

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

GARY B. CROCKER

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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Editor's Note: The interview of Mr. Crocker's time in INR is a tour d'horizon of a profusion of important world-wide intelligence issues, wars, and countries. He praises the INR analysts who worked with him and outlines State-CIA-DIA disagreements. He gives his views on different administrations, respective secretaries of state, and ranking Foreign Service Officers, such as Richard Holbrooke. He describes his intelligence briefings of American leaders and foreign heads of state. Unfortunately, the discussion weaves back and forth in time and subject. For example, a discussion of chemical weapons, their use, their suppliers, even "Yellow Rain" can be found throughout. The text is scatter shot, but there are interesting pearls. Cuba, the Soviet Union, China, the Middle East (Iraq), past and present, armies, navies, and air forces appear repeatedly. Cultural comparisons between the Soviet and Americans abound. Mr. Crocker's time in INR covered every issue, every country. It is all here, in multiple places. The interview ends with a discussion between ADST interns and Mr. Crocker.

INTERVIEW

Q: Today is the 27th of March, 2012, with Gary B. Crocker and this is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy.

And Gary, let's start at the beginning: when and where were you born?

CROCKER: I was born in Spokane, Washington, and lived there and in nearby Kellogg, Idaho, until third grade.

Q: When were you born?

CROCKER: 1940.

Q: Nineteen-forty. Let's talk about the Crockers- on your father's side first; what's the background there?

CROCKER: My father's grandfather came from Minnesota to Seattle in a covered wagon after he fought in the Civil War. Seattle was founded in 1850, so he was there as a pioneer. His son was born in Seattle as was my dad. Dad's mother came in a covered wagon as a young girl and played an interesting role in the development of Seattle.

Q: What were the Crockers in Minnesota? Farmers?

CROCKER: Great Grandfather Crocker was a farmer and Indian agent in Minnesota.

Q: Lumber by any chance?

CROCKER: Grandmother Crocker's father came out and logged off the University of

Washington and he was in lumber and logging in Minnesota, He was a Rogers. And so Grandma came out and they link with the Dennys, which are the people who founded Seattle from the sea. So we have a very long history in that town.

My father was one of six children. He grew up in Seattle and went to the University of Washington, where I did, and went in the Navy during the war. So when I say I was born in 1940 my first five years were all about war.

Q: Okay, let's say when you got into Seattle what was your father up to?

CROCKER: My father was influenced by his grandfather Rueben Crocker because his father left the family and moved to Spokane. Reuben was the oldest Civil War veteran in Seattle and I still have his flag and history of the Crockers back to the Revolutionary War.

Q: What did he do in the Civil War?

CROCKER: He was with an artillery unit, the Minnesota Irregulars, and he was down there fighting in Atlanta where my wife is from. So he did that and he finally moves out to Seattle, was kind of a well known citizen of Seattle and a real character and I've spent a lot of time studying him,

Q: Well let's talk a little about this to give a flavor for his life in Seattle?

CROCKER: Now when he moved to Seattle he did a number of things. He was involved in community politics. Also, let's see, he was a farmer and they homesteaded. My grandmother and my great-grandpa got parcels of land from the government. But he also did some construction and other kinds of work too because I know of some of his trips up to Canada and some of the things that he did. My grandmother, the one that came out in a covered wagon, eventually was the secretary to the mayor, which was a woman, which was extremely unusual in this country.

Q: Oh boy.

CROCKER: That the mayor was a woman, especially if you knew anything about the history of Seattle. The whole history of Seattle's in a book called "Sons of Prophet," about the Dennys and the Eslers and all these people who formed it and it's mainly all about prostitution houses and all kinds of wild things and money going to Washington to bribe to get the railroad to go to Seattle. You know, all kinds. So my family goes back into that history of development of the town.

My dad's father, Reuben's son, he came out, made a lot of money and was the state land assessor for Washington State, and he was a great one to talk to. I learned a lot from my grandparents.

Q: Now your father, was he born in Seattle?

CROCKER: Born in Seattle.

Q: What did he do?

CROCKER: Well he moved to Spokane where his father lived and he and his brother mined gold in northern Idaho. Later my dad built log lodges and cabins on my grandfather's property on Lake Coeur d'Alene in Idaho, my favorite place as a child and my family has seen the remaining cabin in recent years. My father was an interesting guy, born out of his time, basically, but mainly was a salesman, cars, appliances, furniture, that sort of thing, looking for different jobs. But he went into the Navy for World War II. I don't know if this will interest you, but when my daughter had her national board meeting in Spokane (she runs a foundation to promote rural telecommunications), I got to go back to the Davenport Hotel, which is one of these beautiful, old wealthy hotels. When I walked in I had this déjà vu because in 1945, the end of the war, I was in that hotel. My dad was in his sailor uniform with all his sailor buddies and my grandpa was there and they all had these monstrous cigars and there was confetti in the streets and parades. This was an important, early childhood impression I remember vividly, even at five.

Q: It just came right back.

CROCKER: Yes, I could smell the leather-chairs and the cigar smoke. So it was a lot of fun to go back.

After the war, we moved to Kellogg, Idaho, then to the Tri- Cities in Washington, and finally to Seattle. Our first house was near where Seattle was founded. Dad was a salesman, mostly furniture and appliances, and I worked in the stores with him until after college.

Q: Let's talk a bit about Spokane. What sort of a role did Spokane play when you were a kid? I mean, in Washington.

CROCKER: Well, it was a great town. It's kind of a provincial town, you know. It was wheat farmers and all and it's a little more developed now but it was a great place to live. My Uncle Tony was there, my Aunt Grace and all these relatives from my mother's side. My mother was born in Illinois, but grew up in Spokane where we had these great family gatherings in the park. That was really great fun; it was nice. And another thing, whether it gets you or not but we used to ride on a Ferris wheel. When I went back, this was just last year when I went to Spokane and I had my two year old grandson. We went down to the park where the World Fair site was. They had renovated the Ferris wheel and there was my horse, my black horse, and I got to sit on the horse with my grandson.

Q: Well now, I always think of Washington, the state of Washington, as sort of being divided between Seattle, a coastal city and a sort of a broader outlook and Spokane, being the inland, old fashion city. One was sort of a west coast place, the other was sort of a Midwestern place.

CROCKER: Two different worlds. It's like Midwest with plateaus and rock outcroppings and pine trees but they're only like 15- 20 minutes from the Rocky Mountains. And Kellogg, Idaho, where I lived is about 45 minutes east, is a little old mining town up in the mountains.

Q: What about, let's take your mother's side. Where do they come from and what do you know about them?

CROCKER: Spokane.

Q: Before that?

CROCKER: Illinois, Clark Clifford was her cousin. Remember, Secretary of Defense. Her family were Scottish, McAdams clan.

Her mother and father were not wealthy, but sophisticated and beautifully dressed. Her two brothers served in the Army in World War II. A very good American family. My dad's is quite different in contrast. You know, his brother was a mining expert, a brilliant man. He had four sisters; they're all kind of very boisterous and brilliant, well educated, but I think very different from my mom's family.

Q: What about on your father's side then your mother's side, education?

CROCKER: Okay. My mother didn't go to college. It turns out in the end she was very, very smart and very bright. I mean, she remembered all her Latin. She ended up working in a hospital and we always said we realized a little too late in life how smart she was.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: But she never got to college, while her brothers did.

Q: Well this was very much the pattern.

CROCKER: Yes. And her brother became the office manager at Weyerhaeuser timber company. The other brother moved to New York after the war. Mom never drove a car, just like her mom. Both were always involved in the Methodist church. I had three brothers. Our life was always fun. I mean, we didn't have a lot of money most of the time but we had great fun, adventures, a lot of adventures.

Q: What did your father do during World War II?

CROCKER: He was in the Navy. He was a seaman first class. Mainly worked on airplanes. He went all the way out to Florida, which he hated, and then got shipped all the way back to Spokane and worked, I don't know, a half hour or so from our house but he couldn't come home all the time. But he ended up right there and was basically taking

airplanes and putting them back together and shipping them back overseas. At that time he had three children and didn't have to volunteer, but he did so anyway.

Q: Had he gone to the University of Washington?

CROCKER: Right. And he was on the crew, actually, the famous Olympic crew that went to Munich in '36, but he had to drop out of college and help his family. He was an inventor. He ends up later designing the K2 ski and later the Head ski and the Head racket. He convinced Head to make a fiberglass ski, but ended up in a five year lawsuit with K2. He finally quit and went back to Seattle, which he loved. He did a lot of interesting things. He was a great father, Scout master forever. Our family was all about Scouting. Two of my brothers became professional scouters, and I worked in scout camps for many years.

Q: How big was your family?

CROCKER: I had three brothers.

Q: And where did you rank in that?

CROCKER: I was the oldest.

Q: So you grew up in Spokane basically?

CROCKER: No, not really. We lived in Kellogg, Idaho, for several years. Dad sold Chrysler/Plymouths. Then we went to Kennewick, Washington, where Dad sold insurance. They had a deal where you got housing as a veteran so we had a house built in Kennewick and he took over selling insurance to the big atomic plant at Hanford.

Q: Well what was Kennewick like?

CROCKER: It's down below Spokane and it's like desert, you know, sagebrush and dry and not the greatest place in the world. But, we had a lot of fun there, but it was very dry and hot and dusty and 103 degree temperatures. But we started Scouts there and Little League baseball. My dad always pined for Seattle. That was where he felt comfortable and so off we went to Seattle.

Q: How old were you when you went to Seattle?

CROCKER: The sixth grade.

Q: Well let's talk about Kennewick and even Kellogg before. What was it like as a kid? What are your memories of growing up, the early years?

CROCKER: Kellogg was a great place for hiking, hunting and fishing. We lived in this small house in Moon Gulch, but you had a trout stream there, hiking, and everything kids

love. For a kid it was great and Dad would bring home deer, elk, or a big trout. We were a short distance from Coeur d'Alene. About 15 minutes east of Spokane is an incredible resort called Coeur d'Alene. It's one of the greatest resorts in the world. We've been there quite a few times. On this lake my granddad had a huge log lodge that my dad built. It was beautifully decorated. And then he built cabins. I went back about seven or eight years ago with my daughter, my wife and my mother-in-law. I get a boat and I'm looking for the lodge. One looks right, so I drive up and I go up to the door and the lady says well, you're sort of right because your dad and Uncle Louie built this one in the thirties. She sends me down two more bays. And so I drive into the bay and I see a little house there and an old guy. I walk up and there's this old Norwegian sitting there reading a book. I said I'm looking for Louie Anderson. Now, I haven't seen Louie Anderson since I was seven or eight years old, because we used to go and stay in this lodge and all the Norwegians lived there, the Andersons. So he says sit down. And I said well, you know, I'm Gary Crocker. And he says, "Well of course you're Gary Crocker; you look just like your granddad. I wondered when in the hell you were going to get around to visiting me."

We did not have time to find my dad's cabin. Several years ago now, I took my family and my brother Kirby and his wife to the bay, but Louie has died and the niece is living in his house. His sister. I mean, you're talking 100 years old, sister, and she's still walking around in her plaid shirt and tells us the whole story. The lodge burned, but this guy had saved the fireplace on the inside. He took us to dad's cabin. When I walked up I knew it was my dad's cabin. I helped him build with logs. I used what he taught me to build structures and totem poles at a Scout camp I worked at for many years. I'm telling you this because it's where I came from and what I learned from my dad I used all my life. Because he grew up in the Depression, he could take a car apart. He took my old '49 Chevy apart and put it all back together again.

So, life was this great adventure. We didn't have money, but we lived in luxury in this huge place my grandpa had. So that was a very rich time and with memories of sleeping on the big bear skin rug my dad shot. The only thing we haven't done yet is go see the goldmine, which is hard to get to, but that's one thing I would like to do.

Q: Were you much of a reader as a kid?

CROCKER: Yes, always have been.

Q: Do you recall any of the sort of the early books you read that made an impression on you?

CROCKER: Well of course I read all of those Zane Gray and Hardy Boys books. Anything about the west. I was an avid reader of World War II for obvious reasons. There was very little I didn't know by the time I was in sixth grade about Nazis and the Holocaust and fighting in the Pacific. I had talked with people who had been there. I read everything about MacArthur; he was my big hero (I had a big statue of MacArthur). All of those generals and admirals; I knew who they all were. The war was important in my life. Over the years, especially after they built the Holocaust Museum, I was surprised

how many of my friends were not fully aware of the Holocaust nor many aspects of World War II.

Q: I know.

CROCKER: I say this to you because in my early years I read about the war and talked to participants. I wanted to know about this war my dad was in. A discussion on a TV program claimed that events in your early formative years shape your character. Those of us born during the war are very optimistic and basically feel like we can do anything, this country can do anything because we went out there and won a war in two years. I am that way. Nothing daunts me. And somebody says well that's impossible, you know, you can't possibly go over and meet with the Libyans and I said why not? Let's do it. I always had that attitude. It was very important in my approach to foreign policy issues.

Q: Yes. Well, I think that really drives much of what we're doing.

CROCKER: Yes.

Q: Did local history, like Whitman and the pioneers of that area, grab you at all?

CROCKER: Oh sure, because Kennewick-Pasco-Richland was the Tri Cities and that's right down where the Snake and the Columbia come together, near Whitman's mission. In scouting we camped near Chief Joseph's village in eastern Oregon and followed the trail of Lewis and Clark,

Q: Oh yes.

CROCKER: Our family's history intertwined with the founders of Seattle, especially the Dennys. Brewster Denny was a dean at the University of Washington and a constant source of information and guidance. Granddad Crocker told me about real world politics, corruption, and the real history not taught in schools. Chief Seattle was an interesting leader and his writings were very poetic. Dad named his furniture store after him.

Q: Was your family affected by the labor movements at the time?

CROCKER: Yes, that's an interesting question. My dad was a Republican. He thought Roosevelt was horrible. Hoover was the last great president. I heard this my whole life and he hated the labor unions. And we had a lot of labor problems in Washington State. We had a guy named Dave Beck, who was a huge crook out there.

My aunt had a florist shop in West Seattle and two of my aunts helped her. My Father and I helped at Christmas and Easter delivering flowers. Well, the union came and smashed all her windows because she refused to join the union. That made an impression on me.

After college at the World's Fair I learned through my grandfather and a few other people that Dave Beck bought up all the concessions and parking lots at the World's Fair while

he was in jail. The governor was shady too according to my grandfather. My high school class went to his office and I remember impressions of the Italian mafia.

Q: Well when you went to elementary school what subjects did you particularly like?

CROCKER: I consume information. It'd be hard to say I didn't like something, but history was number one. I mean, I just ate up history. I didn't jump all over math. I did my math and learned math but once I didn't have to take anymore I never took another class. I loved science and still do. I still read a lot of science and in the State Department I was involved with a lot of scientists. I've been in labs all over the world. I wish I had taken more interest in English. It's not until later that I realize how important writing is to my career.

Just as a quick aside, I lectured thousands of high school students a summer in a thing called "Lead America" and I've been doing this for thirty years. I've given this same pitch about the Foreign Service, emphasizing that if you want to be successful, English is extremely important. I also emphasize language fluency and history. I had a crash course in English in order to really survive the State Department where people can write and write well and they'll slaughter your text when you turn it in.

Q: When did you move out of the hinterlands and to Seattle?

CROCKER: That was sixth grade. We moved and of course all my aunts and uncles and relatives were there so we were back in with that family and had a lot to do with them. We lived in West Seattle, which is where my grandmother Crocker was.

Q: On a lake?

CROCKER: No, not on the lake. That's where my great-grandfather Crocker lived, on Green Lake, which is right in the middle of Seattle. We lived in West Seattle where I could go down a trail and down the hill and I was at the Fauntleroy Ferry Dock. So from sixth grade on, you know, I just sucked up this life; At first I was in a Boy Scout troop by myself and loved hiking, especially a trip across the Olympic Mountains when I was eleven. I fished for salmon and trout. I used to just go by myself, say in sixth, seventh grade, on the ferry with my fishing pole. Down the hill was a beach on Hood's Canal. In 1951 I was on the beach at Alki Point to meet General Douglas MacArthur, my hero at that time. He dedicated a small statue of liberty. Got to shake his hand. I also joined the Congregational Church on my own where I got my Boy Scout God and Country badge. Life changed when my father started a scout troop and our whole family became involved in scouting. Our troop was the talk of the Seattle council. At my Eagle Scout ceremony my three brothers and I were the color guard—Billy was the Cub Scout, Kirby and Denny were scouts and I was an explorer scout. From 1956 until 1962 I worked in the summers at a Boy Scout camp in the Cascade Mountains. My family was one of the first to see this large wilderness area donated for a camp. We built it from scratch and I still visit there to see the totem poles we carved and the lodges we built. My brother Kirby was the camp director there; he and my brother Denny were professional scouters.

Q: As a kid and all were you aware of the Boeing factory and all that?

CROCKER: Hard to live there without knowing Boeing.

Q: I was going to say-

CROCKER: Yes, two of my brothers worked there, actually, and Billy retired from there. My junior year at West Seattle High School, where my dad went, we moved to Auburn, Washington, where we lived until I went in the Army in 1963.

Q: So you were in high school there in Auburn?

CROCKER: Yes, so I had one year in West Seattle, two years in Auburn and I was student body president there.

Q: Well, let's talk about high school. What was it like?

CROCKER: Very small, like 600. It's a small town, old railroad town. The Pacific Northwest roundhouse is in Auburn. Seattle beat out Tacoma and Portland as the rail junction. So, it's a railroad town, a somewhat provincial little town in some ways but it's the car capital of the Northwest; every car dealer that you can imagine. Auburn had an incredible school system and still does. I went back for the one hundred anniversary of the school. As president I got to know many of the merchants and continued to visit them when I was in town to see my mother and brothers.

Q: What about the outside world? By the time you were in high school did that intrude or, I mean, were you thinking beyond the state of Washington.?

CROCKER: Probably right from the beginning, I would say. As soon as I hit college it was international affairs. I just took every course I could get. I speak to these students from all over the United States, and do it every year; I've been doing it for about 20 years. We bring them in here in the summer. And then I've been all over the country speaking. Here's my reasoning. If you live in a port city on the east or west coast, you will meet more people from other countries, and are more likely to witness overseas commerce. When I talk to students from Iowa and I get questions from them about international affairs, somewhat naïve lots of the time, it becomes apparent they do not have the exposure to the world as others. I've been to high schools and colleges around the country speaking under Madeleine Albright's program. I would compare, for example, my high school in West Seattle which had a mixture of white, black and Asian and a school in the mid-west that was totally white. This is not a perfect observation because there are diverse schools all over the country, especially in large cities. My children attended schools in Virginia with students from all over the world, many of them diplomat's children.

Q: How about the Far East? How much- how important was that as an influence in one's

outlook from your area?

CROCKER: There is a strong Asian influence in the Seattle area -- a thriving Chinatown and Japanese population, particularly farmers. In Auburn I knew Japanese who had been in camps during the war. In my first year in college I took Dr. George Taylor's Far East class. He was Truman's advisor on Japan; he's the one that advised him: don't attack the emperor; you're going to need him. We also had Michaels, Treadgold, and Hinton who I later ran into at George Washington University. Are you familiar with the Far East academic leaders?

Q: Not too well.

CROCKER: Many of the outstanding professors had been missionaries in China and then became professors. The professors I named influenced my views of Asia. My first assignment in the Army was Japan and I traveled all over Asia in that assignment.

