwriter wannabes from the Embassy intruding on the series.

Third, however, I wanted to respect the creative prerogatives of Tolo's writers and production people.

Like a novel or a film, at the heart of a television drama series is the creative spark of a person with a gift. I'd learned from Vaclav Havel and Michael Novak and John Paul II to respect and honor artistic gifts and to give creative people leeway. There are unlimited ways to reveal evil and foster the good. One drama might see things through the eyes of the police. Another might frame the drama from the criminal's point of view. A drama might be positive, or it might be dark. Characters could be earnest Clark Kents or darker Harry Callahans or criminals like Michael Corleone. Deciding on an approach is what creative people do. It's their contribution to society. I was confident that Tolo's writers – Afghans and some creative Australians teamed together -- would come up with plots and episodes and themes we would never think of on our own. I was confident they would know how to focus on crime and crime fighting in an Afghan way. I couldn't see Embassy people telling Afghan creative people how to appeal to Afghan emotions.

My instructions, then, were simple. While there could be plenty of action to draw young viewers, solving the crimes had to depend on brains as well as brawn. And the dramas should include episodes that addressed some of the key law enforcement challenges in Afghanistan -- narcotics smuggling, ammonium nitrate, theft of antiquities, corruption,

and so on. This would be enough to justify the use of Public Diplomacy money. Otherwise, we didn't want to meddle.

Dari was the language of the dramas, but we provided additional funds to Tolo to do immediate dubbing into Pashto. This was to assure that viewers in the Pashto-speaking regions could watch the dramas too.

I was mindful of the dissonance between the selfless crime fighting heroes on the “Eagle Four” team and most Afghan police. Most police were illiterate, and they were involved in minor or major corruption. They could be neighborhood bullies. The Police were not the most respected institution in Afghan society. Viewers would see that the police in the TV series were not the police they knew.

I thought, however, we should go ahead anyway. On one hand, ISAF was getting serious about police training, and part of their focus was to set standards of integrity. Second, I thought that the series, while it entertained, might give citizens and new policemen a glimpse of what might be, show implicitly that their institutions needed reform, and help shape opinion for reform.

The series was eventually named “Eagle Four,” featuring a four-person select police team. A woman was one of the members. When it was broadcast, it gained a substantial viewership for its action and suspense. With writing, selecting the cast, filming, and editing, the programs were some months in the making, however, so I never got to attend the gala premiere.

Farhad Darya

In the Public Diplomacy cone, I was known as a grouch on performing arts and sports programs. They had limited payoff. They had limited reach. They absorbed immense amounts of staff time. I was often vexed by the enthusiasm for these programs in Washington and by Ambassadors.

Ambassador Ricciardone had the characteristic attitude, and he knew the Afghan singer Farhad Darya, who lived in the U.S. The Ambassador described him as sort of a peace and love kumbaya singer, Afghan style, just what we needed to inspire young people with messages of peace and harmony. Darya was interested in a concert tour in Afghanistan. Of course there was no chance of commercial viability, so he turned to the Embassy.

If I recall correctly, it was David Ensor who gave the tour the go-ahead. One aspect of the tour that answered some of my objections was that Darya and his people all spoke Dari, so PAS did not have to become the interpreters or go-betweens. He and his staff were willing to themselves handle all the normal hassles about venues, electricity, sound systems, and so on. It would just cost us more money for more people, more hotel rooms, more security guards, and so on.

Historic and cultural heritage

Historic preservation has for many years been a Public Diplomacy program. The anchor has been grants under the Ambassador's Cultural Preservation Fund administered by ECA. PAS in Kabul had been given grants from the Fund each year since the beginning of the war. During my tour, for instance, we received a second grant for the reconstruction of the Citadel of Herat. I visited the Citadel to see the work in progress, and it was impressive.

Our work on such projects as the Citadel dovetailed with the Afghan government's plans in the area, and within its education strategy. They intended to use historic preservation to help build a new Afghan sense of nation.