Q: Well, did the Cold War intrude much while you were in, say, high school I believe it was?

CROCKER: Oh yes. Even in the sixth grade I was fascinated by Stalin. My class sent him a letter asking him to behave. Like many others of the time I was subjected to the nuclear air raid drills. When my children were in pre-school some John Bircher teacher had them doing air raid drills. I was furious. At the time I was heavily involved in warning intelligence and told the teacher I would alert her if there was a nuclear threat. The Soviet Union invaded Hungary when I was in High School. When I left for college in 1958 the cold war was in full swing.

I read everything I could on Stalin and the number and type of people he killed. That issue was very controversial, and in the early days hardliners like Robert Service suffered because there was disbelief about the extent of Stalin's purges. Do you remember Service?

Q: Oh yes.

CROCKER: Well I met his son at the State Department. I was very interested in what happens to people who take a position opposite the policy position. You know who Lou Sarris was?

Q: Who?

CROCKER: Lou Sarris.

Q: Oh yes.

CROCKER: He was a famous analyst, mentioned in Kennedy's book. He worked in the new office we formed at State and we became very good friends for many years. Lou was

the head of the SE Asia desk in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) and wrote intelligence assessments against getting involved militarily in Vietnam. Secretary McNamara told the Secretary of State to get rid of him and he did. His career never really recovered.

Q: Did you get a chance to travel around much? I assume you got out to Canada and all.

CROCKER: I only traveled in the Northwest until I went to Chicago for a fraternity conference and to California for football games and Model United Nations.

Q: What fraternity was that?

CROCKER: Sig Ep; Sigma Phi Epsilon. My first overseas trip was to Japan in the Army. I went to the Monterey Language School and then I went over to Japan.

Q: What did you take there?

CROCKER: Russian.

Q: Monterey. I'm also a graduate.

CROCKER: Well thousands of us were trained in Russian.

Q: Yes. It was an R-1223.

CROCKER: Yes. Well, what I remember is that old White Russian, that old Petrov. We were never sure he would live to the end of the class.

Q: I think I remember Petrov too.

CROCKER: He was a really old guy.

Q: Yes. He wasn't that old when I went. I went there in 1950.

CROCKER: Ah. See, I would have been there in 1963. And of course what happened to me is they sent me to Japan right away. And I was a spook in those days. I was a clandestine Army type. So I went to Japan undercover and immediately learned Japanese and I just suppressed the Russian and became totally immersed in Japanese.

Q: Well let's first talk about college. What was your major?

CROCKER: I started as a pre-major, which is you can do anything you want; see if you can find yourself, basically. I had no idea what I wanted to pursue, but most certainly not the military. No one in my family had ever been an officer. So, I get in the line for Army ROTC because I like hiking and camping and MacArthur and Patton. Ironically, I did the full four years, got a commission and spent nine years in the Army. But you know, when I

first arrived I was a pre-major and so I took a lot of science and other subjects that were new to me, but I got the political science bug right away which fit with my early entrance into campus politics. I lost freshman class president by six votes but won Junior class president the next year. I lost student body president, but was head of the senior men's academic and athletic honorary. My freshman year I took UN studies from Dr. Linden Mander, who had been the UN coordinator for Palestinian affairs. I took every course he gave. I also started Soviet affairs and international communism from Dr. Reshetar and Middle East affairs from Dr. Spector. My international affairs career had started. Also, all four years of college I was involved in Model United Nations which was a big deal out there. I was on the Security Council when we met at the University of California, representing the UK at San Diego and the Soviet Union at Washington. It is interesting that in my career I have periodically dealt with the Kashmir dispute, which I researched when I represented Pakistan. I was able to talk to Pakistanis, Kashmiris and Indians on campus and at consulates.

Q: Well, at the University of Washington, was there sort of a strong Marxist movement? Because you know, many of the universities had them at the time.

CROCKER: More at other Schools I visited than at Washington. At California they're all wearing shorts and sandals and got Harvard bags and long hair and beads, with a heavy dose of Beatnik and Marxist influence. In college I read Marx, Lenin, Hegel. I read it all under Dr. Reshetar, our Soviet and international communist professor. I took all his courses. I did all my graduate work at GW (George Washington University) in communist studies, post-Stalin studies, and you know, that's when I read Adam Ulum and Brzezinski and other books about the Soviet Union and communism and the communist international. What started in college finished in graduate school while I was focused on the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact at the Defense Intelligence Agency. Many years later I was on a speaking tour in the Pacific Northwest and was sent to Evergreen College in Olympia, Washington. There were large posters of Marx and other very left wing propaganda and the large class challenged me on everything I said. So I asked them who the greatest socialist of this century was and when they got the answers wrong I educated them about Franklin Roosevelt and gave them a lecture on wrongly calling communist dictatorships socialism.

Q: I know, on domestic politics one of the sort of dividing lines or important things for people from your generation was the Kennedy/Nixon election of 1960.

CROCKER: Right.

Q: Did you get involved in that?

CROCKER: I was actually running for student body president right at that time and I'd already been elected to several offices in student government. And I was running against this guy who was very Republican, even supported by the party, but I wasn't a Democrat. I actually didn't like Kennedy at all because of the family history during the war years. We debated at the same time as the national election when there was considerable

differences expressed on campus.,

Q: Oh yes.

CROCKER: Have you read "Citizens of London?"

Q: Yes, I've read "Citizens of London." Everybody was sleeping with everybody else in Churchill's cabinet.

CROCKER: Yes. It's interesting because later in life I briefed Averell Harriman several times at his Georgetown home. Averell Harriman was one of the five major American characters in London and my discussions with him were very educational.

Q: We're talking about the Kennedy/Nixon thing.

CROCKER: Yes. So during the debate my opponent and I had two very different philosophies about student government. Mine was that student government was not real government, we're not running the university, but it was an opportunity to express student views and solve problems in concert with the faculty and administration. My opponent was a political activist who believed in running student government and changing the university, including payoffs for support. I learned the realities of campaigning in student government and also in the classroom of Dr. Hugh Bone, a realist who spent time in Washington DC and is still today considered as one of the great political scientists in the country. Dr. Bone was not impressed with Kennedy's record and his mafia friends.

Q: Frank Sinatra?

CROCKER: Not exactly, although Sinatra had mafia friends, more like mafia personalities he partied with and his father's connections. My dad didn't like the Kennedys.

Q: Well Robert Kennedy was a nasty bill of goods is my impression.

CROCKER: Yes.

Q: And his father, Joseph.

CROCKER: He was awful. I was supporting Nixon, but I wasn't a member of the Young Republicans or anything political on campus. If anything, our students were anti-communist. However, I defended the right of American communist leader Gus Hall to speak on campus, believing he was so outrageous the students would not be impressed. The president of the university believed he did not have the right to speak because he was an indicted criminal.

Q: What about civil rights in that period?

CROCKER: Yes. Big impression. Martin Luther King came to campus and I was trying to find out about the problem in the South and what the truth was about the mistreatment of black people. Well Martin Luther King spoke and then a group of us, some student leaders, got to sit with him for two hours. Can you believe that, with him? And ask him all these questions. And he was just mesmerizing. I was just taken with the man and what he had to say. We were brought up in a home where you respect everybody. My dad would have been aghast if we'd ever said anything bad about black people. King made a big impression and I started trying to learn about the civil rights movement. Now, I end up marrying a woman from Atlanta whose father had a lot to do with the civil rights movement and journalist Ralph McGill was her Sunday School teacher. My wife worked for Congressman Charlie Weltner, whose father Phil Weltner was a famous civil rights leader in Atlanta long before the movement was popular. My first experience in the South was at Fort Benning, Georgia, where I went downtown to Columbus with my new black friend and got the shock of my life. It was worse than I thought. The lesson: see it for yourself, useful lesson for the rest of my life.

Q: Well I take that at the University of Washington civil rights probably wasn't as big a movement.

CROCKER: It was not a movement. My family gets tired of me comparing the west with the south. My university was integrated from the beginning (although the treatment of Indians wasn't great, it was better in Seattle than most of the country) My wife and son's school, University of North Carolina and my daughter's school the University of Virginia used to be all men and did not accept blacks until it was discovered they were great athletes.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: I said women started when the University of Washington was first built a short time after Seattle was founded in 1850. It's interesting that I did not become prejudiced about black people after living in terrible conditions in a Navy housing project after the war that was ninety percent black, with lots of terrible events that could have affected my view of black people. There were also some bad experiences in junior high school. Seattle never had a real civil rights movement because there was no public segregation.

Q: No.

CROCKER: But there were very white communities and Seattle had some old, white gated communities.

Q: How about in college.

CROCKER: I think anti-Semitism was worse, especially in white gated communities. I met few Jewish people until I went to college. I ran for junior class president against a

guy from the Jewish fraternity and we became really good friends. And a guy in my fraternity asked me to play golf at the Montlake gated community. I brought my Jewish friend. The pro comes out to the practice putting green and tells us we have to leave because no Jews are allowed. I looked at him and said, “did you not hear about the war thing.” I realized I had a lot to learn.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: Because that’s the first time I’m hit with the anti-Semitic business.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: My wife’s father was Jewish and I’d been exposed to anti-Semitism in Atlanta.

Q: We’ll talk about that-

CROCKER: But you know it’s interesting that in college, with all my reading, it wasn’t until that point I realized there was this anti-Semitism in the country. When a fraternity put swastikas out on the lawn and criticized our fraternity for pledging a Jewish boy, I went to the fraternity council and said we could not tolerate this on campus.

Q: Well on this thing, I mean what sort of anti-Semitism was there within the university? You mentioned some of the demonstrations.

CROCKER: No, not demonstrations. I was naïve. I didn’t know fraternities were Christian until I went through the ceremony and heard the phrase “free white and Christian”. And I said to myself do I leave this fraternity or do I fight? And I decided to fight and I did; that’s why I went to the national convention in Chicago to get that clause out of the Sig Ep oath. So no, it was not like demonstrations in the south, it was more subtle. A black friend of my wife who was with her in the Red Cross in Vietnam expressed it the best when she said in the South she knew where she stood and what the rules were, but in the north you never knew when bigotry would hit you.

Was there any anti-Asian feeling?

CROCKER: Not about Asians at that time, no. Asians assimilated into society after the war and were exceptional in academics and participated in sports and social activities. Like Jews and blacks, they were not allowed in exclusive clubs and gated communities. There sometimes was friction with very poor Indians who lived on nearby reservations. I was in close contact with Indians on the reservation and in school.

Q: When we’re talking about Indians we’re talking about what we call Native Americans?

CROCKER: Yes.

Q: And these were?

CROCKER: The Muckleshoots were dirt poor. I used to deliver appliances and TVs up there for my dad's store and I'd put antennas on tarpaper roofs. But if somebody couldn't pay, old Three Finger Jack, the chief, would come out and hand me the cash. They never wanted their name on the wall, meaning they did not want the people of Auburn to think they can't pay. They were not a well respected bunch of Indians. There are some other tribes that are fairly respected. Today they are zillionaires. They own this monstrous hunk of land with casinos. Big conventions in the Pacific Northwest are held in their large convention center so they're just rich as skunks with the big houses and all the rest of it. Chief Seattle played an important role in the northwest attitude toward Indians. There was a one day war that led to an agreement to hire Indians in the mines and the lumber industry.

Q: Was there much about the labor movement while you were at the university?

CROCKER: Yes, that was going on. The longshoreman strikes were important because of the port of Seattle. One interesting development was Gus Hall was invited to speak on the campus, you know, the communist leader in the US. The president of the university said he could not speak on campus because he was indicted as a criminal. I took the view with the president that he should let intelligent students hear this imbecile. It'll hurt communism not help it, I said. So he says to arrange something off campus. We did and he was an imbecile. There was some communist intrigue on campus, however, that became apparent when a football player named Serge Grant, whose family had escaped from Russia, came to my room one night saying that the Russians were after him. I looked out the window and there were two men on the street. Serge said he overheard a visiting Russian talking about getting out of the country with information he acquired about Boeing Airplane Company. This took place at the Russian house where students lived and studied. I called the Seattle District Attorney, who I knew from Scouting, and he hooked me up with the FBI. They later thanked me and said they caught the spy. Thus began my long career in intelligence and my decision to pick army intelligence as my branch.

There were no real radical movements while I was there. When I went back years later to see Dean Waldo, he said we returned to your kind of responsible student leaders who saw an opportunity to learn thru student government and manage a million dollar budget. It was a great student government run by committees of students, faculty and administrators. The dean said that a student leader named "Big Red" led an anti-Vietnam protest and basically just lit the campus on fire in the anti-Vietnam period. The university cancelled all those great student government programs. But, the dean said, in the '80s the student leaders were very much like those in the 50s and early 60s. A few years ago they contacted me asking if I still had my records, how we reorganized the student government back then and I sent all my records and consulted with the university.

Q: Well let's talk about the fun side. What were the social habits?

CROCKER: Yes. Well I dated a girl from the next town up, Enumclaw is the name. Through the fraternity system you have these social exchanges. I was a well-known student leader and I knew people in all the fraternities and sororities. I participated in international affairs events on campus like sending books to poor countries and Model United Nationals. As junior class president I put on a big international show with foreign students on campus involved. My social life was great; I had a great time, but I probably didn't party that much because I had to earn my way. On weekends I worked up at a scout camp during the winter season. I studied in my cabin at the scout camp. I always thought that probably is why I got good grades because I didn't party on the weekends. That was actually good because during the week I was campaigning or I was running some program.

Q: When you're campaigning, was this for student offices?

CROCKER: Yes. I ran for freshman class president, junior class president, student body president and I was the head of a lot of programs. The University of Washington had a unique student government. Every committee had a student, a faculty member and an administration member and that group was responsible for the budget and the planning for the student union, the bookstore, the athletic department. Believe that. Coach had to come before our committee which I headed, by the way. But anyway, it was very responsible- As a matter of fact I know a lot of the student body presidents back through time, they all became very big successful people. It was a very responsible, mature student government and we did some pretty awesome charity activities.

Q: Was the anti-Vietnam business getting started?

CROCKER: It wasn't there yet. Our student government was not about politics. It wasn't about trying to take the university over, we weren't trying to burn the ROTC down; that happened my senior year when Vietnam was becoming an issue. A leader named "Ruby the Red" radicalized the campus. My view was that student government was a chance to learn a lot, not take over and radicalize and run around with banners but to actually participate with the university. My only protest was when they tried to pave the quad. We had a big brick quad, it was ancient with Japanese cherry trees and these bulldozers showed up and they were going to pave it and I called the inter-fraternity council and the sorority council. We made a barrier and then I went to see the president, Dr. Odegaard, and I said what the hell is going on? And he says I don't know but come with me. He went out and joined the protest and said I don't know who the hell's responsible for this but they are not going to pave this quad.

Q: I forgot to ask you but sort of growing up and all, how important was religion in your family, your life?

CROCKER: Very important. We were Methodists and I can remember the Methodist services. Boy, I remember going in Spokane when I was five. But I couldn't really hack the Methodist minister in our small town of Auburn, Washington. So I left the family and

joined the Presbyterian Church, mainly because I was so attached to the minister and he and I became close friends for the rest of his life. And I learned more there. And then, actually I'm jumping ahead, I actually know it starts in the sixth grade, I joined the Congregational Church. I do that on my own and I loved the Congregational Church. Still do, actually. I liked theology and I went to student groups and I got my Boy Scout God and Country award there. In high school, I went to the Presbyterian Church. When I got to college it became a very important part because we had this incredible student minister, Presbyterian, at Calvin Club. I would never miss that for selfish political reasons because I was always running for office and the who's who were there. It was about 300- 400 students. And I kept a lifelong friendship with the minister. In the military I often became involved with the chaplain on base and helped with youth groups. I became an Episcopalian by marriage for the last 42 years. I have many problems with church doctrine and history, especially the bias toward women.

Q: Well one of the things you were just mentioning, looking back on it, up through before you get into the military, how much did you see of discrimination or limitations to women in careers? I mean looking back on it?

CROCKER: I have such strong feelings about women now and the rights of women and everything, but I didn't think much about it at the University of Washington because we had women student body leaders and they were big deals on the campus. The same for high school. I think in part women's rights were not as big an issue in the west as in the east. We didn't have men's schools and girls' schools as far as I know. I argue to this day with my friends about separate gender schools. I hold the view that for today's society where you're going to be working with women you are better prepared in a co-ed school.

Q: Were private schools important in the educational system, and I'm talking about usually at the high school level? Because on the East Coast they were important.

CROCKER: Very important, still are. But I never heard about them. I didn't even know they existed.

Q: It just wasn't a factor really?

CROCKER: I had no experience with private schools until I was married. My children went to a private co-ed school in McLean, Virginia and got an incredible education. But when it came to my high school everybody said, you are crazy to pay money when you've got Yorktown High School. They got a good education and my daughter went to UVA and my son went to North Carolina and got his law degree at Tulane. My daughter had an incredible career which included teaching in England, the White House, the Senate, Department of Energy, and Wolf Trap. She is now head of a foundation that supports rural telephone companies in America. My son is an Assistant District Attorney in Charlotte.

Q: Let's pick this up next time. You graduated from the University of Washington when?

CROCKER: In 1962. President Kennedy spoke at my graduation..

Q: So we'll pick this up when you're off to the military.

CROCKER: Yes. I actually don't go for a while. I was commissioned in the Army and was told because of the Cuban Missile Crisis I could not go to Tufts University. Dean Brewster Denny, related to the founders of Seattle, got me a scholarship to Tufts. During a delay of eight months I worked at the World's Fair in Seattle, traveled with folk singers, and generally had a great time until I reported for infantry training at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Q: Today is the 4th of April, 2012, with Gary Crocker. And we left this the last time, you were graduating from college and heading for the Army.

CROCKER: I finally do go to Fort Benning, Georgia, for my infantry training. Went through a short version of ranger school. It was basic training, not much different than ROTC basic training at Fort Lewis, Washington. But to continue our discussion about race relations, this was my first look at the south. On the first day I went to Columbus with a tall black officer in my class. There I learned first hand about the white, southern bigot as we were spit on and told to go back to the base. My social education there was as valuable as my military training. After Benning, I drove to Washington, DC, spent the night, found a group of my fraternity brothers who heard the call from the President to serve the country. I pulled in one night at the Sig EP House and here were 11 of them, my buddies from Seattle. So that was a great experience because they took me all over but I was on my way to the intelligence school at Fort Holabird in Baltimore for a nine month course; I was training for what they called an agent handler, basically a person who recruits and manages spies, which was exciting and very interesting. We ran all over Baltimore and Washington, DC, learning spy craft. Friends of mine in the government took me to congress and federal agencies. I even met Chief Justice Douglas. It provided reality to my political science studies. From Baltimore I went to the Monterey Language School for Russian as did many military personnel at that time. When we pulled into the parking lot, after driving across the US, we heard on the radio that President Kennedy had been shot.

Q: How'd you find that school?

CROCKER: It was good. I might have done better if I'd done that at an earlier time because I was tired of school. I mean, college, infantry school and then the intensive nine month intelligence course left me in a mode to go to work not school. All the people in my class spoke Russian or had studied Russian somewhere. I was the only one who never had a word of Russian so I was not the star of the class, that's for sure.

Q: Yes, I was R-1223, the Russian 12 months course. This is 1950.