The availability of additional money for Public Diplomacy also allowed us to consider funding cultural preservation on our own, not dependent upon the annual Ambassador's Fund process. Many ideas were proposed, but PAS needed expertise that Foreign Service generalists did not possess. The arrival of archaeologist Laura Tedesco as a 3161 cultural heritage programs manager allowed us to do so, and from the summer of 2010 she was evaluating projects. She was greeted enthusiastically by our new partners in the Ministry of Culture.

One of the most critical needs in this area was to postpone mining in the Mes Aynak district, which included the buried site of an ancient Buddhist monastery and town. A Chinese firm had won the right to mine there, but Deputy Minister of Culture Omar Sultan successfully deployed an Afghan law to delay the mining until the site was surveyed and the preservation of the priceless site was planned. Laura Tedesco helped the Ministry plan the survey, the excavation and preservation of the site's artifacts, and their eventual movement to a new facility. It would take a few years.

Relations with Ministry of Culture

Radio-Television Afghanistan came under the Ministry of Culture, and David Ensor worked hard on developing a close relationship with the Ministry's leadership. The Minister was Dr. Sayed Makhdoom Raheen, ably assisted by Deputy Minister Omar Sultan. We met with them many times.

The Ministry had been bombed by the Taliban in 2008, and we funded the repair of their building and a new press conference hall. As I mentioned before, we made an agreement for the Ministry to develop a new library of copyright-free broadcast materials. Laura Tedesco picked up on earlier assistance to the National Museum, and she brought the Ministry into her planning for cultural preservation projects.

The Ministry of Culture had diminished in standing over the years, and like other Afghan ministries it lacked management capacity. David was contemplating how to help the Ministry when I left.

TRADCOM

A little while back, when you were talking about men in turbans, I mentioned that we might reach them as members of tribes, and as Muslims. This insight was the heart of the “Traditional Communication” first launched by ISAF, but then funded and continued by us.

For the tribes, the Government had a Ministry of Border and Tribal Affairs. It had over the years become a weak ministry, and the Minister and his people were interested in increasing its influence within government and society. The Ministry was the formal government mechanism for its liaison with the tribes.

It was the ISAF Communications Directorate that first began a program with the Ministry of Border and Tribal Affairs. It was much the brainchild of Army Lieutenant Colonel Maria Metcalf, who deserves far more credit and recognition than she ever received. She funded the Ministry to organize several jirgas between the Ministry and tribal leaders in different provinces. The jirgas gathered local tribal leaders with Ministry people, who spoke to win their allegiance for the government. Lieutenant Colonel Metcalf’s team -- she had some key people from the California National Guard -- kept the U.S. presence modest and unassuming.

ISAF wanted to ramp up the program, but Admiral Smith had run out of money. Lieutenant Colonel Metcalf described the program to us, and we funded the next run of jirgas, and we began planning to take over this part of what the Army called TRADCOM.

Once again, our lack of access to the money Ambassador Holbrooke had promised was vexing, and I thought that Lieutenant Colonel Metcalf wondered why she had to work with such a rinky-dink Embassy PAS. Because of the funds tangles I described earlier, I was funding the jirgas one by one from different small pockets of money, not helpful in planning a long term program.

Similarly, ISAF had begun to work with the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs. Let me mention that various signs and letterheads in English had different names for the Ministry – “Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs,” or “Ministry of Hajj and Islamic Affairs.” But the Afghan name was “Ministry of Hajj and Endowments.”

There are similar ministries in other Islamic countries. The Ministry’s tasks included formal registration of mosques, certification of mosque teachers and payment of their stipends, a network for spreading around approved lessons, management of endowment properties, and so on.

This ministry had also fallen on hard times over the years. In ISAF and in PAS, we saw that cooperation with the Ministry of Hajj and Endowments could strengthen its place and its ties with mosques. It could register more mosques and in time propagate teachings of Islam that abjured terrorism.

We spent a fair amount of time both at the Ministry of Border and Tribal Affairs and the Ministry of Hajj and Endowments. Lieutenant Colonel Metcalf and her successor, Lieutenant Colonel Chad McGougan, were in the lead for ISAF. For PAS, Colonel Sandy Raynor and some members of the S/CRS team logged the most time there. In time, David Ensor played a large role with the two ministries.