CROCKER: Monterey was a great place to be stationed. Four of us lived in a nice house. When I finished I shipped out to Japan and immediately was put into a clandestine outfit, undercover with a new name. I spent the next full two years in Japan, first in a clandestine assignment and then as the executive officer to the commander of Army intelligence in the Pacific. Japan had an espionage law so we had to be undercover. Although they knew we were there. I developed some good agents who provided information on Russia, China, and Suharto in Indonesia. As the executive officer, I traveled to Hong Kong and worked with our field offices in Thailand, the Philippines, and South Korea. I briefed on Vietnam frequently and was very knowledgeable when I went there in 1966.

Q: So the Japanese knew you were there?

CROCKER: Not exactly. There's two sides, one is counterintelligence, trying to catch spies and that sort of thing and then our side, which was usually not official and we had nothing to do with the local government. I had a very successful two years targeted mainly against Russia and China.

Q: I know we can't get too far into this but how could you do anything about Russia and China when you're sitting in Japan?

CROCKER: Japan was an incredible place to operate out of, actually, a large number of people traveling to these countries. I wouldn't say we gathered tremendous military intelligence but we did get some. I focused almost entirely on trade companies, people who were going to Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, on Japanese trade. I'd studied up on trade in the Far East and it really wasn't hard to start meeting Japanese or others who were in that business and traveling. I developed an interest in China because I met a bunch of Chinese living in Japan who had relatives in the Mainland and had some success on that. One success had absolutely nothing to do with our mission. I met a man who was doing business with Sukarno in Indonesia and he provided me with tremendous amounts of information about how Sukarno was sucking his country dry and false contracts with the Japanese and him making millions of dollars for himself. We contributed to his downfall, or at least I like to think that was the case. After the Japanese wrapped up our little operation, I became an executive officer to the commander of intelligence in the Pacific.

Q: What period are we talking about now?

CROCKER: From late '63 until '65.

CROCKER: During that time we had to drop everything and recruit people at the Olympic Games. One of my more significant projects involved sending in a team to learn that Cambodia's Sihanouk was secretly supplying the North Vietnamese and Vietcong for money.

Q: He's the king of Cambodia.

CROCKER: Right. Sihanouk was just playing all ends against the middle. He'd been a big friend of the Kennedys, you know, with all kinds of contacts around the world. And there were a couple of pretty interesting operations we ran out of Japan, particularly Vietnam, but we worked through Thailand as well. So I got to visit the teams there. This all came to an end when Secretary McNamara decided to save gold and he moved the entire 500th MI Group to Hawaii.

We lost a fabulous mapping agency that employed Russians, Chinese, everybody you can think of, and also a translation outfit that did outstanding work on foreign documents. That was the end of an effective Army clandestine intelligence operation in the Pacific, with a great loss of human resources. So I moved to Hawaii. That's a totally uneventful period because the commander was court marshaled and I was told to stay away from the investigation.

Q: What had he done?

CROCKER: Everything. He had classified documents at home, he was sleeping with a colonel's wife who was in Vietnam, he misappropriated funds; you name it. And the thing is, I was his executive officer and I knew everything. When I reported to duty at Pearl Harbor, a very wise sergeant major told me to disappear. So there's nothing much to report except a really good time in Hawaii.

Q: Then where'd you go?

CROCKER: I took what they call circuitous travel on an embassy flight. It was my first time to do that; I just sold everything I had and got on the around-the-world embassy plane and flew to all the great places. When it stopped, you get off, have a good time, and get back on the next flight. So I traveled all the way around the world, stopping in the Philippines, Thailand, India, Pakistan, Libya, Iran, and Germany. Remember that in those days we had bases all over the world. As an aside at the end of my career I flew from Wheelus Air Force Base to Tripoli on Qadhafi's private jet, long after the base was taken over. I had 40 days of travel at very low expense with incredible stories and experiences. Traveling by myself I'd end up in people's homes and met a Turkish general at the airport when I flew into Turkey and he gave me a ride all the way into town in his staff car and then he provided me a staff car the whole time I was in Turkey. I met an Indian woman who was divorced and had children; she took me to her home so I could, you know, experience Indian life. Later in life I made the same trip with a lot of money saved in Vietnam, staying in the best hotels, but with few interesting experiences. I finished in Germany with \$17 left. I took a chance that one of my old buddies from Monterey would be at an intelligence outfit in Bremerhaven. He took me to the biggest mansion I've ever seen. His mother-in-law was a governess for a wealthy German family and I lived like a king for the next four days. A great end to an outstanding trip.

Q: Then what?

CROCKER: I go to- back to Fort Holabird and am assigned a terrible job working on

background investigations. I quickly volunteered for Vietnam. For the second time I drove across the US, visited my family, and headed for Vietnam. I came into Vietnam in an undercover capacity where we did not associate with the Vietnamese government. I spent a tour and a half, having volunteered to stay another six months. I ran a clandestine team up in the central highlands, stayed in the central highlands the whole time and I had successes recruiting and finding the VC (Vietcong) and the NVA (North Vietnamese Army). We had great support first in An Khê with the 1st Air Cav Division and later in Bong Son with the Cav and the 4th Division. The Cav was a special unit because they developed air mobile concepts nobody in the world had ever tried, providing me access to helicopters and recon assets.

There were NSA (National Security Agency) units there along with Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) personnel I ran operations with. I even had naval gunfire support as well as Army and Air Force fire support. Language capability was essential for our work. I had army linguists as well as a Vietnamese special forces linguist who was Chinese. I will only mention a few operations to provide examples of our work. We wanted to make sure nobody attacked the district headquarters, for example, and we couldn't get any radios out of Saigon, or much support at all. I had my agent put a can on a rock and the MPs (military police) went by there all the time and if they ever saw that can they were supposed to call me. Lo and behold we hit a huge unit moving in on Bong Song.

Q: Any other successes?

CROCKER: Our support changed when the generals in Saigon rotated and support shifted to the field. Probably the most eventful thing that happened was I met my wife, Diane, who was with the Red Cross at the First Air Cav. We had a blind date, I picked her up in my Jeep in front of her tent and then it was a short romance because she got moved to the 173rd near Saigon. I managed to meet her in Saigon and Cam Ranh Bay, and later when she was stationed at the Fourth Division in Pleiku. It was easy to go there because I coordinated with one of our units there. Anyway, she did an incredible job. She was out at forward fire bases all the time and gained an impressive knowledge of the war all over the country. We had some fun taking food and toys to the Montagnard village near An Khê and some other fun times with the other Red Cross girls. So I can say I said good-bye to my girlfriend in Vietnam and when I joined up with her in Atlanta I was using my real name which of course made her parents wonder what happened to the guy she wrote home about. I actually enjoyed the work in Vietnam. It is a beautiful country and my wife and I learned a lot about the culture and I spent all my time with the Vietnamese, Chinese and Hmong people.

Q: Did you have any contact with people from the embassy at all?

CROCKER: Nothing. We were very unofficial, but I did work with CIA, even lived with a CIA guy in a reeducation camp. We discovered the locals were supplying a large VC unit and conducted an operation against the units. We directly supported the division, although we belonged to the MI Group in Saigon. I had a boss who wasn't much help to us. He was stationed in Nha Trang. I understand that this big new colonel's coming from

Saigon with him. At the airport in Bong Son, he walks up and looks at me and he says, geez, Gary, couldn't you get a better job than this? And it was my colonel from Japan. We had become very good buddies. He was probably a lieutenant colonel then, I guess, and he had an interesting career in his Army life. So anyway, it kind of blew my boss away because he'd been telling him some negative information. I should mention I was in full combat gear and had just finished a successful mission to brief my old buddy about. He made sure I got all the support I needed after the General told him what a great job we were doing. After that we had an incredible operation. I had a principal agent, Vietnamese, who used to do business with a Montagnard tribe not known to experts on the subject. They were called Edo and they lived right smack in the middle of the big VC area north of the An Lao Valley. So I had these two old, crippled Edo who were not used as slaves because they couldn't work. I sent them back to their village with marker panels underneath their clothes. First, we took these people in a helicopter, obviously for their first ride and my principal agent told them to put a marker panel on the rock on the river bend. Well, to our surprise I get a call from a captain friend of mine who said, the marker panels were on the rock. I said you're kidding. He said yep and we're going in with Chinook helicopters. So I jumped in and headed to the river bend.

Q: Chinook being a large transport helicopter.

CROCKER: Yes, and I swear it looked like something out of a movie. It was the damndest thing you've ever seen. We came in and 300 scantily dressed Montagnards, looking like they had just been rescued from Auschwitz, were carrying their chickens and pigs. They were a very primitive tribe, came out of the jungle and we loaded them up, flew them back to Bong Son. Only my principal agent could speak to them. We formed a big circle where they passed around a pipe and honored me with bracelets and crossbows. Our medics saved many lives that day. When those people got healthy we had 300 new agents to support our efforts in the central highlands. We built them a big village eventually. My new boss from Nha Trang arrived in the middle of the operation and support flowed from then on from Saigon. Then I took my second trip around the world on the embassy flight and headed for Atlanta to see my future bride.

Q: How long were you in the Army?

CROCKER: Nine years. And then I was up at NSA in Fort Meade running a reserve unit on the weekends for five years.

Q: Have you got any stories you can tell? I don't want to get into things that might be classified.

CROCKER: I've never gone over to the Army and said, you know, what's unclassified now? I did run some sensitive operations into Laos using Laotian prostitutes who I flew on the CIA's airplanes. They brought back very useful information which kept me from getting in trouble using the agency's planes. I had a lot of agents and worried about the fate of a Chinese who was a special forces linguist for the Vietnamese Army who spoke Chinese, Vietnamese, and French. Because he was my constant companion, I've worried

about what happened to him. I always hoped, because he was working for the Americans, that he got out but I have no idea.

I think most of the agent stuff today is not that sensitive. It's not like if you revealed any of these things it would do anything because they're all probably either dead or out of Vietnam. On one operation my agents were spread out on a big peninsula and they reported a very large meeting of the VC and the NVA. A CIA guy and I were watching people from the village, the women, in intervals going out with big baskets of food and crossing the river real early in the morning. And I said this all comes together. They're taking supplies out to the VC. We sent helicopters down that stream shooting and stopping the supply flow. And then I tried something new, called in naval gunfire. The naval gunfire put shells right down the trail where the enemy was located, causing large casualties. We were getting closer to Tet, the Vietnamese holiday, but we were not aware the enemy had massed forces for attack.

I had an interesting history with the famous General Danny Graham who left Vietnam saying the whole Tet thing was propaganda. Graham was always in intelligence, I first met him in Hawaii, eventually he ends up back here in Washington at the DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency) and then CIA. He had a reputation for being wrong, but moved up the ranks anyway. When the enemy attacked on Tet, I was away from our compound in Qui Nhon having a beer with Vietnamese friends and then they shouted "VC come, VC come." I didn't believe it until I heard gunfire and headed down the back alleys to our compound. VC were in town and had taken over the local headquarters. I got into my combat gear and joined up with some Special Forces guys and spent the whole day fighting VC. They'd infiltrated the city. But the Korean Tiger Division wiped them out. We didn't know the attack was countrywide. Their attack was suicide and a failure, but politically it was the beginning of the end, although this was 1968 and the US defeat was in 1975. Of course, it was a black eye for intelligence given the huge resources we had in country. I stayed in the field undercover for eighteen months, despite some attempts by the Saigon command to move me to the large headquarters there. I strongly supported three generals with the two divisions I was attached to and they spoke up for me.

I would like to jump ahead to some pertinent stories that occur much later concerning Vietnam. In the next years I met people who were involved with Vietnam in much different ways than I was. My first real argument when I arrived at the Defense Intelligence Agency in Washington was with a report that the Soviets had air mobile forces along the Chinese border. The air mobile concept of the First Air Cav was far advanced of anything the Soviets had, mainly because the platoons owned their helicopters and had them with them ready to go. The Soviet units order helicopters for support. In 1975 I'm leaving to go to NATO representing State/INR and the deputy of INR, Roger Kirk, calls me to the front office where they've got maps of Vietnam. And he says Gary I know you don't work on Vietnam (I was working on the Soviet Union). He said how long do you think they have to hold out and everything? And I walked around and looked. I really had not paid that much attention because I was really busy getting ready to brief at NATO on Warsaw Pact matters. I walked around, Highway One and 19 were gone, everything was gone. And I said what do you mean hold on? I said you know,

Saigon doesn't have a wall around it. (He'd never been there.) I said there's no wall and the VC live in town. I mean, it's just a matter of somebody saying move in and it's going to be all over very quickly. I said everything's cut and this game is over. He says something like we think we can hold on. I said I don't know who's calling the shots but you might want to call Lou Sarris. Anyway, do you know who Lou Sarris is?

Q: No, no.

CROCKER: Well, back in the beginning Lou Sarris was the head of the Southeast Asia Office of INR and he was writing papers saying going into Vietnam was a huge mistake. Well, Secretary of Defense McNamara called Secretary of State Rogers to get rid of Lou Sarris. He sent Lou off to oblivion. Kennedy's book, "Best and Brightest," said Lou Sarris is one of the best, smartest people we ever knew. Anyway, I said, it's over. I explained my rationale and he thanked me for my time. I left with the impression that officials had not given up and were unprepared for the VC move into Saigon. The NATO meeting starts on Monday and on the board is posted "embassy falls in Saigon"

Q: Well what happened? You left the Army, you retired or what?

CROCKER: No, the next part of the story is I leave Vietnam on the embassy flight, staying in Hiltons with lots of money and visiting several countries along the way with no good stories to tell like the time I did the trip with very little money. There is a lesson there. So, I get back and report to DIA, right where we are now. Arlington Hall, and got a low level job as the assistant Czech Army desk officer. I was there a short while and it's the beginning of 1968 and there is concern about the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, so they move me to the Pentagon in DIA's current intelligence shop. I'm still in the Army and now a major and three of us become sort of the ground force analysis team, working seven days a week on the Czech invasion, which happens in August. So my whole life was dominated by the Czech invasion. I briefed at the White House, to the Joint Chiefs, numerous others, in particular to Dolores Wahl and Bob Baraz at State. I mean, I was right in the middle of the analysis and fighting CIA and their analysts.

Q: Just to get a feel, was there a difference between the Pentagon and the CIA?

CROCKER: Oh God yes.

Q: What was the difference?

CROCKER: My mentor when I get to DIA is a woman named Cynthia Grabo, who had been Army intelligence. And she was a warning specialist, basically; she focused on how to do warning. Well, she convinced us three in this office to look at an analytical problem and determine whether somebody is preparing for war or an exercise or whatever, focusing on logistics, later at the State Department my experience with this crisis will be invaluable when I brief three secretaries on three different crises, in each case stressing logistics. The problem at the Agency was they were looking for political indicators or were too close to the policy side. You had an atmosphere in Washington and in Europe

that the Soviets were cooperating and we were working on various arms control measures and they wouldn't dare invade Czechoslovakia. And Cynthia taught us that they were gearing up for a major operation. You could tell the difference between just posturing and threatening because troops broke open the bunkers and they get out real ammo and they start putting extra fuel on their tanks. I remembered from Vietnam, when you tape extra ammo on your helmet it's for real, We were watching this thousand mile logistic exercise that really was preparation for the invasion.

Also, I think people misread the Dubček Spring (Dubček was the Czech leader.). They were misreading a lot of really bad political analyses of what I would say was going on and that happens again several times in my career. So at DIA I'm arguing with these people, many of whom rose up in the ranks of CIA and claim today that they were the ones who predicted the invasion. But as you mentioned, national intelligence estimates, that's where the proof is in our history, is in those national estimates because that's where you take a position in writing. The invasion was for real on August 18. I remember because I was in Atlanta, we had just clinked champagne glasses to our future marriage, when the invasion was announced on TV and the Pentagon called for me to return immediately.

Q: Do we see the Romanians standing down at the time or were they forced to participate?

CROCKER: It's important that you analyze the Warsaw Pact with the Soviets. You don't ever do it separately. That's the warning. Because they have to fight with their allies. So, if they're going to fight NATO, they have to involve the allies in their planning. There was no doubt the East Germans wanted in, but the Soviets knew that was a bad choice. So, they forced the Hungarians to send in a small unit as they did with the eager Bulgarians. The Poles wanted no part of the invasion but had to send a token unit, Well the Romanians refused. Now my view is the Romanians always played a game between Moscow and Washington. Remember Ceausescu came here and went to the White House and they would fawn all over him, but he was a bad guy and I used to write that he was a bad guy. We never should have been encouraging this dictator who was playing all ends all the time and then aggrandizing himself and making himself rich. And so he played this game that looked like he was the gadfly and thumbing his nose at Moscow, but he didn't have that power to be thumbing his nose at Moscow. Instead, he played a game and he was useful to the Soviets for certain reasons. Anyway, they only sent a medical unit. But they did that so the Soviets could say it was a Warsaw Pact military move into Czechoslovakia. A lot of people forgot that the Soviets came into Czechoslovakia early in the year, for a thinly disguised spring exercise. They had already brought their forces in to scare the hell out of Dubček and then moved back just over the border. And that's when the general view that they're not going to invade started. At some point Moscow decided it had to subdue the damage done by the Prague Spring and achieve their long held goal of moving five Soviet divisions closer to NATO. So that was my first introduction to intelligence work at the national level with new high level security access and high-level briefing experience.

Q: You know one of the things that was talked about later was that we built up the Soviet and Warsaw Pact forces to be almost invincible.

CROCKER: Right.

Q: Was this a pretty well run organizationally, the Czech invasion, or not?

CROCKER: Yes, the Czech invasion was reasonably well executed and of course the Czechs didn't oppose them.

Q: I mean there's no thought of war,

CROCKER: NATO saw it as a power move, not a prelude to an invasion. It's 1968, we're still in Vietnam, and sending more forces there would strain our actual military capability. It's a time when we're not really interested in going up against the Russians. In answer to your question, we entered a period in intelligence when the capability of the Warsaw Pact forces was exaggerated. In the coming years there will be high points in the exaggeration, but sometimes the reason was the desire to increase the military budget. Much of my career from 1968 to the fall of the Soviet Union was spent fighting overblown threat assessments. In the eighties, it was some of my DIA colleges and I that began to convince people that the Soviets were not ten feet tall. They were never as good as some analysts or in particular defense tied think tanks said they were. I've appeared in some TV documentaries about the strength of the Soviet forces. In my career I have been a part of an interagency group. Many people don't know that there are interagency groups on major subjects. One reason I eventually end up in State is because I sat on a warning committee, a national warning committee, that had all the agencies and I was the rep from DIA. And it was there I met Bob Baraz and Dolores Wall from INR, two heavyweights who sat on this group. And so eventually that's why Bob Baraz made the call and said we need you to come work in INR.

While at the Defense Intelligence Agency, '68 to '71, and later the Air Force I also was doing my Masters at night at George Washington University in international affairs and mostly focusing on Sino-Soviet studies, a lot of post-World War II communist developments. It took a long time to complete my masters because during that period at DIA I was extremely busy, putting in long hours. We had the invasion of Czechoslovakia and a number of other events.

Q: Well I want to just go back to the Czech invasion. You know, here was a case of, I mean, granted it was not essentially a wartime thing but it was a mobilization of communist forces and just, well in a way almost the only European action that took place in our lifetime. I mean after World War II. What was- I'm sure there was an awful lot of taking a look at it again and how well did you feel that the various Soviet-East German-Czech troops performed?

CROCKER: It's important to note that the (Warsaw) Pact forces had gone into Czechoslovakia in the Spring of 1968 for an "exercise." When the forces withdrew many

observers felt that the Czechs had backed down from their political Prague Spring that had worried the Soviets in terms of their allegiance to the Pact. Many western observers, especially in Washington, were convinced that the Soviets would not invade. A small group of us in DIA disagreed. I would have to say the Warsaw Pact planning, the preparation, especially logistics preparation and the deception part was well executed. In 1968 we still didn't have a lot of the intelligence systems such as satellites and NSA capabilities that gave you the kind of precision on forces that we developed later. We relied heavily on military attachés, other kinds of observers and spies to tell us when their troops were moving. It was a little frightening to me how much of this movement of large forces escaped our attention. We're talking about very large forces, five divisions of forces from the Soviet Union, pieces of units from the Warsaw Pact; that's a pretty large operation with a lot of support behind it. U.S. intelligence and all of our allied intelligence had watched those forces and assessed how they would attack NATO. But when it came to a real military movement, our intelligence was weak.

Q: Well in a way it was an exercise both of the Warsaw Pact but also for our intelligence agency.

CROCKER: Yes. It changed a lot, yes.

Q: And you're saying that our performance was not as good as you expected.

Right. Because I had just arrived from Vietnam and got my high security clearances when I moved from Arlington Hall to the Pentagon. In my first assignment we were watching Pact forces with airplane photography. The airplanes used to fly into Berlin, in the approved air corridors and that was our limited source of technical information. There was satellite information, but it was not always timely.

Q: You used to drop the things.

CROCKER: They were dropped and picked up by airplanes or landed.

Q: Pick them up and then develop the film.

CROCKER: Yes. So it may be a month before you saw the pictures, you know. We didn't have that kind of coverage that we later relied on. The invasion in August was very fast because they were just camped on the border and moved in, hardly the surprise attack it was touted to be by some analysts. Five divisions moved in with very limited East European participation and stayed there until the Warsaw Pact ended.

Q: Did you get any feel for the mood of the Czech army?

CROCKER: It was a stand down. I mean, what I remember is the Czech army did not resist. I had worked on the Czech army for a short period when I first got to Washington and was not surprised that the Czech army, with orders from its government, decided not to enter into a blood bath.

Q: Okay. Well, I'm moving to another thing. You say you were on this warning group. I remember talking to our attachés; I was in Belgrade for five years and you know, one of the things you do is you go past the ministry of defense to see if the lights are lit on a Saturday. All of us were looking for indicators.

CROCKER: Right.

Q: What sort of warnings that you can talk about were particularly important?

CROCKER: Well, first would be the political warnings that Dubček was challenging the Brezhnev Doctrine and Moscow's superiority. It was clear that Moscow strongly believed that the Warsaw Pact was their business and they were probably suspicious there was some Western influence behind the liberalization going on in Czechoslovakia. Generally the Prague Spring was generated by the Czechs, but the Soviets were paranoid and often misread western politics and intentions. When I say "Czechs" it's important we're talking about Western Czechoslovakia now, which is much more westernized anyway and much more connected to Western Europe.

Q: As opposed to Slovakia.

CROCKER: Soviet troops came in through Slovakia, a more Slavic area, and then moved west. Warning was ambiguous in the sense that we could not be sure if Brezhnev would give the order to invade, and if so, when. In the spring of 1968 they took me from my position over here at Arlington Hall and moved me into a new current intelligence shop to watch for the Czechoslovak invasion. So it wasn't as if we were totally caught by surprise.

So, now from a warning standpoint my mentor, I mentioned to you before, named Cynthia Grabo; she was teaching three of us about warning and her view was that this huge logistics exercise, it spread over a 1,000 mile area and it was a huge Soviet exercise in logistics. That means getting all your ammunition and your fuel and getting everything ready. Same thing they would do if they were getting ready to attack NATO; with about 90 divisions they would need this huge logistics preparation in order to do that, to get all the bridging equipment ready, for example.

Well, there was this huge exercise and that's what made her think there was a realness to this military preparation; they were anticipating that they might have to go and they wanted to get everything ready. So that was, I think, one of the really big clues that there was something real going on and they were getting ready in case the move into Czechoslovakia led to a war with NATO. In my decades of watching the Soviets I never found them to be terribly perceptive about Americans in particular and what we would or wouldn't do. And often our doctrine, U.S. doctrine, was ambiguous on purpose. I considered this a strength, but there have always been those who want a declared policy on what we would do with nuclear weapons under what specific circumstances. It's better to be ambiguous, not have a declared doctrine, and make your opponent carefully

consider their options. But Brezhnev gambled on NATO not over reacting, and won.

Q: Well let's go back to this warning group that you were with. I mean, this is beyond the Czech thing but you remained with that warning group for a while, didn't you?

CROCKER: Right. Even after I came to State Department I would go to the meetings.

Q: Okay. What sort of things does one look for? I mean, obviously there's the political indicators.

CROCKER: Certainly.

Q: But are there sort of specific things that you all would be looking at?

CROCKER: Yes and I would say those of us that were involved in warning for a long time, and many of these people had been involved many years more than I had, some really fine, senior people were on this from all the different agencies, they tended also over a period of time to have been in that job, like the NSA rep had been there for years. So these people all knew each other. That was very important that they all knew each other and knew how in a fairly short meeting to review the warning indicators. I mean, it's a profession to them. And they go through the various indicators, the political, the economic, military, and logistics. I mean, we'd come to the meeting and they said we're going to put, let's see, Cambodia on the list because we've got this flare up and developments going on here with the Khmer Rouge. They might add Cambodia, okay, that hadn't been there before. They would bring experts to describe what was going on. And also there was input from our ambassadors in our embassies as well as others in the embassies like CIA and military personnel. With all of this information there would be a vote on whether to put Cambodia in the warning paper which was a formal report that's issued to all agencies. But as the chairman used to say many times, a lot of people will say it's so bland most of the time when nothing major is happening. Some even argued the group was not worth the effort, until of course a serious warning was issued.

Q: Well now, this raises the question that's always second guessing but was there the equivalent to a terrorism subsection?

CROCKER: Terrorism was a non-issue. The Soviet and Chinese threats overshadowed everything concerning threats to the US and the Middle East was a dominant crisis area. The Third World hardly ever played into the report.

Q: How big did China really loom at that time?

CROCKER: Well let's see. We're talking when I first go on the Warning Committee, one of the issues was the Soviets fight with the Chinese in the Far East.

Q: The river thing, Ussuri.

CROCKER: Yes, the Ussuri. And I would say China didn't have the forces to project power, I would argue; even today they don't. In the '60s, there was the threat to Taiwan and they shelled Quemoy and Matsu. So there was that period of time. I was actually serving in Japan at that time, in intelligence. But China didn't figure prominently as a strategic threat like the Soviets. I think a good way to put it is that on several occasions in my career I've written a paper or suggested that we have a NATO-like organization in the Far East with confidence building measures like we had with Europe and the Warsaw Pact. I was always told to never say that again. We had the South East Asia Treaty Organization, but it was not the same and was area limited.

Q: Oh yes, we did.

CROCKER: Yes. The State Department and Defense preferred bilateral arrangements.

Q: Were you looking at India-Pakistan?

CROCKER: Not much except for the China-India flare ups on the border. The India-Pakistan nuclear developments came much later. We were building projects in Afghanistan. Did you know Eliza Van Hollen or Chris Van Hollen? He was ambassador.

Q: Well I knew of Chris Van Hollen.

CROCKER: Yes. Eliza worked with me for a long time on Afghanistan at State, but that's for another day.

Q: Looking at it back and you say everybody had been doing it for a long time and one of the big problems in Washington is you get straight line thinking.

CROCKER: Through our talks about my experience, particularly briefing secretaries of State and congressmen, I just develop a sense that oftentimes when you're presenting a warning you must put it in a frame of reference that the person understands. Eventually the Warning Committee function shifts to the National Intelligence Officers at the CIA and I continue to work with that group later in my career at State. Through all of those years of presenting warning assessments my theory was that I needed to know the experiences of the person I'm briefing. For example, I found that people who had worked on the Berlin crisis or had a Central Europe focus about the Warsaw Pact threat often had the view that the Soviets did things a certain way and a new view was unacceptable. After Czechoslovakia we ran into the view that the Soviets would take action in Eastern Europe the same way. I'll have a long story for you about Poland later that involved Secretary Vance and Secretary Haig.

Q: What about the French and the Germans and the British in this warning? I mean, what was their role?

CROCKER: We have a close bilateral exchange with the UK at a high level of classification. There is liaison with the other ally's intelligence organizations. I had little

involvement at DIA and later the Air Force with the allies. My involvement with the allied intelligence officers becomes very regular as soon as I join State/INR, particularly because I participated in the NATO intelligence committee every year. It was not unusual for me to meet with allies at State or in their country. I was working strictly Soviet matters when I was in DIA, but the '73 (Yom Kippur) War happens while I'm at DIA and what a very senior person told me was that our mistake was we believed Israeli intelligence and they were wrong. We think of them as infallible but they didn't get it right and we followed their lead.

But the Czech invasion sort of sets me into a whole new arena of access to highly classified information and briefing senior people. My analysis was read and I got to know several directors at DIA. The whole rest of my career I spent a lot of time at interagency meetings at CIA.

After the Czech invasion we developed a whole new warning system because of the worry that they had five divisions now forward and we're facing a new Warsaw Pact that some believe is planning to attack NATO. Lots of money and manpower were spent on that premise. I had designed this warning system with a list of indicators that would be highlighted when military, economic and political developments began to change. The three of us in the office spent considerable time on this process. And I was there at night and we had been talking about the possibility of the Soviets moving forces into Romania. All my lights went on and I went upstairs in the Pentagon to the duty officer who is a flag officer. He has a phone right there, a red phone. And I gave him my analysis, that it looked like they were building up on the border of Romania. And I'll never forget this as long as I live; he picked that phone up and he called the White House and said "I need to speak to the president." And I'm thinking maybe I'd like to take another look at the analysis, you know, I want to check my work here. So anyway, he calls the president and the next day I come in to work and my boss says well, you stopped them. He adds he doesn't know if I really did, but we're claiming you did. And so Lyndon Johnson gave a press conference that next day and said we will not tolerate the Soviets trampling over another country. It was an important and emotional speech, calling Brezhnev out for trampling countries in East Europe. There already were Soviet troops in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and many divisions in East Germany, four divisions in Hungary, none in Bulgaria and none in Romania.

Q: What other issues did you work on?

CROCKER: We worked on the Sino-Soviet border, which was fascinating- There was a little war there in '69 over islands in the Ussuri River.

Q: What about your feeling? What were we getting at? How do both sides respond to that event?

CROCKER: Well, you could imagine we didn't have much in terms of eyes on the ground and our satellite photography was not that timely. We were kind of in the blind and later, much later on we find out it was a much bigger build up of Soviet forces than

we thought. In the battle with the Chinese over an island in the river the Soviets used some pretty horrendous fuel air explosive weapons, causing large casualties. We're watching this buildup as best we can, not knowing it was a massive buildup. At a cocktail party in Washington an American is talking about how he rode the Trans-Siberian Railway from east to west. He and a British fellow kept track of all the military shipments they saw on the trains going east. No one had debriefed him. This became a very important piece of intelligence because of the details of the rail cars loaded with tanks. As an aside when I worked for an Air Force General later he took credit for this intelligence claiming he had sent the American on the rail line.

We see these huge fortifications being built with old T-10 tank turrets. I had a real old classified Soviet map from World War II with the positions of the armies on the Sino-Soviet border. We had been trying to put pieces together to see how the Soviets were developing their fronts and their armies in 1969. We ended up looking very smart in front of the Director of DIA because the Soviets were repositioning their forces in the same places they were when they had a million troops there in 1945, which allowed them to invade Manchuria very quickly. And it was from this experience I wrote a paper on Soviet doctrine to counter those who always characterized the Soviets as being in an offensive posture to attack. Well, I restudied Stalin, and wrote a paper that I briefed many times. Stalin built his forces against China and Europe in what he called the "strategic position", meaning he could order his forces to defend with strength or conduct a massive offensive. It was common at the time to believe that the Warsaw Pact was in an offensive posture against NATO and Soviet military planners believed they could defeat NATO. Unfortunately, there were analysts and think tanks that made assessments that Warsaw Pact Forces could defeat NATO with little warning. I argue against that view the rest of my career.

Q: Well they didn't see that there was a sort of a Soviet doctrine that goes way back.

CROCKER: They write a lot about doctrine. I'll use the words of a Russian general I was negotiating with in Geneva. I said to him that in our country we have all these think tanks and big buildings full of people and they produce all these studies and doctrines about war. I said do you have that in your country? Obviously I knew because I'd seen the volume of documents we received. From these analysts derived the bad analysis about subjects like the Soviet surprise attack, which they said the Soviets always use. The Soviets never did a surprise attack in their whole history. They're very pragmatic, plodding people, who prefer mass buildups before taking action. The Soviet General replied, saying "my friend, they bring the studies to Moscow by the ton in rail cars."

Q: Well, let's talk some more about this period.

CROCKER: We can wrap up DIA. I leave the Army and DIA in 1971 when the Army asked me to return to Vietnam. My wife was pregnant, I was finishing my masters degree at George Washington University in International Affairs, and I was working on a high level project with the Director of DIA. I had taken on the afore-mentioned General Danny Graham on his analysis that the Soviets would attack China in force in 1969 and

come out on top. Besides I did not want to return to Vietnam with my high security clearances that would have slaved me to a desk in Saigon. There were few jobs available and I spent many months searching for a job until an Air Force General named Ed Ratkovich gave me a job on the Air Forces Intelligence staff.

Q: Let's finish with DIA. There were allegations that every time appropriation hearings came around the Pentagon drug out this document about the Soviet threat.

CROCKER: It was called Soviet Military Power, a glossy color magazine based on classified intelligence. It was cleared by all intelligence agencies. Several times I cleared it; therefore, it was more than just a Pentagon propaganda piece. There were more exaggerations in testimony and agency intelligence reports. One of the overblown assessments had to do with the eight Soviet airborne divisions. During the 1973 Middle East War and subsequent conflicts in that region there was a tendency to mirror image US airlift capabilities. We were able to put 500,000 people in Vietnam. The Soviets could not dream of projecting power outside their country with their limited sea and air lift capability.

Q: And it basically shows that they've got overwhelming forces.

CROCKER: Right, particularly if used without showing the corresponding strength of the US and its NATO allies.

Q: Billions of more dollars for our defense and it was always considered to be a budget ploy.

CROCKER: The justification for large nuclear forces was that they would deter the larger conventional forces of the Warsaw Pact.

Q: Did you get involved with this?

CROCKER: Yes.

Q: I mean, what did you do?

CROCKER: The Pentagon had an analyst named Andy Marshall who believed military, economic, even political activities had to be included in Net Assessments in order to derive conclusions about comparable force capabilities. He believed, and still does, that we need a more sophisticated analysis to make force comparisons. My master's thesis was an assessment of the comparison of US/USSR research, development, technology and engineering. When I go to INR I just continued some of this work and co-authored the great warning estimate we did in '75 that exposed the myths about the Warsaw Pact running over NATO in 24 hours. 90 days would be a better estimate of even them getting ready.

Later the exaggerated estimates were proven wrong. CIA fought and fought and fought

and finally we used some really high-level sources to prove beyond a shadow of doubt that their (Soviet) planning factors were pragmatic. They had no intention of a surprise attack on NATO. They were going to build this huge force before they ever did anything. And their problem was they had to go to war with the Warsaw Pact, with most of them hating the Soviets. Another great day in my life was related to the Polish crisis when General Jaruzelski said that maybe the Germans were going to come from this side, the Russians from that side. He said it is my duty to fight the Germans, but it's going to be a pleasure to fight the Soviets. We will cover this later.

In 1979 I am right in the middle of the controversy about Soviet forces when they invade Afghanistan. I briefed Vance and his counselor Marshall Shuman that they were going to invade Afghanistan. I told him five times at least and he didn't believe me. And I kept telling him and telling him while CIA was dragging their feet on the analysis. But I also said they're going to have a hard time because they're not that good. I did get in some trouble when I spoke my mind in a TV documentary on the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. I was in between the President and the Secretary of Defense who were saying that the Warsaw Pact had 4-1 superiority in tanks, 5-1 in artillery and superior airpower. I had been watching the Soviet forces on a daily basis and their divisions performed horribly. Interestingly enough, the US military officers who were interviewed, majors, lieutenant colonels, not generals, were saying yes we've seen them up close and they're not that good. My career survived somehow.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: So anyway, I'm leaving DIA in 1971 and we are building toward what I call the black day in intelligence that you're talking about in the mid-70s when they have these threat assessments that exaggerate Soviet military power and postulate them running across Europe in no time, all that. And so I'm out of there and I couldn't get a job. It's really a terrible time, nobody was hiring, everything was being cut. We're still fighting in Vietnam and actually Europe is weaker than we thought because of the drawdown of forces for Vietnam. I spent a lot of time in Atlanta when my father-in-law passed away. Finally, an air force general, a friend of the family, gave me a job working for Air Force Intelligence as a civilian, working Soviet Strategic Forces and Soviet Research and development.

Q: We'll talk about the time when you were working for the Air Force. One of the questions I'll ask, we won't cover it now but was there an Air Force culture or how did you look, I mean did you find they were looking at things differently than DIA?

CROCKER: Oh, it's like night and day.

Q: Okay. We'll talk about your Air Force assignment.

CROCKER: Right about when I'm leaving the Defense Intelligence Agency at the Pentagon. I was an Army major and I got out of the Army and I eventually end up working for the Air Force as a civilian.

Q: Well alright now, let's move to your basic career. Where did you go; you say you were in Defense then you went to Air Force?

CROCKER: Yes. That's actually where we were. I was working on my Master's thesis as well as an important project on warning for the Director of DIA, my wife was pregnant—and the Army said I had to go back to Vietnam. I may have mentioned that before.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: A family friend, General Ratkovich, gives me a job and it's déjà vu again because instead of going to the Pentagon I go all the way out to Fort Meade to an Air Force unit. There each service has their own organization at Fort Meade, basically a research group, and I'm going to be the Egyptian air defense guy after having worked at a strategic level on the Czech invasion and other issues. Well, I never went there, it turned out, because - I went there and they were all excited to have me and then I never came back - because the general was working me into the Air staff in Air Force intelligence. I worked on Soviet strategic forces and Soviet research and development and testing. And there's not a lot to say about the Air Force time other than the difference I always noticed between State Department and the Air Force was the unlimited resources available. So as an analyst, if I wanted to run out to Rand in California I just jumped on a plane and went to Rand Corporation and talked to them. I'd run up to the foreign technology division in Ohio. I mean, I could run around to contractors and get contracts to do studies. It was another world from INR and DIA. Maybe a little more like CIA.

But there are plenty of examples of stove piping. I think a good example is the Backfire bomber. This is a really good example where the Air Force was saying that the new Backfire bomber was a new continental bomber and could hit the United States.

Q: This is a Soviet plane.