With the Ministry of Border and Tribal Affairs, the aim of the meetings, the rapport, and the funding was to help them organize its series of jirgas. Our side and theirs gradually learned the “best practices,” meaning that there were some stumbles along the way.

Working with the Ministry of Hajj and Endowments required more thinking, more strategizing. On one hand, giving the Ministry some support to increase its reach to more mosques -- perhaps only ten percent of Afghanistan's mosques were formally registered with the Ministry -- would be helpful. Part of the support might be monetary, but the Ministry needed modernization and capacity building. We hadn't gotten very far with the capacity building by the time I left, but it had begun.

Another part of this had to be to help broaden the religious perspective of the Ministry and leading Afghan clerics. I hate using these shorthand religious terms, “radical” vs. “moderate,” but we hoped that more Muslims could be exposed to Islamic thinking that steered away from Wahabism, jihadism, extremism, call it what you may, in favor of teachings that discredited violence and supported the modernization of their society.

Take Malaysia as an example. Malaysia is Muslim, but it has a modern education system. Yes, the school day includes lessons on Islam, but the students learn math and science and health and language and social studies for most of the day. Malaysia is a multicultural society.

Very few Afghans knew much about other Islamic countries like Malaysia. They had been isolated in their corner of the world for a long time. The few Afghan clerics who had studied outside the country were those who had received scholarships to study in Saudi Arabia. Intellectual breezes that had affected Islam and society in other parts of the Muslim world had not reached Afghanistan.

We had the idea of bringing Malaysians to Kabul, or sending Afghans to Malaysia or to other places in the Muslim world. This was a kind of “exchanges” or “visitor” diplomacy. In Public Diplomacy we always favored bringing exchangees or visitors to the U.S., but we could also send Afghans to other countries if the visit would help us achieve our goals.

Speaker programs had not much been part of our programming in Kabul, but in this area we could see that speakers would help. We hoped that leading American Muslim thinkers could visit Afghanistan. David Ensor and Nancy Corbett, the new CAO, gave this initiative to an officer who arrived shortly before I left, Chris Istrati. He told me that during his tour he organized programs for four American Muslim speakers, taking them to many cities in Afghanistan. The most successful was Imam Yahya Hendi from

Georgetown University. Chris thought these speakers were mainly useful in overturning stereotypes that American Muslims are discriminated against in the U.S. They also spoke for the dignity and freedom of Muslim women from the kind of discrimination practiced in Afghanistan. Working through a local NGO, PAS supported the visit of ten other Muslim leaders from around the world.

Let me mention one other memory relevant to the religious side of TRADCOM. During our session on Bangladesh, I mentioned that I came to the personal conclusion that if you're doing "dialog with Islam," it's better to have officers who are personally religious, or at least have a basic sympathy for what religion contributes to life and society. You'll remember I said this was an "unactionable" insight on my part, since first PAOs have no role in selecting the officers on their teams -- you get those assigned by the system -- and second it would be improper to prefer an officer for his or her religious views.

I was reminded of my insight, though, when I joined Lieutenant Colonel Metcalf for one of the tribal jirgas in Paktika province. After the jirga, those of us from ISAF and the Embassy were invited to a large dinner by the province governor, Abdul Qayum Katawazi. I was sitting on his left at the table when the U.S. Army lieutenant colonel who was the local battalion commander from the 25th Infantry Division came in. The commander took the seat opposite me, on the Governor's right. A dozen of his officers and NCOs sat down at other tables to join the dinner.

It was Ash Wednesday, so February 10, 2010. A few of the Americans had been to see the Chaplain earlier in the day, and they had the smudge of the ashes on their foreheads. The Governor noticed this and asked about it.

The lieutenant colonel said, "It's some religious thing, but I don't understand anything at all about it." This surprised me more than a little, a rather glaring lapse for an officer, I thought.

Sensing a teaching moment, I explained that it was the opening day of fasting for many Christian denominations, which got the Governor's attention. Looking at all the Americans wolfing down the local food, the Governor said, "they don't seem to be fasting!" "It's after dark!" I said, and he laughed at his own hasty reaction. I briefly explained Lent, saying that Muslims and Christians both fast for part of the year. The governor noted with pride that Muslim fasting was more severe than Christian fasting, but he got the point -- that there were many American soldiers who worshipped the same God as he did.