CROCKER: Yes, a Soviet plane called the Backfire, that the Air Force said could hit the United States and it should be included as a strategic plane because it could carry nuclear weapons all the way to the United States. And the Air Force had been trying to predict for some time there was going to be this long-range bomber that was going to get to the U.S. And that would increase the bomber threat and therefore the Air Force needed to increase its budget. So, I actually participated in this issue and went to contractors and found a contractor who would prove that it was an intercontinental bomber. And of course they were having a hard time. But there was a contractor that would sell their soul for anything and they wrote a big study that it was an intercontinental bomber. Well, this actually occupied a lot of high-level attention in Washington D.C., this battle with CIA as I remember who said it was not a strategic bomber. Anyway, the funny part of this story is there is a delegation in the Soviet Union and the Soviet General says to the U.S. Air Force General, "I understand you're a pilot." And he said, "And I understand you think the Backfire's an intercontinental bomber. So here is my offer to you. You may fly the

Backfire Bomber to the United States and I only, you know, have actually one piece of information I need.”

And he says, “What’s that?”

And he says, “Where do I send the flowers?”

Q: That is a funny story.

CROCKER: It was later shown there was no way that thing was going to make it to the United States, unrefueled anyway, but the Soviets didn’t have any big air fueling capability.

My trips included US strategic missile sites and other strategic sites. I was in charge of publishing a very comprehensive book on the entire Soviet force. It was very highly classified, but there was a sanitized version. And General Keegan, who was quite well known, was the general and he was convinced the Soviets were building a charged particle beam weapon and he had this site in mind. Nobody else in the community agreed with that.

Q: This is kind of like the laser weapon?

CROCKER: Well it’s sort of like a laser. In simple terms you have a nuclear explosion and you send this beam down a tunnel. It could mean they could have been shooting neutrons or protons in an attempt to use a charged particle beam as a weapon. Most of the scientists were very skeptical that they could make that work and that some even doubted that this thing we saw was in fact going to do that. It’s actually an interesting idea; it has its origin in the last U.S. nuclear test when they set off the nuclear explosion in the Pacific and observed the charged particles follow the magnetic lines above the earth.

The other thing I did was a lot of work. There was God knows how many people involved in our government trying to figure out how to cost Soviet military expenditures, what was the real Soviet military budget, particularly compared to ours. And so I wrote quite a few papers, went to lots of meetings and I wrote my Master’s thesis at George Washington University (GW) on a comparison of U.S. and Soviet RDT and E. It described the differences in the way the two countries develop weapons and the difficulties in trying to estimate how much the Soviets spend. It also debunked the CIA cost figures. This story has an interesting short ending; about the time the CIA is going to present to Congress its latest estimate of 10 percent of GDP (figuring out Soviet GDP was speculative at best) Right at that time a Soviet comes to the United States, he defects, basically, but nobody’s ever picked him up and he’s at a cocktail party and he’s talking about having seen the Soviet military budget. He finally gets debriefed and his estimate based on actually seeing the budget figures is much higher than CIA’s. Army and DIA had larger estimates. Bill Lee, former CIA, said it was 50 percent of their budget which ends up being closer than the 10 percent CIA projected. I was on the side that says it’s much higher and I wrote quite a few papers on the subject. My Master’s thesis argues that

you can't compare the United States, a country which has a pricing system based on the market and a centrally controlled country like the USSR which sets their own prices. In their system, the Kremlin sets the price of everything. This old economist in INR, Herb Block, would come to the interagency meetings, one at the White House, and say "you failed to take into account the difference in the pricing systems of our two countries."

I finished my Master's thesis at George Washington University while at the Air Force. I spent two years at Air Force. But a lot of the time I'm at a Masters program run by the Armed Forces Intelligence College, now University, and it was a true Masters program with electives and speakers from all universities. It was a good program. While I was there Bob Baraz and Dolores Wall called and asked me to take a position in the Soviet office in INR. I was there in about 30 minutes. I came sailing from Anacostia like a rocket to get over there and sign up for that job. So that brings us to State Department.

Q: You came to the State Department when?

CROCKER: In the spring of 1974.

Q: Alright. How stood things with the Soviet Union at that time?

CROCKER: Right away I'm writing about the Warsaw Pact threat and the buildup of Soviet forces. There's a big buildup. I mean, they're starting to get a pretty large military and they're getting better. They'd been pretty mediocre, in fact, if you really got to look at them. But they were building and there were a lot of emerging threats. Now, this is post-Czech invasion, post-threat to Romania, the Sino-Soviet conflict, the big buildup against the Chinese, and so by the time I get there they've pretty well established these front formations similar to those in World War II. The buildup was all the way around the Soviet Union even against Iran in that area and they built these fronts and they're putting a lot into their forces and there's a lot of interesting things about the Warsaw Pact and the East Europeans in this time that I wrote about.

I'm only in this office a fairly short time, writing memos for Kissinger on some Soviet force developments, particularly the airborne troops and their ability to deploy the airborne to the Middle East. I should mention that I came in as an FSR, Foreign Service Reserve, in a cone-like structure for political-military science analysts. I had no idea what the FSR system was or that I would have proficiency reports like the regular FS system. Anyway, Bob Baraz says he is going to build a whole new office in INR and he wants me to play a major part in it and run the whole warning and current intelligence section. My first colleague was from CIA. There were just two of us down in the watch. We were located in the watch and Bob Baraz and the rest of the team were located in a big office outside the INR vault. We constituted a global current military intelligence office. Bob was working on arms control, the MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions) talks in Vienna. He brought in Lou Sarris, the great Lou Sarris, famous for his views on Vietnam, to do arms trade. He had people doing a number of things. He brought people in to do military arms trade, UN peacekeeping missions, treaty negotiations. The two of us convinced Admiral Zumwalt to provide a full-time Navy officer on a rotation so we had a

full-time Navy person all the time to do worldwide Navy intelligence. Eventually we get Air Force and Army officers as well as analysts from NSA. This was a new concept where we looked at conventional forces and international affairs on a global basis.

The other office that was formed at the same time was for strategic forces. So they had all the strategic talks, SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks), START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), nuclear, comprehensive testing. And so that's the beginning of this whole new operation which I'm a part of until 1999.

Q: Well, we'll talk about developments there but when you arrived did you sense a different feeling about this than say the purely military intelligence? I mean, were they questioning different things, assuming different things? I mean, was there a difference?

CROCKER: Yes, well there's a considerable difference from the Pentagon or DIA. There is less of a chain of command and INR wrote directly to the Secretary, in this case Secretary Kissinger, who liked intelligence assessments. Ray Cline, an old pro from CIA, was the head of INR. INR's heavyweight Sovietologists had a direct line to Hal Sonnenfeldt, Kissinger's counselor and Undersecretary of State, who came from INR. I don't know if you know that INR was formed with about 600 people. CIA took 300 when it was formed. But INR was loaded with talented people.

You remember Kissinger was leading the national security show, he was in charge. I already know that from coming from the Pentagon where we had to respond immediately to Kissinger directives and requests for national papers.

Q: Oh yes.

CROCKER: Net assessments were prepared in detail for Kissinger to support his strategic policies. And it is a time when the Soviets are building up their forces. There was a certain hype when I arrived about the Soviets and of course Kissinger was playing the Chinese and the Soviets off each other. In my view Kissinger didn't read all of the papers he asked for, instead he used the whole process to keep the intelligence and defense policy bureaucracy off his back while he pursued his own policy agenda. He did want and use Intelligence information, but maybe not so much the assessments. He paid very little attention, he said once, to many of the other areas of the world where he expected the assistant secretaries to take care of their problems.

An example is the very first thing I did in our new office, meager as it was, was to address the Cyprus crisis. Neither of us knew much about the situation, but we were expected to produce intelligence reports immediately.

Q: This is July 1974?

CROCKER: I don't know anything about Cyprus and I found this analyst up in the bowels of INR who had been writing about it, although nobody ever paid any attention to him or read anything he wrote. So, I grab him and he ends up briefing the president and

everybody else. He's like one of the few people who actually knew anything about Cyprus and why the Turks are so mad. I mean, it turned out to be fairly simple. A guy named Sampson was put in charge by the Greeks over the Greek Cypriots. Turkey considered him a maniac killer and feared for the Turkish Cypriots. With little knowledge of the Turkish military I used my best military analytical techniques to predict how long it would take Turkish forces to reach Famagusta. It was one of those lucky kinds of things that I predicted that they would invade and how long it would take.

Well, Kissinger eats it up and he eats it up even more because I'm absolutely right. Exactly 24 hours they were in Famagusta. Kissinger was impressed and our little office was off and running.

Q: Well, it does show too that sometimes, I mean, it goes back to the straight line thinking. If you've been looking at a problem, whatever it is, Social Security or this or that, for years they don't see dramatic events changing things.

CROCKER: Right, right.

Q: I mean, the new boy on the block can come along and say hey, this certainly looks like they can do this.

CROCKER: Right. The intelligence analyst is constantly trying to convince policy makers or intelligence managers with no practical experience that their assessment is correct. This is a particular problem if the analysis runs counter to current policy or plans or conventional thinking about an issue. I'll have numerous examples as we move through my career in State. Fortunately, I was working for Ray Cline and Bob Baraz in the beginning. Both were experienced intelligence officers who shared my view about the Soviets and taught me how to operate in the State environment. Baraz was Russian and had translated for the Secretary in high level meetings.

Q: The Carter people came in and they thought they could reason with the Soviets. You don't reason with the Soviets.

CROCKER: Yes., I have a great story about going to the White House briefing. My wife was from Atlanta and she knew many of the people working for Carter. Later I'll have a good story about briefing the First Lady on Afghanistan. It showed how little Jimmy Carter understood about the Soviet Union. I briefed Vance several times on Afghanistan. I just couldn't convince him that the Soviets were going to invade, I believe because he was totally immersed in the Iran hostage crisis and thought that Soviet military activity was related to that issue. He was a gentleman and afterwards said he was wrong. The Polish crisis later brought me to Vance's office, but that time I said the Soviets would not invade.

Our interesting start with the new office thrust me into the interagency arena in a far more comprehensive way than when I was at DIA or Air Force. In those two agencies I represented a point of view that had been heavily vetted up the chain of command. In

INR I often represented the view I held as an analyst with marginal vetting by my bosses or other offices. Although our office worked global military issues, most of my early work was on the Soviet/Warsaw Pact threat, depending, of course, on what the big national security issue was at the time.

Q: Okay well let's talk about the atmosphere around Turkey and Greece. I mean, the problem is that probably most rational people in the United States that say you know, if we have to come down on one side or another we'll come down sort of on the Turkish side because the Turks got a bigger army and all but- and the Greeks are- have proven to be sort of feckless. But at the same time the Greeks have got a tremendous lobby, tremendous political influence.

CROCKER: Oh, absolutely.

Q: I know; I left Greece on the first of July '74. I was consul general there.

CROCKER: Ah, interesting.

Q: But the Greeks have got political clout. Next to the Israelis.

CROCKER: Oh yes, I agree, yes.

Q: But here you are, a new boy on the block; what was the atmosphere while you were dealing with this thing?

CROCKER: One of the first duties I get is to go with Paul Cook, who is a Sovietologist, to the NATO intelligence meeting which is a two week, annual conference to draft the threat to NATO. We work for months, drafting our positions on the Warsaw Pact threat and the threat situation in the Middle East and North Africa. Two separate books are worked on in different committees. I continue going to these meetings for about twenty years. And if I had to reflect on those years of meetings, the Turkey-Greece battles over the wording of paragraphs concerning Cyprus and other regional matters would stand out, particularly that first year when Turkey invaded. It took us about five hours, maybe to draft one paragraph about Cyprus. One silly little paragraph and that's where I see the characteristics, the nature of these two beasts. I almost never met or socialized with the Greeks, finding my loyalties were with the Turks. They were Greek colonels usually or obnoxious diplomats. They were always chiding the Turks with statements like "we Christian nations, of course, can agree on a date for next year relative to Easter." The Turks' English usually was not very good and they did not always understand western humor or the nuances of the paragraphs. So anyway, I became close to the Turks over the years in helping level the playing field with the Greeks. This experience at NATO precedes my work on Cyprus in INR and influenced my writing for Secretary Kissinger's on the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and the issue of nuclear weapons in Turkey as well as our intelligence listening posts.

Q: In the Black Sea.

CROCKER: Yes. I also remember providing my views on Turkey to a National Security Council member and Kissinger's subsequent briefing on the Hill about the importance of Turkey to our national security. He had a big map with Turkey in a bold color. I also remember meeting Kissinger when we brought the INR Cyprus expert with us. He was very upset that we had not kept him informed about developments before Cyprus exploded. Of course he was knee deep in some major issues at the time, but he was not the only US official who had not paid attention to what was being written about Cyprus, and I would include myself in that category before I had to work on the problem. This goes back to our discussion about warning. There were other issues at the time that Kissinger delegated, like having Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker negotiate the Panama Canal Treaty. A foreign service officer who assisted Bunker gave me first hand information on the negotiations so I feel confident in my judgment.

That sort of gives you the flavor about the Greek influence.. The Greek lobby was not having a lot of effect on the State Department and I know they were in Congress because I mean, they were very powerful down there. And we got a lot of resistance, obviously, when we were talking about Cyprus and Turkey going into Cyprus. There was definitely, as far as Kissinger was concerned, a tilt to Turkey, yes.

Q: Well then, when you sort of settled down in this INR job, you formed a global office.

CROCKER: Yes. It was a global office that did arms control, we did all kinds of peacekeeping reporting. We did current intelligence warning about what's going on all over the world and we also wrote monographs, you know, and memos to the secretary about bigger issues. I wrote a number of assessments on important topics. Except with Kissinger, I felt he preferred factual papers to personal thoughts or beliefs. Ray Cline took a paper of mine, scratched out some personal comments, and told me Kissinger liked my intelligence information, and was not all that interested in my views. My window on Kissinger derived from my unusual position as the INR briefer on George Vest's political military staff when he was assistant secretary.

Q: Political-military.

CROCKER: I learned a great deal about arms control, munitions control, the Secretaries policies and debates within State and other issues that would help me in my career. George Vest had a pretty impressive bunch of people. A number of them, like Jim Goodby, became ambassadors.

Q: Yes, that's a high period for political-military affairs.

CROCKER: Yes. Well, George of course was an impressive officer and had an important job vis-à-vis Defense. I mean, Defense had to come to him to get certain things approved. I gave a morning briefing, a quick intelligence briefing to his staff every morning and then I would brief George personally two days a week; I would come in and see him and his deputies. George loved to tell stories and describe the morning staff meeting.

Q: What did you get from that?

CROCKER: When I think back on the different secretaries of state, I can say this: there was no doubt who was in charge and whose policy we were following. There was absolutely no doubt. But the interesting thing is Kissinger created the open forum, a testimony to his ability to listen to different and sometimes opposition views. An analyst in my office wrote a paper against the policy of the assistant secretary of Africa. Kissinger liked the policy of the paper better than that of the assistant secretary, and adopted his view. I mean, he actually read those dissenting views and he was very adamant about that open forum and preventing anyone from suppressing views being expressed in the document. I assume it's still going on. A friend of mine, George Dragnich, was the head of it at one point in time.

When I think of this period it is clear who was in charge, whose policy we're following. What I liked about it as an intelligence officer is that he did read the reports and provided feedback. He didn't care what the paper looked like, in contrast to a later secretary, Haig, where everything had to be perfect, the margins had to be exactly right. We had to underline it in the Kiplinger style. And they would send it back two or three times. And of course by then it was out-of-date. You don't send a memo to the secretary just for the hell of it. It's usually pretty important. For example, there's going to be a meeting at the White House to discuss the information in this paper.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: But Haig would miss it because his staff would keep sending it back. Well, he won't accept the margin is an inch and an eighth. You should have underlined this. I remember my paper on the Soviet airborne, Ray Cline made changes in ink on my paper and took it straight up to Kissinger. That was unheard of for most of my career. Although my favorite experience was when Secretary Vance called from the United Nations and said he needed a paper on Sino-Soviet military relations in one hour. I had a draft and the assistant secretary decided to send it without anyone doing any editing. You'll appreciate this. A letter comes down to the assistant secretary from Vance and it says he would like to see more papers like mine. And all of these people who were waiting to get a hold of my paper, as they usually did, and edit beyond recognition, were told to write more like the paper I sent to Vance. It doesn't get much better than that.

Q: Well sometimes, the words of highest praise in the State Department are he's a good drafter or she's a good drafter. Well when you think about it it's not the thought behind it, do they draft well. In other words, are they almost a glib writer?.

CROCKER: Well in a way, I think, when I talk to high school students every summer one of the things I tell them is writing is going to be the key to a successful career. I mention Dick Holbrooke and Francis Fukuyama, who wrote the End of History. They wrote beautifully and to the point, but they also understood their audience, especially the Secretary of State they were supporting. Holbrooke understood Vance and Christopher.

Fortunately he included me in some of the briefings and I established a good working relationship with Christopher, who read my assessments.

But Holbrooke was the guy to watch if you wanted to learn. I mean, people don't like him, obviously he had a big ego and everything else, but boy he and I would go in to see Vance and other people would be lined up to come in with us and he'd say no, Gary and I are going in to see him. Who are you people, he would say? And we'd go in there and he would say, now Gary, tell the secretary what you told me. I remember, once, we were going in to prepare Christopher to go to the Hill on a national security issue, not his strong suit.

Q: Did you have any dealings with Nixon?

CROCKER: No, not really, no. No, let's see. I had some interesting information about the Nixon administration's international behind-the-scenes policies, that I've told very few people about, actually. They bring in a new inspector general into the State Department and he was a New York prosecutor. And I'm told to brief him with highly classified information, and brief him every day. And a lot of it has to do with the Shah of Iran. And so I go in to see him and he says I want to tell you something. He said, "I appreciate the candor in your briefings," and then he showed me a piece of paper, signed by Nixon, that said "Anything the Shah wants—anything—give it to him."

Q: Yes, that was our policy.

CROCKER: Yes. And he said now let me show you some things. And he started showing me what we'd been doing with Iran. We were building a huge carrier base. We were building an aircraft carrier base in Iran and the Navy was in on it. A lot of this is on the QT - Congress wasn't quite in on it. I was surprised he was telling this in the first place. I went to George Vest, you know, brought him in on this. He said there's a real problem in this building going on here about this subject. Of course I wasn't primarily working on Iran, at the time. Although, later, I did get involved in the hostage crisis there. I didn't know much about the Shah or whether he was going to stay or what might happen to him. In the near future I get involved in the raid with Col. Beckwith to rescue our embassy personnel. But the end of this story is, the door was closed and the IG wasn't there anymore. That was the last of that. Just literally I went up there and nothing. That was the end and I didn't ever hear anything more about it.

Q: You know, I've had people who served in Iran tell you you couldn't report on anti-shah developments at all. I mean, this is crazy.

CROCKER: It was crazy.

Q: I mean, this is like telling doctors you can't report on any diseases.

CROCKER: It wasn't until years later that I learned about significant activities in the Nixon administration. There was no interagency sharing process like I experienced in the

Reagan administration. Reagan ran a more open administration where interagency coordination was concerned. There were sharp differences about policy that were debated at meetings, especially between Richard Perle (the dark prince) and key state officials like Roz Ridgeway on major arms control. My involvement was with nuclear, chemical and biological issues and negotiations in Geneva. My career flourished under Reagan. I briefed many senior officials in the US and overseas. I took an interagency team around the world for five weeks. I mean, all kinds of things happened.

Shultz was open and the interagency process worked under Shultz, but he was engaged in battles with CIA and the White House staff. Under Haig, that was like the strangest thing I've ever seen in my life. Not sure how that worked at all, although we had lots of interagency meetings they were orchestrated toward specific hard lined goals involving anti-Soviet policy.

But the most secretive was Baker. No doubt about it. I couldn't find out anything.

Q: Well he had that coterie around him.

CROCKER: Little group.

Q: And that's dangerous.

CROCKER: And you know I never briefed him, never got near him. One senior analyst in my office had one minute and 30 seconds, he was told to tell the secretary about Iraq. That's the only guy I ever knew that actually saw him. And what's interesting is my next door neighbor who rode to work with me, was a close friend named Arnie Kanter, who was acting secretary for awhile and at the National Security Council. I actually went up to see Arnie Kanter when he was Baker's assistant. At the time I was running the INR task force on the Balkans and told Arnie I thought State was making some serious mistakes. Later on I went to a meeting at the White House that Arnie chairs and it was very helpful because I was definitely against the CIA position on the size and nature of the Soviet chemical weapon stockpile. I sat on the British side at the table, they shared my view that the stockpile was much bigger and more lethal. CIA reps did not realize Arnie and I were friends when they criticized my view. Anyway, it's interesting how different the policy process was and the intelligence input under the different secretaries.

Q: Okay well let's try to put this in somewhat chronological order. You came to State in the '70s-

CROCKER: Right, '74, when Kissinger was Secretary.

Q: You were saying Kissinger was pretty open to new information and ideas.

CROCKER: You could get good intelligence reports to him.

Q: But you never spoke to him.

CROCKER: Only after he left State. I briefed him on Soviet forces in Cuba

Q: So how about then when Kissinger left and Cyrus Vance took over.

CROCKER: Well he's a secretary I briefed starting in 1979, but I have more interaction in the first few years with Deputy Secretary Christopher and Assistant Secretary for East Asia Richard Holbrooke. We had an INR briefing group called the gang of four—two analysts for China, one for Southeast Asia, and I for the Soviet Union. In some cases we added other analysts. We became very popular, especially with Holbrooke. Our group was part of a delegation that met every year for a conference with the Australians. Holbrooke called me from Philippine President Marcos's yacht and asked if I could put together a briefing team for Marcos and his security council. He told me to have CIA prepare sanitized briefing charts but he wanted me to brief on the Soviet threat and have a good analyst to answer questions on China. I chose Herb Horowitz who had served in Beijing. He also said to be prepared to brief in Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia. INR would fund it of course, Holbrooke did not deal in modalities. He never cleared the trip with INR; that was my job.

A main reason for the trip was to assure Asian allies that U.S. forces would stay in the Pacific. There were rumors the U.S. 2nd Division was leaving Korea.

The Chargé in Manila, there was no ambassador, informed me upon arriving that Marcos wanted the briefing during lunch. I told him this was a classified briefing for 22 security council members and could not be given with waiters present. The Chargé went crazy, told me I could not tell Marcos what to do, but the Philippine security officer and the foreign minister agreed with me and I briefed after lunch. I sat next to the head of the military during lunch and he informed me there was no smoking or drinking when Marcos was present and it was advised to be quiet and not ask questions. Before I started Marcos asked me if Brzezinski, Carter's National Security Advisor, had approved the briefing and I assured him that was the case. He asked a few questions and the briefing was over. We had put numerous classified briefing boards on the table but everyone immediately left the room. Afterwards we met the first lady, Imelda, who told us she was not a member of the security council and could not join us. We were informed she was leaving that day for Moscow. Horowitz and I flew to Clark Air Force Base for a formal briefing about how they provided security for the Pacific and Indian Ocean with a rather small number of airplanes. Horowitz, a true non-military foreign service officer, remarked that the briefing was a bit exaggerated. It was clear there were problems with Marcos. Next we were briefed at US Naval Station Subic Bay by one lean, mean Admiral Kilrain about the importance of Subic Bay, a very impressive base. Seems there were also problems with Marcos and talk about closing the base. The US put Marcos in power and the military supported the economy, but he had become a power hungry, corrupt dictator who considered China the threat and the Soviets someone he could work with. My mission was to convince him the Soviets were the greater threat.

Holbrooke then sent us to Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. In Indonesia Ambassador

David Newsom told us it was unusual for defense and foreign affairs people to be in the same room. They asked many questions and engaged in dialogue about the issues. I had briefed Newsom before and interacted with him later on. The briefings in Malaysia and Singapore also went well.

Q: I assume Holbrooke was pleased.

CROCKER: Very. I had significant interaction with Holbrooke on numerous issues. He took me to the UN to brief the Mexican Foreign Minister who was going to China. We had lunch in his suite with him in his running outfit. The purpose was to brief him before the trip. He took notes like he was one of Holbrooke's staff, demonstrating his influence in the international community. Holbrooke and I met numerous times concerning the Soviet threat. First it would have been 1979, the period before the August '79 invasion of Afghanistan. I tried to convince Vance and his counselor Marshall Shulman that the Soviets were going to invade Afghanistan. I was a little ahead of the interagency position. CIA was dragging their feet on whether the Soviets were going to invade Afghanistan. At this time our embassy people were prisoners in Iran and Vance is totally involved in planning for the US attempt to rescue our prisoners. I was using my experience with the Czech invasion in 1968 and the logistics buildup I saw for that invasion. In 1979 the Soviet troops were loading up extra fuel cans in their tanks and they're breaking open bunkers for ammunition. And I'm attending interagency meetings about the buildup, but the community keeps dragging their feet. And so I went up to see Vance the first time, laid out my briefing. He and Marshall just don't believe it, don't think the Soviets would take such drastic measures to save the political situation.

I knew there were some Soviet troop movements along the border with Iran and there was some anticipation by the Soviets that maybe we were going to move into Iran. We actually had plans to do that, down in Florida they were planning a military movement to rescue the hostages and to literally attack Iran. That was one of the options. So the Soviets were kind of right in that sense, and Vance had reason to believe that Soviet military activity was related to Iran, not Afghanistan

So, Vance knows about the raid, that we're going to run this helicopter raid, and he's adamantly against it and eventually resigns. Here we had the importance of the frame of reference of the policy maker. Here I was an intelligence analyst telling him all the reasons that the Afghan political scene with Taraq and Amin fighting each other dooming the communist control and Soviet influence. The Soviets have invested in the Afghan army and supported the use of chemical weapons and other lethal means to suppress the opposition. So, I'm looking at it from that standpoint, the buildup of forces and I'm saying I think we're not far off from a Soviet attack. They just don't buy it at all, just no way. And he knows about US plans that I am not aware of at the time. He's working around the clock on getting our hostages out of Tehran. That's what he's focused on. And I go in to see him a good many times. There are two schools of thought in intelligence. One is you give them a warning and then it's their problem, you know, to accept it. That was Sherman Kent's view, a former CIA official, who believed you provided the leaders with the warning and if they don't do anything with it that's their

problem. The other view, which I subscribe to, is that if you believe you are right, then keep bugging them with your analysis and enlist the help of the staff around the policy maker and other intelligence analysts, particularly from other agencies.

So we had a good many meetings and I found him to be a real gentleman. I think Vance was an honorable person who was distracted by the Iran crisis and may have been right to oppose the military rescue mission given that it was a disaster.

Q: But how was it seen from INR? Did we see it coming?

CROCKER: It was mainly up to me and a few colleagues in INR. One of the interesting things about INR is it's so small that I may have a portfolio that 500 people at CIA are working on, you know, but I'm the INR guy. So it's very different to say, but I had the support of my assistant secretary Ron Spiers. He let me run with the analysis and helped me get support from the policy desks, particularly Phyllis Oakley on the Afghan desk and some on the Soviet desk. The problem was the general population in the government. There were few political indicators especially from Moscow and my military indicators, like the logistics buildup, did not sell. There was some super intelligence about the Soviets' ambitions in Afghanistan. The Soviets saw Afghanistan as a strategic prize in the region in relation to Pakistan, India, and Iran. So my calculation was that their big plan was endangered by the political infighting and they decided on a military solution. Kremlin watchers are not onboard because nothing is leaking out of the Kremlin. And it's '79, it's before the Polish crisis, but it's enough after Czechoslovakia and you've got new leaders in Moscow. There was optimism about arms control negotiations in Europe. Marshall bought into optimism, which is ironic because he wrote a book about never trusting the Soviets. I remember him saying there's no way the Russians are going to do this. It would just be terrible politically because we've got serious negotiations underway. It wasn't long before I would brief Marshal that I did not think the Soviets would invade Poland, which he found ironic.

Q: Well what was there to this thing? I mean, could it have been a coup- a communist coup against a communist government in Afghanistan.

CROCKER: More a power play by two communist tribal leaders gone wrong.

Q: But what was there that set you and a few others to say maybe this will get the Kremlin to do something politically wrong? I mean, these were pretty old guys.

CROCKER: Right. And the thing is we were watching it and we're really sure that Afghanistan was really important. And later we get good information that we were thinking correctly. Not only was there the military position vis-à-vis the Straits and Pakistan, but Afghanistan has valuable minerals like uranium. They also calculated it wasn't important enough for Jimmy Carter to resist and perhaps considered the boycott of the Olympics to be worth the risk. There was also the Soviet buildup opposite Iran in case our rapid deployment force down there in Florida under General Kingston did invade Iran. I actually said if I ever wrote a book I'd probably call it "1979" because it's when I

think the significant changes start happening. They fight the Chinese again in '79, a big old battle on the far east border. The Chinese invade North Vietnam and get their butt kicked in '79. There's a huge debate with our allies in Europe over nuclear weapons. I actually got involved with the German Minister of Defense over this issue during a dinner party at a German friend's house in Bonn. They ganged up on me about Carter's nuclear policies. I mean there's no need to tell all of them but '79 is really an interesting year. And it's an interesting year in terms of arms control talks in Europe. The Soviets are dipping their toes into Angola and Ethiopia, they're starting to mess around in places and see how far they can push the envelope. They're kind of getting out there, fooling around in other countries in the Third World and they're getting a little ambitious. That was another thing I would put in my calculation as it seemed to me they were getting a little more sure of themselves in meddling in other countries. At the NATO intelligence meeting I was tasked to write the cable to all capitals which listed the Soviet's dangerous advances around the world, including naval expansion.

One last thing I'll tell you about Afghanistan is that after they invade Richard Holbrooke says to me "Does the First Lady have a security clearance?" I said I don't know. You know, the hell with it he says, I'll just tell the President we are going to brief her on Afghanistan. He knew I had given a number of classified briefings, including to the NATO military and political committees combined. Now Holbrooke never calls my boss for approval, he just tells me what to do after I briefed him one time. This was from the old Sino-Soviet days in 1977 which we haven't even discussed yet. I became well known for my Afghan briefing and went over to the White House to brief the First Lady. She came in with another lady and we sat there a good two and a half hours giving her basic Afghan and Soviet 101 as well as a classified briefing on the Soviet occupation. In the end, I hope that you find this entertaining. Holbrooke's across from us and she's sitting next to me chatting about my father-in-law, who was a big deal with the Democratic Party in Atlanta, and she has asked good questions and thanked me. So, this is the honest truth, she said to Holbrooke, well, why didn't Jimmy know those Soviets were so bad? That's what she said. So Holbrooke starts and he says well you know, that's why you have Admiral Turner, the head of CIA. So I said to the First Lady, when I was in college and in grad school the most influential person about the Soviets was Brzezinski, your national security advisor. He knows as much as anyone about the entire subject.

To my surprise she apparently did not have a high opinion of Brzezinski.

Q: Ah. You know, I mean one of the brightest bulbs in the field.

CROCKER: I didn't say a word, I just sat there. I never said a thing. I mean, how am I going to respond to that?

Q: Yes, yes, but still. But I mean, because you're really talking about naked intellect out there.

CROCKER: There were a number of great Sovietologists I studied under at the University of Washington and George Washington University, like Adam Ulum and John

Reshetar, but Brzezinski was at the top. Hal Sonnenfeldt was Kissinger's Soviet advisor. He came out of the strong Soviet shop in INR that had the likes of Paul Cook and others.

Q: I've interviewed him.

CROCKER: I wrote my first paper in INR for Hal Sonnenfeldt. I was literally sent over to Geneva for an international symposium because Hal Sonnenfeldt couldn't go. There were very few Americans there; mostly military people. We were treated to a talk on American foreign policy by a German instead of Sonnenfeldt. When he was done I said "excuse me, Gary Crocker from State Department. I really have to say that this presentation wasn't the American view. It is more the central European view of the world and American policies. We are a Pacific-Asian power and an Atlantic power. None of you guys in Europe can say that or have experienced our world view." This was not my first experience. In 1969 when I moved into my house, when I first got married, I talked over the fence with my neighbor, the first secretary of the German embassy. He had been a Nazi soldier and had been a prisoner of war in Russia for years. He spoke fluent Russian and was well known in Germany for all his work on the Soviet Union. And over the fence and eventually dinners we became very close friends. He's the one that snookered me in Germany and invited the minister of defense to come to dinner and beat up on me. But I listened to him quite a few times and I said I would like him to ask his embassy- this is a very bright man now, PhD, published, spoke good English- I said I would like you to ask your embassy to send you around the United States for 40 days. I'll plan your trip. You know, I don't want you staying like at Hiltons. I want to plan this trip in order for you to see rural America as well as the big cities. Eat in the diners and talk to people. He came back and said he had no idea. He thought America was Hollywood, Chicago, Miami, and New York. He said -- and this is a very intelligent man -- that he had no idea what America was about. Many times in my career I encountered the stereotype about America. Then there are the Soviets, who have less exposure to the United States and are bombarded with propaganda. I used to do my apples and oranges thing in Moscow; I'd say that no one in New York knew how many apples and oranges would come into the city. We had just been out to visit a textile factory in Moscow; they showed me how Moscow decided that all women wore these flowered dresses because that's what the system makes and there's no other source for dresses unless you're rich and have somebody going to Europe to buy things for you. Fed chairman Greenspan spoke to them after the fall of the Soviet Union and after three days they said they still don't understand who sets the prices? So I always said going back, to several trips to Moscow, that some immigrants came to New York a long time ago and they set up a fruit business. They went down to Latin America and they set this thing up and they ordered fruit. They decided how many apples and oranges and bananas to buy based on market demand and they set the prices. They figure out what people are willing to pay for a banana. Nobody in New York sits up there and says bananas will sell for this. And the Russians look at you in total disbelief. Very rarely did I meet a Russian that would understand, very rarely. Now, Russians who were stationed here like Ambassador Dobrynin understood America, as he proved in his book Breaking with Moscow.

Q: We need to get back to chronological order.

CROCKER: I actually had made notes of the major events chronologically and we actually did a pretty good job thru 74 and then we jumped to '79.

Q: Okay.

CROCKER: One of the problems I face is that I often was working on several issues at one time, with some of these issues lasting for years.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: For example, in 1977 I'm doing the Sino-Soviet briefing for Holbrooke in Asia, but I'm also heavily involved in the Soviet biological weapons program and writing papers about it.

Q: Alright, well let's work with this now.

CROCKER: Yes.

Q: Next time we'll discipline ourselves.

CROCKER: Yes. We actually, like I say, there's only one main thing that I didn't mention from '74 through those years. Lots of things happened but there's only one main area I didn't mention yet that runs all the way through my career at State. I worked on global chemical-biological weapons issues until 2006, but other major issues as well.

Q: Okay, well we'll certainly move together.

CROCKER: Alright.

Q: Today is the 17th of April, 2012 with Gary Crocker and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. And Gary, we left it, you had done a listing of incidents when you were dealing with Soviet affairs.

CROCKER: Right.

Q: Particularly in biological warfare and all.

CROCKER: Right.

Q: So what we want to do is go back to your timeline.

CROCKER: So I actually listed the Presidents, the Secretaries, and the people I was working with because I tend to identify the issues with the Secretary and the people in

charge who I was briefing.

Q: I understand.

CROCKER: When I left the Army in 1971 I joined an Army intelligence reserve unit at the National Security Agency. It was a highly classified work environment with all of my “troops” being analysts at NSA with advanced degrees.

I was in charge, so I tailored the studies to things that I thought were interesting for the Army and for myself. The first study was on the Iraq Army, which later, when I worked on Iraq, was obviously extremely useful.

Q: Was Iraq sort of considered to be in the pocket of the Soviets?

CROCKER: Yes, almost their entire military was Soviet equipped. And the Soviets were very much involved and of course the whole Saddam Hussein crowd comes in. They had gotten rid of the leader and became pro-Soviet. So they were on a secondary list of countries to watch out for. I won’t say they were totally ignored, but not the front burner until Saddam attacked Iraq in the southern area of Iraq. The other study we did concerned Warsaw Pact exercises with the goal of determining when the Warsaw Pact would use nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. It turned out to be very difficult to predict plans because, as in the west, the real exercise on WMD was played offline. The reason is that WMD messes up the scenario. This study was also very valuable to me when I worked at State. None of my colleagues in other agencies had studied the exercises in the same manner and in such detail.

Q: OK. You were looking at the military threat. And was this a period when you were particularly concerned about chemical warfare and all?

CROCKER: I should mention that as soon as we established our new Political Military Affairs Office I immediately became the State Department representative to the Interagency Committee on Chemical-Biological warfare. That’s one of the science committees in the interagency framework. So for the rest of my time in INR, I work with analysts in other agencies on these subjects. This committee worked on global programs as well as the Warsaw Pact. It’s important to mention that I also got involved in arms control and the BW/CW treaty negotiations in Geneva. In the beginning the US was the only country that admitted to having chemical weapons. I will say more about this later. In the mid-to-late 70s we were looking at the Soviets supplying chemical weapons to Egypt, Iraq, and later Syria and Libya. Interagency analysts disagreed on the size and nature of the Soviet BW/CW program. That issue becomes more important later when the Soviets admit they have chemical weapons. Some of us believed that the weapons stockpile was very large based on highly classified material, some of it from defectors dating to World War II. In my office there was a safe full of old classified documents on the very large chemical and biological program the Soviets developed. So that was important because only about 50 of us in the intelligence community in those early days were really adamant that the rest of the intelligence community and policy community

were really underestimating or ignoring this large chemical weapons program.

Q: I'm suddenly looking at this later now. We're talking about chemical, biological weapons and all. What were they and how would they be used? Talk about it.

CROCKER: Let's start with the first part and then the second part's really important. We had what I would call a mirror image of the Soviet program based on our program. And you'll remember that Nixon decided the U.S. is getting out of the biological weapons program in 1969.

Q: Did he get rid of chemical weapons as well?

CROCKER: We kept the chemical weapons program which was controversial in this country. Senator Church held hearings exposing details about the U.S. programs and led the charge together with others to get rid of the chemical weapons program. Little was known about the Soviet program and the threat it posed.

Q: The big problem being of course that unlike nuclear weapons, chemical munitions can leak.

CROCKER: That's right. I've inspected many chemical weapons sites, including all over the Soviet Union, and they're dangerous, they leak, and they were often poorly maintained. In the early days our country was burying agent in places like American University. I met somebody who was dropping it in the ocean down by the Bermuda Triangle in big caverns. The Soviets back in those early days were dumping old agent in the Baltic Sea and in the Pacific. Just dumping it in the ocean. And later that becomes a big issue as we learn these agents in munitions are deteriorating, killing everything. So what are we talking about? We were mirror imaging, saying they had mustard gas, like we did. We had a lot of mustard gas and they had a lot of mustard gas. We knew that. Ours was in munitions while the Soviets had very large containers full of mustard gas, lewisite, old agent dating back to World War II or earlier.