A Visit to the United Arab Emirates

The Minister of Hajj and Endowments let us know that several Muslim countries had made offers to help them, especially the United Arab Emirates. They could provide Korans, build mosques, and help educate imams.

The UAE invited a delegation to visit them -- they invited two senior officials from the Ministry of Hajj and Endowments. They also invited me and the British brigadier, John Brittain, who was now overseeing the Tradcomm effort for Rear Admiral Smith, his aide Major Katy Badham-Thornhill, Lieutenant Colonel McGougan, and a few others.

We all flew together to the United Arab Emirates and were hosted by their General Authority of Religious Affairs, which had the same functions as the Afghan ministry. We received high level briefings on the management of religion in the UAE. Their Director General was very frank about the danger of mosques and madrassas becoming hotbeds for radicalization, explaining the need for government control of the mosques, seminaries, schools, and madrassas.

Their management system combined licensing examinations for imams, salaries, uniform sermons throughout the country, and a comprehensive calendar for Islamic teachings through the year. Most of a year's calendar of Friday sermons addressed religion and morals, but they also fit in other topics like international cooperation to curb malaria.

The visit gave the delegation an in depth look at the UAE system, and the Afghans were quite taken with the UAE approach. When the Afghans sat down with the Director General, though, he was frank about the problem. The UAE could provide Korans. Specifically, how many did the Afghans need? Exactly how many mosques are in the Afghan government network, and how many would you like to have built? The Afghans had no plan, no priority list. How many students are in mosque schools? The Afghans didn't have a count.

In other words, the Afghan ministry didn't have answers because it didn't have a management frame of mind, and it didn't have planning capacity. They had a big ministry, but their staff was untouched by modern concepts of management and planning. There was a distance between Afghanistan and the UAE that religious solidarity alone could not bridge. After the visit, we began to focus on capacity building at the Ministry so that it would be able to simply take advantage of offers that came from other parts of the Muslim world.

In coming to grips with what might be done in this area, however, I found myself constantly vexed. In ISAF and in PAS, we could think of initiatives that would over time move Afghanistan's religious establishment and its thinkers in a positive direction. As we proposed them, however, there was skepticism, questioning, and indeed naysaying in Washington.

Afghanistan is a society saturated by faith. The Hazaras are Shia while most Afghans are Sunni, but there are no non-Muslim religious minorities. The languages and characteristic forms of speech deeply reflect religious thinking. Education, even government education, is all religious. Radio and television stations have entertainment and drama and news, but every network runs Koranic programs every day. They all run advice programs, explaining how problems in marriage, family life, or daily life can be resolved in an Islamic way.

My own conviction is that you can't communicate in a faith-saturated society without some reference to faith, without entering that realm. Talk economics, talk development, talk governance – yes, these are important dimensions of life. But economic and political appeals rest on a premise that individuals are economic men or political men. Of course when I say “man” here, I'm just using the traditional words from political philosophy, but of course I mean men and women.

As I've said before, these do not capture the full human personality or address all human needs. All societies have a social dimension and a moral dimension, and for most people that means a religious dimension. They have social, moral, and religious aspirations too. And I don't see how you can successfully communicate with a faith-based, faith-saturated society without shaping your communications in a way that references, responds to the religious character of society.

Ambassador Eikenberry understood this. He told us, for instance, that when we received historic preservation money, we must be sure to preserve some mosques too. He wanted to use that one Public Diplomacy tool to show sympathy, respect, and understanding of the Islamic side of Afghan society. We had no problem getting Washington to fund repair or preservation of empty, historic mosques. If, however, a corner of the historic mosque was still used as a place of worship even though it was damaged or needed repair, we heard from Washington about the separation of church and state, and they would not approve the project because that would be assisting worship.