Q: Actually, World War I.

CROCKER: Yes, probably back to World War I. We go public though and say that we have 40,000 tons of total chemical weapons, which includes all of our mustard, it includes the older nerve gas sarin as well as soman, and then a whole class called V agents. So we are kind of thinking they have the same thing we do and we don't have a lot of new information, we have a lot of old information telling us what they did way back, OK? And it may interest you that throughout all this time, until we finally go see the Soviet stockpile, we never had a defector out of the chemical and biological weapons program. It was so secretive in the Soviet Union that even a Minister of Defense later said he was never briefed on it. So it was this massive program, as we find out later, but it was carefully hidden. We were using satellite photography and trying to identify facilities and then do models to figure out how much they had. Very inaccurate analysis. It was controversial in that even our military people didn't like to have it as a threat. And I can

explain that. I traveled to Germany and many other places. The controversy and the problem is best said by a German officer who said to me, "I don't like your threat briefing about the Soviets having all these agents we didn't know about and that they have agents that can penetrate our mask and our suit. We have spent all the money we're going to receive for suits and masks and vehicle protection. We don't want to spend anymore." That's the same as the U.S. Army view. You'd run into more opposition on our case from part of the U.S. Army than just about anywhere. They didn't want to expand it and there was a big push back in this time to build binary chemical weapons, which means you would have two agents stored in different places and when you bring them together you have a lethal nerve agent.

Q: I understand.

CROCKER: And it would be safer and it would be easier to destroy, OK? Well eventually we produce binary munitions, but not without a huge controversy in Congress and elsewhere.

Q: Why would there be a controversy?

CROCKER: Because they don't want to spend any money on chemicals, and prefer negotiations to eliminate chemical weapons. There was a group, particularly in the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, that worked for years on a chemical weapons treaty after negotiating the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Treaty that was ratified in 1975. The Defense Department was of several minds. On the one hand they did not want to eliminate chemical weapons in the face of an undetermined Soviet threat, yet they did not want to devote a substantial amount of money in developing a deterrent capability to protect our troops. Defense had little trouble getting rid of the biological weapons because studies showed them to be unusable and hard to control.

Q: Explain more about the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA).

CROCKER: Right. I worked with ACDA my entire career in State, often briefing the Director and his staff as well as participating in negotiations with them overseas, mainly in Geneva. I was caught in the middle. I wanted to rid the world of these horrible weapons, but I was worried that US policy makers and defense officials were ignoring the Soviet threat for political and financial reasons. US capabilities were an open book because we had declassified so much information while the Soviets denied they had a program. International publications played up the U.S. program and criticized it while paying little attention to the Soviets. I remember a senior CIA officer saying to me "You're exaggerating the Soviet threat. It's not that big. They have a lot of old agent, but you know, it's not that big a deal".

Q: Well, give somebody an idea. What was the state of the art for delivering the agent and how would it be used? I can't see that it's very beneficial to the attacker.

CROCKER: You need to separate chemical and biological weapons in this regard. Did

you serve in the military?

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: OK, did you get that briefing where they kill the rabbit with a small drop of nerve gas?

Q: No, I went into the Air Force.

CROCKER: In 1963 I went through a chemical weapons course at Fort Benning, GA. In order to convince you that you need to don your protective equipment quickly, they show a little teeny drop of nerve gas killing a rabbit, OK? And then they have this atropine syringe that every soldier had to carry in case of a nerve gas attack. There were many delivery systems. There were bombs, rockets and various spray devices. What impressed me was the fairly limited area chemicals covered and how limited they were based on wind and weather and terrain. There are two main kinds of chemical agents. One is persistent, like mustard gas, which will stay around sometimes for hundreds of years. I mean Iraq and Iran are still suffering from the mustard gas used in the 80s. The other is non-persistent agents like nerve gas, which kills you, then dissipates. The latter is preferable if you want to move into the area after the attack. But generally you're talking about a relatively small area that's going to be contaminated. But the biological attacks that were simulated in movies at Fort Benning showed a little rowboat with a spray device on the back going around Manhattan and killing everybody in New York. And biological agents are easy to disguise or move into another country because they can be carried in a very small container. There are many kinds, and many of them (especially in those days) that have no anecdote. I mean like anthrax, for example. We didn't have anything to use against it. And when you get into plague and a lot of these other agents, for example smallpox, the effects would be very lethal and hard to protect against. We and the Soviets had all kinds of pathogens as well as toxins which are chemical or poisons made from organic material. So on the biological side it was much more difficult, very hard to figure out how much and what type anybody had. Now, that's when the Church committee also revealed that we have this big biological weapons program and Nixon in '69 got rid of it. It was closed down. I was on a committee to make sure the U.S. wasn't violating the treaty. This is very important. Ray Cline was my boss at INR. Right off the bat in 1975, a year after I arrived, the international community ratified the Biological Weapons and Toxin Weapons Convention. It calls for the elimination of biological weapons, but it has no verification mechanism. This is a lesson for the whole rest of my life in arm's control. Ray Cline said to me in the hall -- because I was leaving for Geneva to participate in the Chemical Weapon Convention (which starts way back in the '70s. It isn't completed until about 1997). "Don't you let happen to the Chemical Weapons Convention what happened in the BWC." Verification was the key to success.

During the rest of my career I face the attitude, especially in the science community, that the BWC rid the world of biological weapons. I will later testify in front of a joint session of Congress that there is still a biological weapons threat and it has been used by the Soviets in violation of the BWC and the 1925 Geneva Convention which prohibited the

use of Chemical and Biological weapons.

The Geneva Convention doesn't have verification either, but it is the basic international agreement on the prevention of the use of chemical, biological, toxin, or choking agents on human beings. We used this treaty later when we accused Iraq of using chemical weapons on the Iranians and that led to an important 1989 meeting in Paris of almost every country to reaffirm the importance of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. But it was a state-to-state agreement that was fuzzy about a state using it on its own territory as happens several times in history since 1925. And almost every state put a qualifier on their ratification regarding retaliation or preemption against a state using or threatening to use the prohibited weapons. Iraq for example, claimed that Iran had used chemical weapons on Iraq. Therefore, I was involved in my whole time at State with the many issues involving these weapons of mass destruction. While the analytical field seemed narrow to some people, I found that it was a very large, complicated and politically charged set of issues. I got very involved in the use of chemical weapons and biological weapons in Afghanistan, Laos, Cambodia, Yemen, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia and Iraq and Iran.

Q: Well, I mean you say it's been used. But this was sort of rogue use?

CROCKER: No, government use, absolutely. Not rogue at all. Before my time, in 1960 -- one of the reasons I mentioned that I was in this reserve unit is that while I was there the NSA gave us access to a tremendous amount of stored material. I uncovered a document—I wish I knew where to get a hold of it today—a document detailing the Egyptian operation of using chemical weapons on the Royal Yemen forces. Mubarak was the Head of the Air Force and the Air Force dropped lethal chemical weapons on the Northern Yemenis in 1963 and 1966. Now, this subject was swept under the rug. The U.S. decided not to play, we were in Vietnam, we had Agent Orange problems. We were being accused of using chemical weapons ourselves. The British were a little more aggressive, but basically nothing happened. Nobody was prosecuted, nobody was ever called to task. There was no big investigation like we had on Iraq or other areas. The real proof was that the Red Cross pulled out because some of their own people were threatened by gas. There's no doubt if you read the classified document or even review the public record. When I brought this up at a speaking engagement in New York, I was scolded by the Egypt desk and told that I was never to bring up bad information about Mubarak because President Reagan had an agreement with Mubarak that we would never bring up the issue of chemical weapons use. I did, however, include a statement about Egyptian use in a highly classified national estimate on worldwide chemical weapons.

Q: Was he using our chemicals or someone else's?

CROCKER: Soviet. Later, Egypt makes its own agent. At one point the Egyptians agreed to show us the Soviet weapons so we could, for the first time, analyze them, but the trip was canceled. And later I'll say more about Egypt's program. In the beginning there were people around me that questioned why I spent so much time on CW and BW, but later the importance becomes more evident and my expertise was more in demand.

Q: They just couldn't handle it?

CROCKER: No, because they weren't interested in it. You can't believe how many times senior people just didn't want to deal with this whole subject, including very senior CIA people. The subject can also get very scientific and difficult to understand or believe, or even unpleasant to hear. I am reminded of making Ambassador Bunker look ill when I described the symptoms of toxin agents, such as projectile vomiting. Much of the attitude changed when the Soviets admitted to having a large chemical stockpile in 1987 and Iraq used lethal agents on the Iranians and their own Kurdish population. More on that later.

Q: One of my hobbies is War Games, which are published by various people. I remember back in the '70s they had a Red Star versus White Star.

CROCKER: Right.

Q: Which is the Warsaw Pact. And they had biological warfare and it stopped things cold.

CROCKER: I'm glad you said that, because it's one of the reasons I mentioned my reserve duty and our studies of Warsaw Pact war games. There were serious arguments against those of us who said the Soviets had a large BW capability. They claimed that we would see CW/BW exercised. I did some research and found out that the US played CW/BW offline because it messed up the exercise scenario. The Soviets did the same.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: During my career I participated in several national exercises and war games. There is a schedule on how the exercise will proceed, leading to the use of nuclear weapons. If chemical or biological weapons are used, it fools with the schedule. For example, if the Soviets in the scenario used massive amounts of CW or BW on the ports in Europe, that would mess up the US reinforcement of Europe in the conventional phase. Therefore, CBW was played off-line in some manner.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: The Soviet Union placed far more emphasis on offensive and defensive CBW capabilities than did the US. I worked with a French television crew to produce a documentary on worldwide chemical/biological weapon capabilities. When they finished in the US they came to me and said, "Are you sure you want us to include the U.S. because it's very embarrassing?". They said, "The Soviets have thousands of protected vehicles to enable them to fight in a chemical or biological environment." They spend a huge amount of money protecting their forces. They have these great big vehicles with a jet engine that can spray vehicles as they drive by. We had one up at Aberdeen. I mean we did not spend the money on chemical/biological weapons protection. And we had this impermeable rubber suit and this mask, right? The Soviets had a totally different

protection system. The best system was the Israelis, they were always way ahead with their gas masks and suits because they were looking at what the Soviets were up to. So there's huge controversies within the intelligence community and the policy community that I got involved in by virtue of being on this interagency committee. Some policy makers in State and some generals and admirals were very interested in the threat and what we had to say. Because later, we're talking about some serious V agents and agents the Soviets had designed to penetrate our mask and suit and render them useless.

So I consider this a fairly big issue and particularly because I was a lead spokesman both on TV and before Congress about the use of chemical weapons and biological weapons. I worked on several national estimates. One in particular was drafted when Haig was Secretary and the follow up was under Secretary Shultz. Then we did white papers based on sanitized versions of those estimates which we sent to the UN, Congress, and for general public reading. But that's a little bit down the line. We kind of lead into the Carter administration with a pretty full plate of chemical weapons issues. And Warren Christopher is one official who called me about it, and was interested in it. "Had I got any new evidence or not." And Dick Holbrooke was adamant about it. The issue of chemical use starts in 1978 with evidence from Laos. The issue of chemical weapon use would occupy a lot of my time for many years. I briefed many people including Secretaries Vance, Muskie, and Christopher as well as their staff, people like Marshall Shulman (Vance's counselor) and Dick Holbrooke, Assistant Secretary for Asia.

Q: Yeah. Well, now what were you getting? Were you getting that this is something so horrendous we can't deal with it? I mean you go to the nuclear exchange and you can expect huge casualties and destruction. But as soon as you move into chemical-biological, I mean you're talking about regional or local elimination.

CROCKER: True, chemical weapons kill people on a much smaller scale, but biological weapons could inflict very large casualties over a large area. There is a lobby group that says it's not the great threat that the US government postulates. Do you know who Professor Matthew Meselson is? Have you ever heard of him? He's a Harvard professor who often was given security clearances and worked for the Army and Arms Control Agency and others. Well, he was a key drafter of the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. He maintained that the treaty eliminated biological weapons, without any verification measures in the treaty. He told me once, "Gary, you're just raising fears by postulating that new developments in biotechnology can be used as weapons. We're trying to make scientific advances all over the world and if you keep scaring people that science is being used for bad things it will hurt research and our ability to fund scientific work to help people." It was arguments along this line and others that frustrated our attempts to sell a real threat that needed to be addressed. I'll say more about the obstacles we faced as we go along, but point out that eventually the point of view of a few of us in the intelligence community, including our foreign colleagues, will become accepted as main-line thinking.

Q: Well, isn't there also another side to this? And that is that this type of non-nuclear technology can be produced in a relatively modest country at less expense than nuclear

weapons.

CROCKER: True, absolutely right. That was another problem, but in almost every country that had chemical weapons they were provided by a country like the Soviet Union (Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Vietnam are examples) or a company from another country got them started with production(German companies in particular). The big problem that faced this little group of about 50 analysts from CIA and Defense was that we competed with thousands of analysts working on strategic nuclear issues who had the ears of policy makers. As an example, when they established my office in INR we were given a few people with lousy accommodations. But the strategic shop was well-manned and accommodated, with easy access because they worked on strategic nuclear issues and high-level arms control talks with the Soviets. We were called the “bugs and gas” people in a derogatory manner in the interagency arena. This will eventually change when chemical and biological weapons proliferation gains attention as a major issue, about 1984. In the mid-1970s we did a big national estimate on the Warsaw Pact threat for 18 months. It was the first time they had ever included the Navy. The Navy always got their own estimate. The estimates had always featured Central Europe, but if you include the Navy you have to address the flanks (Norway and Turkey). This raised new issues about warning of war and what preparations the Warsaw Pact would have to make to fight all of Europe. Before the emphasis was on how long it would take the tank armies in East Germany to cross into West Germany. Adding chemical-biological warfare in the calculation added more complications to the conventional threat scenarios that only considered nuclear.

Q: When you think about it I mean it's just incredible. But you can see how it's an intractable problem.

CROCKER: Yeah. I have a slide that shows all the other issues going on in the world that overshadowed chemical and biological issues or competed with them. Also, almost none of the policy makers have any technical knowledge about these weapons or experience with their use. Interestingly, several foreign service officers were directly involved in gathering evidence from Southeast Asia and Afghanistan. Ed McWilliams was the most outstanding and he later became an ambassador. More policy people started getting involved in the issues from the late-70s as more use evidence and arms control developments became a major part of the political scene. McWilliams was the first one to collect the information on the use of chemical weapons in Laos and later on Afghanistan. His interviews with Hmong victims in Thailand was the first compilation supplied to the UN. Ironically, he faced opposition from the Bangkok Embassy and the regional office in State. Mort Abramowitz was Ambassador and Roy Stapleton was his deputy. They were not happy when I showed up in 1982 leading a team to investigate CW use, but Assistant Secretary Holbrooke insisted that our team be given full support. Foreign Service Officers did an incredible job in the field, along with defense attaches and NGOs. This international group of intelligence, policy, scientific and humanitarian workers stayed friends and worked together to stop the use of chemical weapons, in some cases even to this day.

Q: What about the yellow rain issue?

CROCKER: Well, that's my major issue. Some people have suggested that I write a book because the issue is very complicated and somewhat misunderstood. I actually was looking over the chronology this morning which appears in two government white papers. The first paper in 1982 was from Secretary of State Haig. It laid out the physical evidence (vegetation, blood, shell fragments) and the interviews with victims from Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan. Secretary Shultz also provided a white paper in 1982 that expanded on the scientific evidence and intelligence reports. Both of these papers were sanitized versions of two National Intelligence Estimates (NIE) that were drafted by a small group of us from CIA and Defense. In 1983 a special NIE was published. The term "yellow rain" came from a book by that name written by Sterling Seagraves and was picked up by the media. We avoided the term in government reports. In 1978 Ed McWilliams, an FSO and Denny Lane an Army Attaché started interviewing refugees in Northern Thailand. They compiled a list of hundreds of names and their stories. These were Hmong people talking about being gassed. And they described one of the agents as a yellow rain that destroyed crops and made their livestock sick and people also got sick and sometimes bled through the skin.

Q: That sounds terrible.

CROCKER: The interviews were compiled in State and sent to the United Nations. We also stepped up intelligence collection in cooperation with several countries. Dick Holbrooke was the first high level official to make a public speech about the chemical attacks and several congressmen weighed in after visiting Thailand, in particular Jim Leach. A few government officials talked about it, but the White House was quiet. Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher was very interested in the evidence and called me for progress reports. Collection was difficult because of the Lao and Vietnamese control as well the Soviet military presence in Laos. Therefore we relied on mercenaries and travelers and special teams to collect evidence. We also had joint intelligence operations with Thailand. The Thai royal family were involved in science and were very supportive of our efforts. But our intelligence was telling us that Soviet supplied chemicals were in Laos and we knew where their storage facilities were, and this is all through joint U.S./Thai collection activity. We knew that the Lao with Soviet support were using some Soviet spray devices on planes. The original samples were leaves with yellow spots on them. And we get various vegetation and soil samples, including some from Congressman Leach. An interagency intelligence team was formed with policy support and in 1979 we briefed a sub-committee in Congress on our evidence and assessment, which was that the Lao were using lethal agents on the Hmong and low-land Lao people that were supplied by the Soviets. A team of experts from the Army testified on their findings in Thailand with the conclusion that several types of agent were being used, some causing death. This hearing is where I first met Professor Mathew Meselson from Harvard who will play a major role in this issue. He disputed the evidence and brought a mask and suit to demonstrate that defensive technology had rendered chemical weapons ineffective.

We were sitting in an interagency meeting when a young scientist named Sharon Watson from the Army's scientific unit at Fort Dietrich presented evidence from Dr. Mirocha in Minnesota that there were trichothecene toxins in the spots on the leaves taken from attack sites in Laos. None of us had ever heard of these toxins which are produced from fusarium normally at low temperatures, such as the tundra of Russia and Canada. These toxins would not be found naturally in Southeast Asia. They cause sickness and death and can lead to bleeding through the skin. Another scientist, Dr Rosen from Rutgers, also found the toxins in samples from Laos. A third Scientist, Dr. Sheiffer from Canada, confirmed the results as did others from several countries. A scientist in Japan, Dr. Ueno, who was considered the world expert on these toxins, told me Dr. Mirocha's published research was a guide for everyone in the field. Professor Meselson countered the US government evidence after a trip to Thailand with his view that the yellow spots and the yellow rain were caused by bee cleansing flights and the bee droppings picked up pollen. His interviews found that the Hmong people were honey gatherers. Meselson convinced a lot of people and he continued to focus on the vegetation samples from Laos and casting doubts on the human testimony, including that of a Lao pilot who had flown the missions.

We realized our evidence was hard to prove, and shifted our collection to blood samples, especially from Cambodia where certain groups were attacked by Vietnamese. We conducted some successful collection operations right after chemical attacks. ABC television did a documentary on the attacks in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan. I worked with them to make certain the right people were interviewed and the government got a fair shake. The documentary included filming of the collection in Cambodia and the trail of evidence to the plane in Bangkok to the material handed to me and Army specialists at National Airport. These samples were filmed going to Dr. Mirocha in Minnesota. This countered criticism that the U.S. did not have chain of custody.