Many students in Afghanistan are in government schools, but many are in local mosque schools, madrassas. The madrasa education was narrow, but madrasa educators would have welcomed materials to teach math and science, and you could see how some support for teaching non-religious subjects in the mosque schools could in the long run have a deradicalizing effect. This was something that would be better addressed by USAID than by PAS, but Public Diplomacy could fill some niches in a comprehensive program. But USAID in Washington had its own jitters about supporting education in mosque schools. One USAID staffer in Kabul was only beginning to think about these schools, and she told us that anything USAID might do in this area was way down the road. As a result, this was something we never got around to.

“Separation of Church and State” in a Faith-Saturated Nation

In area after area, one could think of programs that could hopefully come to bear on how Afghan Muslims thought about their religion, and would reduce the appeal of a jihad-focused Islam. Or programs that might broaden the education of students in the mosque schools so that they could get real jobs when they were older, rather than think of being martyrs because they had no other prospects in life. In Washington, however, the lens used to view these programs was reflexively “separation of church and state.”

This was the same objection that so vexed me when I had encountered it during my tours in Bangladesh and in Nigeria. In the home stretch of my assignment, I confess, I got more and more fixated on this. “Fixated” as in “target fixation.”

Any GS-9 in Washington could put a temporary stop to our planning by playing the “separation of church and state” card. USAID had an attorney on its staff in Kabul, and I raised this with him. I hoped he might help us find a way around unthinking objections. He did a little research and supported the objections, all based on his reading of one or two Supreme Court cases, especially the “Lemon test” in the 1971 case of *Lemon v. Kurtzman*. He apparently considered that the last and definite word. He meant we must be totally hands off with Islam.

It was time for a dissent cable to force the issue in Washington, I thought. I wrote out the draft of a long and impassioned cable. It would be unthinkable to send it out, though, without letting Ambassador Eikenberry and the other ambassadors know I intended to do so. I went up to see Ambassador Ricciardone after I gave him the draft.

He persuaded me not to make it a dissent cable, which would have its own kind of repercussions. Rather he would suggest to Ambassador Eikenberry that he send it to Ambassador Holbrooke, saying in his cover email that my paper reflected his thinking, and the Department needed a new approach.

Looking back, I see that Ambassador Ricciardone's approach meant that no one in the Department was *required* to address the issue. A dissent cable gets a lot of attention and requires a formal reply to the officer. Ambassador Eikenberry's email with my attachment simply fell into email boxes, and no one had to take the time to address the issue on its merits.

My guess is that those who read it in L just shuddered. I was raising fundamental questions, asking for a major rethinking of the Department's accustomed brush-off of religious issues, and challenging all the customary (and to my mind tired) defenses of “separation,” “entanglement,” the Lemon test, and so on -- all the tangles we've spun for ourselves over separation of church and state in the United States. They wanted to apply every one of those principles to Afghanistan. I just found this boneheaded, perverse, inexplicable. Marines die while Washington thinks through whether the court case that denied textbooks to Catholic schools in Pennsylvania nearly four decades ago applied to Afghanistan.

Well, I said my piece. The way you get around these things is to sidestep them. The word processor changes the word “mosque” to “community center,” and it's not dishonest because mosques perform that civic function too. Still, I didn't like doing this, and I would have preferred that the issue be faced head on.

We were discussing some of these issues in PAS, and someone expressed the opinion that we can't work with religious leaders, and they can't be trusted anyway. An FSN, though, mentioned that USAID had sponsored a project for imams so they could learn about

family planning -- that there is no Islamic objection to family planning. "And when the imams passed on this information to us, after that we understood," he said.

There we are. It was OK for family planners to go in and use favored imams for their social engineering, which would lay the ground for advocating "reproductive rights" and abortion later. USAID had no qualms about doing this for their objectives, but whenever I proposed programs in the middle of a war to affect thinking by religious leaders, everybody gave me the business about separation of church and state.

Q: In the end, did you spend all the money that Ambassador Holbrooke provided? Or had it been delayed too long?

BISHOP: I had told SRAP and SCA that I was going to spend all \$72 million or die trying. I had gotten some programs going, and David had some good, new ideas, like the television trucks.

My last day in Afghanistan was September 1, 2010, one month short of the end of the Fiscal Year. I happened to be at SCA/PPD on September 30, and they were celebrating that they had spent all the funds.

I can see we're coming to the end of our time. I left Afghanistan with mixed feelings. I was pleased to have played a role in one of the most important struggles of our generation. I joined my own pride as a Vietnam veteran with a respect for the young Americans in the armed forces of today. I wasn't a critic, I was in the arena.

That's mixed, however, with feelings of inadequacy. I'm not sure that in my second war, the war when I had significant responsibilities, I did much that was in the end decisive. I'm conscious, moreover, of having made some specific mistakes.

I made the mistake about contracts and grants that delayed the Shamshad project. I did not take the chance to attend the Press Office's daily media briefs to the Ambassador, which would have given me more face time there. I didn't demand to be in the Ambassadors' Shura. I was too much "Mr. Nice Guy," accepting organizational decisions in Kabul and Washington that hampered our chance to make a difference, swallowing my frustration in order to be a team player. I could not get enough people into the field. I didn't resolutely fire some people in Kabul who weren't working out. And I did not send out the dissent cable on communicating with Muslim audiences.

There were reasons for each of these choices. My experience with grants was limited, my experience with contracts was zero, and different people gave me different advice. A fight over Public Diplomacy's inclusion in the Ambassadors Shura would have cost time and impaired the collegiality we needed. The organizational problems I was wrestling with probably couldn't be remedied with a Holbrooke or McHale decree, even if they were interested. Firing people didn't solve problems because there were no replacements available. We had few applicants for the positions in the field. I can deploy these reasons, but they may just be rationalizations. In my personal life, I try to avoid always "looking

back” at missed opportunities, but I fear I will never let go of these misgivings about myself in Kabul.

What, then, did I accomplish? I suppose I held together the organization in late 2009 and early 2010 while we waited for David Ensor and the surge personnel to arrive. I did all the damn things that Washington demanded, like the Blue Plan, and the endless personnel requests, and the scutwork at the Afghanistan end needed to get hold of the funds. I pushed away some nonsense, and I got us going on some important initiatives like TRADCOM. I shaped the expansion that would be necessary for coming tasks, and I at least set the stage for the great increase in scale that was required.

When I read Marshall's memoirs of my grandfathers' war in France, I had recognized I was the personality type he felt did not rise to the challenge -- the “man of the conservative type, who laboriously builds up a machine.” In the autumn of 2009, the first challenges were, however, organizational. There was no way to go forward without taking them on.

Whither Afghanistan

Q: Let me ask the final question. You left Afghanistan only a few months ago. What's your impression? Whither Afghanistan?

BISHOP: I would say our part of the war, the Communications and Public Diplomacy war, there has been progress, and we began things that were good. With sustained effort and more people -- we needed people more than we needed money -- two-thirds of what we were given would have been enough -- we could make that part of the war work for us.

When each new officer arrived, I sat her or him down in my office for a talk. Something like this:

“Here’s the score. Every morning you’re going to walk into the office. You’re going to open up your workstation, and there will be emails. There’ll be more op-eds than you can read. Every journalist, every think tanker, every Foreign Policy guru, every international relations professor on the make, everybody showboating Congressman will speak their piece, and almost all of what you read will be variations on a same theme.

“They'll say, 'Well, maybe we could be successful in Afghanistan except for ... fill in the blank. Except for Karzai. Except for his brother. Except for corruption. Except for the tribes. Except for the Pakistanis. Except for civilian casualties. Except for American ignorance. Except for ... on and on and on.'

“All these articles and op-eds have one purpose -- to show that these columnists, these scholars, these eggheads are really smart, smarter than the President, smarter than General Petraeus, smarter than you. Many have been to Afghanistan as 'war tourists,' and

they think they are a better judge of things than those of us who are on the ground. It's all a big intellectual show.

“You’re going to have to read those articles because we have to be aware of them, but they will begin to discourage you.

“Starting now, this minute, make up your mind that we cannot have any doubts.

“We can do this. We are one part of the whole effort. We have many programs that are good. We have some old programs, like exchanges. We have some new programs, like working with tribal and religious leaders, that derive from the communication principles that we know in Public Diplomacy.

“You break it down in parts and we can see our way forward. It's not up to us to do the borders, it's someone else's job to finesse President Karzai, and it's not up to us to do the development. We have to believe that our colleagues -- the ones who have thought about those problems, have professional knowledge and convictions about how to manage electricity and agriculture and law enforcement and money laundering and all that -- they're doing their jobs too.

“And more than anything, the armed forces are in motion. Wars are about using military force first, followed by other supporting parts of a war, to totally change the equation, to create new opportunities. You can never be certain how a war will proceed. You begin by beginning, you take advantage of each new development, you make your own breaks. If everyone plays quickly and smartly, we can do it.

“But, if we doubt we are going to do it, we will lose. Doubt is the beginning of defeat.”

I intended the talk, which I was giving them from the heart, to brace them up.

Fast forward. I was back in Washington. A classmate in the retirement seminar asked me, “what do you really think about Afghanistan, Don?”

So I told them about my talk to each new officer, and I said, “This is what I think.”

“I got it, Don! You were a supervisor. You had to tell that to your people to keep up their morale, get them to work. But you're back now. What do you *really* think?”

And I said, “That’s what I really think.”

Nobody asked me whether the war was a good idea or a bad one, but we’re committed. We have committed all these young men and women to fight. Yes, we work hard at the Embassy and have our share of moans and groans, exasperations. Our Embassy complaints are just nothing compared to what those young Americans go through. They’re putting all they have on the line.

Our job -- the supporting efforts, the governance, the development -- is to achieve the nation's mission and to save their lives.

It's beyond the capacity of any human to orchestrate this as some perfectly planned use of national power. That was the problem with the Afghanistan Communication Plan, the problem with metrics, the problem of an exit plan even before we begin, the problem with second-guessing by war tourists and STAFFDELS. It's not possible to do this. It's a form of hubris to think we can. Let me say that again -- it's hubris to think we can. It is possible, though, to go and duck and weave and tack and compensate, and take some losses, and win some here, and lose some there, but still in the end achieve our goals. It's all we can do.

So, whither Afghanistan? I still think it's possible. But like Lincoln said, it all depends on the progress of our arms. And yes, it is a civ-mil fight. Yes, it's a whole of nation fight.

It's a war. And if there's anything I know about wars, it's that resolve must come from the top.

Wasn't this the most inspiring part of President Obama's inaugural address? Again, "We will not apologize for our way of life, nor will we waver in its defense. And for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken -- *you cannot outlast us*, and *we will defeat you*."

Win the War First

Stu, with your indulgence I'd like to cover two more topics. One is the matter of our objectives in Afghanistan. The other is to think about the source of many of our travails.

Let me back into the topic of objectives. As April of 2010 approached, we received the standard offers from Washington for Earth Day programs. Saving the planet is a holy cause in our time, and all over the world Embassies scheduled programs, regardless of whether there were environmental goals in the Mission Program Plan. What were we in Kabul going to do?

I told the staff we were going to resist every effort to spend time on an Earth Day program. Surely Afghanistan has environmental problems, and surely Afghanistan in the future must reckon with them. But now is not the time. Saving the earth is a distraction for now. Once more my staff heard one of my mantras: "The best policy to save the environment in Afghanistan is ... win the war first."

What is the best animal rights policy for Afghanistan? Win the war first. The best education policy? Win the war first. Again, what did Lincoln say? "All else chiefly depends" on "the progress of our arms." The environment, animal rights, care for the disabled and poor, breast cancer awareness -- these are part of the "all else."

Here's the point. The availability of immense amounts of money to the Embassy meant that initiatives in every area could be entertained. Tom Niblock told me that only a few years earlier the talk at the Embassy was that bringing Afghanistan up to the level of Bangladesh -- a government with just enough control of a whole nation -- would be enough. By the time I arrived, expectations had escalated. Expectations of what we could do. Expectations of what the Afghans could accomplish. Expectations of what Afghanistan could be.

That led to a great profusion of ambitions. Sometimes individuals at the Embassy had personal commitments that prompted them to urge programs to address this or that problem. NGOs had their own visions and people to advocate them in Washington and Kabul. More often, agencies in Washington -- and visiting department and agency principals and the special envoys -- wanted to demonstrate their commitment to the war by having the Embassy develop a program in their field.

All this led, in my view, to an indiscipline in our approach to the war. All the programs and initiatives did some good, I'm sure, but many of them were tangential, or premature. "Nice to have" programs absorbed management time, crowding out higher priorities. We were spreading ourselves too thin, attempting too much.

Remember I said that war has its own dynamics, its own laws, its own principles? Even when I was an ROTC cadet I knew that the first principle of war is "objective." Decide what you want to achieve. Another is "mass." Bring everything you can to bear on that objective. A balancing principle is "economy of force," not to waste effort on sideline campaigns. That was the management principle that premised the admonitions I heard in USIA training -- an important role of a PAO is to be able to say "no." Don't waste time on small stuff. I fear we did so. By "we," I meant the Mission, the civilian side of the war effort. By "we," I include Public Diplomacy.

I thought, for instance, that the considerable Mission effort in 2010 to redirect resources to the development of Kabul city represented a diversion. Kabul like so many large cities remained vulnerable to sporadic attacks, attacks repulsed by the Police and the Army, but the city was mostly secure. For most Afghans in Kabul, on most days, in most places, things were "Afghan normal." Most of the people accepted the government. Kabul's economy was growing. Spending time and money on Kabul was a distraction when the more urgent need was to extend governance and development and communication into the Pashto-speaking countryside. But hey, nobody asked me, and we played our part in the effort. This was a time when I followed George Marshall's advice to be most committed and enthusiastic even if I had some personal misgivings.

This, then, was the travail. I feared that we -- those of us in Afghanistan -- were not in charge of our own priorities based on firsthand knowledge. Rather our priorities were being set by political and social priorities in the U.S., being exported for us to implement.

In Afghanistan we were among brave young American men and women. They came from the four corners of our nation, from fine suburbs and wretched city neighborhoods and

farms on unforgiving land. Talk to infantrymen and you heard accents from cricks and hollers, or mean urban streets. Our soldiers and Marines patrolled in strange landscapes from the moon dust of Helmand province to sharp cold mountains, facing a ruthless enemy animated too often by a twisted version of a great faith.

We Foreign Service Officers tended to come from the advantaged neighborhoods of America, but in our hearts was the same love of country and an earnestness that will make me forever proud. In my life I lived in both worlds, the armed forces and the Foreign Service, and I love them both.

But to some in Washington, comfortable and free, privileged to indulge in the latest intellectual fads of change, in no danger of being maimed by an IED, looking to score points in the latest political combat, we in Afghanistan were marionettes, to dance to the tune of their fashionable causes.

The constant messages from Washington, the nagging about why hadn't we launched this or that program, the insistent demand for us to report programs and progress that they could claim credit for, the second-guessing, the endless reviews of grants and contracts, the lawyering, the war tourists using up our time, the legislative branch hoops -- all these ropes pinning us down like Gulliver -- had a common underpinning.

Washington wanted to run a war. The capital was, apparently, full of wannabes -- not only wannabe lawgivers but also wannabe counterinsurgents, wannabe geniuses longing to be sprinkled by the Gods with the dust of warriors. Warriors whose genius allowed them to exempt the prerequisites like Parris Island. Their actions and their demands and their bureaucratic inertia shouted that they didn't trust those of us who were there. But here's my question. If they so wanted to do so, why weren't they there, in Kabul or at a PRT?

“Win the war first.”

Q: When did you finish up in Kabul?

BISHOP: I departed on September 1, 2010. My replacement, Matt Lussenhop, a very good man, had already arrived. Ambassador Eikenberry hosted a ceremony anticipating my retirement in the Embassy atrium. That's the honor I most appreciated receiving.

I turned 65 the next month, and I was required by the old law to retire on October 31. I spent the last month in the transition seminar at FSI.

Some months later, a Distinguished Honor Award plaque arrived, in the mail.

Q: We're coming to the end of our time.

BISHOP: There's so much more to say!

End of interview