We had a large press conference at State and I have all the people from CIA and the Army, but I'm the only one that could speak. The press reacted badly, they wanted the scientists on record. Don Oberdorfer was the senior correspondent and a family friend in the audience and he helped me out by vouching for my credentials. Right away the press raised the issue of the U.S. using agent orange in Vietnam.

Richard Burt becomes the State PM (Political-Military) assistant secretary and said, "Well, the difference is if you smoke maybe in 20 or 30 years you'll get cancer." That's Agent Orange basically, a defoliant. The facts on Agent Orange are pretty fuzzy in my opinion, but I said, "We're talking about a lethal substance that kills you right away, something totally different than Agent Orange."

All right. So this Harvard professor becomes the main antagonist of the U.S. Government and shows up everywhere with vignettes about each part of the government evidence. We refine our evidence and collect a large body of data, which is in this first NIE (National Intelligence Estimate) and in a paper that Secretary Haig signs that lists all of our samples and where we got them. And by this time we have scientists from many countries supporting us and I and some others go on TV shows to argue our case against Meselson. I even appear on radio with UN Ambassador Kirkpatrick. Our thesis at this point is that

we have evidence from three separate battlefields -- Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan -- that point to the same chemicals and toxins being used and the common denominator is the Soviet Union. So we have built a fairly strong case, but there was still opposition, some from inside our government and several other governments. There was also difficulty explaining the complex nature of chemical warfare and the treaty obligations. The Geneva Convention prohibits the use of anything that harms humans, but it had no verification or punishment provisions. The key is that biological and toxin weapons are covered by the 1975 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick actually said it best in our radio/TV interview: "Every housewife will understand that there are chemicals or gas, bacteria and disease, and poisons or toxins. They're not going to understand trichothecenes and mycotoxins.

I would say to this day you could go interview people at State and you'll get different opinions about whether this is a real story. One of the problems later on is that it became identified with Al Haig as a Soviet propaganda issue. And people would just say "Well, that was just Haig's propaganda to get the Soviets." That became a very popular kind of comment. By the time we had what I say was an air-tight case with evidence, working with the British and working with the French and the Australians and others, it had become a political issue and policy issue and some people just didn't want to touch it. That later is somewhat taken care of, but that's the early story about "yellow rain". It involved many countries, many scientists, all kinds of people with different relationships to the issues. Later in the game I headed a team of interagency specialists on a forty-day trip around the world. But in the Carter period we struggled with a very new situation. Holbrooke was a big supporter as the Assistant Secretary for Asia. He made sure we got to go to Thailand. He called Ambassador Abramowitz and insisted we get full support in Northern Thailand to interview the victims.

This issue doesn't go away. Several years ago we hired an intern at State who had her PhD in communicable disease. Rebecca Katz's mother was a well-known scientist at NIH and Rebecca wrote her PhD on "yellow rain".

Q: So this issue spans several decades.

CROCKER: Yes. Meselson got himself put on her PHD committee at the Wilson Center at Princeton. His criticism failed because she wrote an airtight PhD. I mean it's one of the best unclassified reports on this subject. It shows scientifically that the critics were just wrong. The Soviets sent papers to the United Nations with really flimsy evidence, even accusing the US of using chemical weapons and causing massive disease with agent orange. We easily debunked the Soviet view and continued to battle Meselson and some of his academic cohorts. I spent a lot of time on this issue and briefed people all over the world.

Q: What about the scientific community? I can understand the military community in a way that something's just too big to contemplate. But what about the scientific community? Were they digging their claws into this?

CROCKER: Well, we got the President of the National Science Foundation to be our spokesman on this subject. He reviewed all the documents and was our spokesman. Generally, many scientists followed Professor Medelson's lead and were critical of the evidence. Some looked down their nose at scientists who were dealing with toxins, referring to their field as "soft-science". In 1979 there was also a new issue about a big explosion in a biological weapons plant in the Soviet Union in a place called Sverdlovsk. Through intelligence we know immediately that anthrax escaped from that facility.

Q: How does that relate to "yellow rain"?

CROCKER: We've been watching that facility from the '50s as a biological weapons place.

Q: Yeah. Fort Detrick is it?

CROCKER: Well, Detrick is somewhat comparable because they tested biological weapons there before the U.S. unilaterally shut down its program. I'm going a little off timeline, but this is a fun story. There's a big black sphere at Detrick you can still see. That is where the biological agents were tested.

Now, I hope you'll appreciate this story. Later on the Soviets will admit they made biological weapons and we conduct joint visits to ensure each other that our programs have been eliminated. This is in 1991. The reason for the inspections is that the British have a very high-level defector for the very first time who exposed the Soviet biological weapons program. And it wasn't anything like we had assessed. We were way off. Forty-five thousand scientists -- civilians -- working on a program called Biopreparat in many locations. And the main agent, he says, is plague. Now, you go back and look at all our intelligence reports, everything we wrote, and nobody ever guessed plague. But that was the main agent that the Soviets were developing. And they were putting them on ICBM warheads. I mean this is a startling story, OK? US and UK teams visit these facilities. The Soviets had a requirement under the United Nations, under the treaty, to submit a document that says what agent you have and what your program was, OK? In order to say you were in compliance, you must state the program has ended. We had already done that. Pressure was put on the Soviets as more defectors emerged. All of a sudden, our band of fifty or so analysts were more in the limelight because our warnings about a large Soviet BW program were being heeded. But the program was much bigger than any of us had thought. A woman working for Merck Pharmaceuticals went to some of these facilities in the Soviet Union and to check on investing in these "former BW facilities". Ellie Fagen was bringing me back tons of information. One of the things she commented on is they have enough fermenter capacity to make beer for the whole world. They've spent this huge amount of money building these monster facilities, you know, to overproduce. Basically, it was a contingency for war so they could produce God knows how much biological weapons. She says, "You just can't believe how big these facilities are, I mean these huge fermenters and all kinds of equipment.

Q: Had we picked up the fermenters?

CROCKER: No, our assessments were based on what we could see and engineering analysis of what could be produced. Until the defectors, we could only speculate on what agents they were producing. It turns out we were pretty close, but it was a hard sell with the information we had. And remember, the defectors come out when Yeltsin becomes president, and US officials didn't want to embarrass him. I mean Yeltsin told two Presidents of the United States that he did not know what was going on and did not care if the US tried to find out about the program. In preparation for our going there and them coming here (and they were going to go visit everything we ever had, any place we had a military bio facility, like Pine Bluff or Dugway Proving Grounds) we trained by going to Detrick. And I posed as a Russian, I had a team of people and we went into Detrick. And we're standing at the big black sphere. The General in charge of Detrick's told me he didn't know what the sphere was used for, I think honestly. But to a Russian it would be unthinkable that the commander of Detrick did not know.

Q: I understand. They would have intelligence on the activities there.

CROCKER: I was familiar with Detrick. I'd been there quite a few times. It was where some of my colleagues worked. So I went offline. I said, "OK, offline a minute, I'm not a Russian right now. I want you to go get Bill. Bill is like a GS-11, wears jeans, plaid shirts, got a big thing of keys hanging on his belt, real tan, smoked a cigarette, right? You know the guy, OK, you've seen this guy. All right. So I said, "Bring him here," all right. So he comes here and I say, "OK, now I'm a Russian again, OK? And you got this guy here who's been here since this place was built. Let's ask him."

And he said, *(said with a thick Southern accent)* "Yep. Well, yeah, you know, we take that botuline toxin or equine fever or whatever, anthrax, and I climb up that ladder and I go in there and place it and lock it down and set it off, and then we see how it spreads.

The general says "How long?"

"Oh, I did this for years and years".

Q: That is a good story.

CROCKER: The change in US/Soviet relations happens in Geneva in 1983 and '84. I'm in Geneva on a year's sabbatical. I don't think I've mentioned this yet. I won a Director of Central Intelligence fellowship to study for a year in Europe. My program was on chemical/biological weapon negotiations and the background on agent use. I was assigned to the mission in Geneva. Forty countries sit around the table. It's called the Conference on Disarmament, but then it was the Committee on Disarmament. And they deal with proliferation, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, nuclear test ban, all kinds of subjects, including the drafting of the Chemical Weapons Convention. And they had drafted the Biological Convention. The U.S. and the Soviet ambassadors sit next to each other. And I was sitting behind them when Ambassador Viktor Issraelyan said, "I have an announcement to make. The Soviet Union has chemical weapons." This was the first time

any Soviet ever admitted to having chemical weapons. I used to tell people that in most arms control negotiations, both sides admit, or all sides admit they have the weapons being discussed. But in the Chemical Weapons Convention it's one-sided. The US has provided volumes of information and curtailed its program while most countries have not admitted having any weapons. So finally we have the beginning of an honest negotiation starting.

The Soviet Ambassador invited all of the members to visit the Shikany test facilities in 1987 and see the chemical weapons. This constituted the first visit by western observers to Soviet CW sites. Our small crowd of interagency intelligence analysts now had a larger audience more receptive to our assessment about the size of the Soviet program. Before I left for Geneva the intelligence community produced a National Estimate that took a hard line on the size and nature of the program. By the time I return to Washington DC, another group has got the ear of senior intelligence officers with a watered down estimate of Soviet capabilities.

CIA took the position that the Soviets only kept 10% of their agent in weapons, the rest was in bulk storage. They also presented an elaborate assessment that the Soviets lost interest in chemical weapons. It wasn't until 1990 when we and the British are invited to view the entire stockpile that our position was verified. Our group consisted of DIA, Army, sometimes NSA and myself. We maintained that the stockpile was more than the 40,000 tons claimed by the Soviets. Before we left for our tour in the Soviet Union in 1990, there was a meeting at the White House with the British present to go over the differences of opinion. The CIA spokesman denigrated our view and singled me out for siding with the British estimate. He was unaware that the chairman of the meeting was Arnie Kanter, a friend and neighbor who served in several positions in State. I remember walking into the tents at a Soviet storage area in 1990 and seeing elaborate displays of each weapon. They had bombs, rockets, missiles all full of V agents, new versions of nerve agent. NATO protective equipment would have been vulnerable to these agents. I remember saying to my agency colleague, who I'd known for years, to bring his camera over and take a picture, especially the dates on the weapons. CIA had argued that they stopped producing weapons, yet the dates were quite recent. Their argument that the Soviets were ready to give them up because they had tactical nuclear weapons was refuted with the 1990 visit. It wasn't long before even the DCI Bob Gates was using a hard line on Soviet CW/BW.

Q: Well, just talk a little bit about say, the Soviets had opted to use plague as a prime agent.

CROCKER: There is a known antidote for plague, but the western world would not be ready for a large-scale attack. Another agent I haven't mentioned is smallpox. During the course of our visits to the Soviet civilian biological weapons sites, we learn that the Soviets had used the sample of smallpox entrusted to them by the UN for research on smallpox agent to be used as a weapon, again probably on missiles. The only other sample was kept at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, in Atlanta.

Q: What was the reaction to this news?

CROCKER: Work on smallpox was done at Koltsovo. It made me want to scream. I brought a high level team to brief Talbott, the Deputy Secretary. The response at high levels in Washington and elsewhere was that we did not want to embarrass Yeltsin, we had a lot riding on his success. I still get upset when I think about the smallpox issue and the way even the UN swept it under the rug. And one of the things the defector from St. Petersburg said was they had not only developed plague and these other agents, but they had used all kinds of new science to harden them. The agents could survive a nuclear environment or they had been genetically engineered so that you wouldn't have any protection against them. Old vaccines would not work. Now, I want to go back to something you asked earlier. It becomes more clear when I deal with the Soviets and then I come back and reflect on our own program, that these weapons were produced without a real doctrine for their use or actual plans to use them. You had a bunch of scientists in the United States and the Soviet Union in very secluded facilities. Very few people knew about it. In some cases senior people certainly didn't and I'm sure few Congressmen knew about it. So you've got these very secretive programs, very hush-hush. In both countries only a select few in the military know about the weapons; therefore, they are not really integrated into a strategic plan, you just have them because the other side does and they might have to be used someday. I will never forget the debriefing of the British scientist, Jack Kelly, when he returned from one of the most secretive sites where they tested biological agents. This was a person who spent his career in high containment labs. He said "I was in the presence of evil." Unfortunately he committed suicide over the issue of whether Saddam still had chemical weapons in Iraq.

Q: I remember that story.

CROCKER: The Soviet program was more evil than ours and much larger. President Nixon unilaterally got rid of our program. Soviet experts who visited our facilities had no doubt that our program was eliminated. They visited all of our facilities, these scientists and engineers who had been subject to KGB propaganda about our program, then went back with the truth and spread the word that a massive U.S. BW program was built on false information.

Q: That's interesting.

CROCKER: The man who was in charge of Koltsovo, Sandakhchief, was making smallpox and other agents. Koltsovo is the place Merck went to and wanted to invest in it and use it in the pharmaceutical business. Sandakhchief was one of the scientists who came to the U.S. He was very impressed with our technology and medical equipment. Ellie Fagen from Merck goes to Koltsovo and there's KGB watchers in her group. She has a film crew and when she returns she gives me a tape that looks unused. She said the Director of Koltsovo wanted me to see the tape. As Ellie's group moved through the facility there was French music playing until they came into certain rooms and the music changed to the song "You are in the army now". Sources had told us about these rooms and where lethal agents were worked on. He was sending me a tape telling me which

rooms were where the agents were produced. Merck of course decides they cannot use facilities where pathogens were made.

Q: Yeah, scary stuff.

CROCKER: So the end of this story is that it is decided at high levels here that the joint inspections have resolved our mutual suspicions and it's time to sign an agreement that we're both out of the business. Well, the problem is we didn't see any of the eight military facilities. Many of us in intelligence who worked on this issue for decades were disappointed and believe there is still a question about the BW program that has not been resolved. Frank Wisner had just become the Undersecretary for Security issues and he signed the agreement in Moscow in September 1992. Initially the information from defectors was highly classified and I would have to take the documents to a few senior people in State. In this period I was a member of a high level interagency group that decided on the policy for the US/Soviet interaction and worked on the effort to get the Soviet Union to submit a declaration about their program. The diplomatic activities involved the ambassador in Moscow. I wrote a highly classified history of five years of negotiations on the BW issue. Our military had released a huge amount of information to the UN and by 1992 they were ready to stop this interaction with the Russians. Chemical/biological weapons had become an important issue because of the Iraq war and the importance of protection for our troops. Therefore, we never visited the military facilities, but inspections and interaction with the Russians continued and at the interagency level new information indicated the program was even bigger than our original assessments.

Q: So you assume that it's probably still stockpiled.

CROCKER: There is still some kind of program. At least we got beyond the period where even high-level people in intelligence refused to believe our assessments. Professor Meselson of Harvard had brought three "medical experts" to the US to explain the accident at Sverdlovsk in 1979 as tainted meat with anthrax. Eventually he was proved wrong after the defectors started telling their stories. US scientists at one of Meselson's meetings criticized me for playing politics when I suggested they should hear the US argument, not just Meselson's view. After the fall of the Soviet Union some scientists in the chemical and biological field sold their expertise to countries like Iran and Syria. I got quite involved in this issue and worked with some Russians who traded information about what these scientists were doing in Iran, including smuggling agents out of the country as well as providing expertise. The head of the Chemical Weapons Board, General Kuntsevich, who had provided us some information ended up being "arrested" for illegal work overseas, but he continued to show up in our reports and at meetings. As I said, it was a big story. Some people thought it was kind of a sideline issue, but in my view it was a pretty big issue.

Q: Yes, I agree.

CROCKER: The chemical/biological weapons issues gained international attention in

1989 under Secretary Shultz. That's when we did something spectacular on the subject. A group of us in State who had worked on the use of chemical and biological agents in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan and later in the Iran/Iraq War decided that it was time for an international conference to secure pledges from every country to not use the terrible weapons and condemn countries that used them. In effect, reaffirm the 1925 Geneva Protocol. Foreign Ministers from 147 countries attended the meeting in Paris following Iraq's use on the Iranians and the Kurds. To understand the significance of this successful meeting, I will need to review the case history and my involvement during the tenure of Haig and Shultz. The whole picture changes in terms of the importance of chemical biological weapons and the number of people working on it.

Q: Yes, it certainly came to the fore when we responded to the Iraq invasion of Kuwait.

CROCKER: Right, we went from being a minority group of protagonists to being in demand on top priority issues. Our experience with investigations from 1979 to 1989 helped us work with the United Nations to develop an international system for investigating the use of chemical and biological weapons. And that was done in Iraq and Iran better than we had done in any of the other countries, going back to Yemen in 1966.

Q: Did you find that as the threat of biological and chemical warfare became more apparent, there was a difference in NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) between the different nationalities.

CROCKER: Sure. Interestingly enough, I gave a full briefing to the NATO political and military committees in 1979 about Southeast Asia and Afghanistan. While I was there I received instructions to also brief on the anthrax release from Sverdlovsk in the Soviet Union. I had been instrumental in putting language into the NATO intelligence threat document about the use of chemical and biological weapons, with no dissent from any country. Germany, France, and the UK all provided private support for our assessments by providing evidence they had collected and analyzed. But you have to understand the Germans don't talk publicly about chemical warfare, they just get beat up in the press about World War I and II. As a matter of fact I remember a German said something at the Conference on Disarmament and the Russian Ambassador blasted him with a history lesson.

So now, the French just don't tell anybody anything about their nuclear or chemical weapons program. The French have been at the forefront of chemical weapons development going way back. In fact, it was surprising to me that the Germans learned about chemical weapons from the French that helped them make weapons for World War I. France was extremely helpful privately on Southeast Asia and Afghanistan. Over the years I found the French to be in sync with us on the Soviet threat. Europeans were very involved in investigations worldwide and collecting information as well as treating victims overseas and at European hospitals. The UN sent teams to Thailand and Pakistan, because they couldn't go into Laos, Cambodia, nor Afghanistan. Allies played a major role, but the Soviet in charge of UN investigations made sure there were Bulgarians or others on the teams who would report directly to him. The UN report did not condemn

anyone by name, but it did say that there was circumstantial evidence that chemical weapons were used. A lot of politics was involved. When our team went to the UN to present our evidence, we briefed the Soviet in charge and he immediately handed the documents to his Warsaw Pact assistant. I actually got to know the Head of the UN team, an Egyptian named General Ez. He had been trained in the Soviet Union and knew a lot about chemical weapons. I asked him if his statement about the use of certain chemical weapons in Afghanistan being believable was based on his experience in the Soviet Union. He just smiled and nodded his head. We had sensitive intelligence that the Soviets had a problem with a toxin they used as an insecticide and herbicide called mycotoxins.

Q: What's that?

CROCKER: Mycotoxins, the toxins we found in samples from Southeast Asia.

Q: I understand.

CROCKER: And the intelligence was saying it was used in Afghanistan and we didn't have samples from there. Later on, when Russia falls and we bring the head general in charge of the chemical weapons programs to the United States and he says, "Yeah, yeah, we investigated using mycotoxins, you know, mainly as a way to go against an insurgency or whatever and use it to destroy all their crops and all their cattle, and of course if some people get hit with it they're going to have problems." Well, that's what happened in Laos. I mean that's exactly what happened.

Some scientists said, "Oh, mycotoxins would never work, you'd have to drop tons of it, it wouldn't work." But it did work. Our intelligence was correct. Later we set up some pretty elaborate investigations in Afghanistan. We had some doctors and others investigating. I gave movie cameras to Afghans who filmed chemical weapons attacks, for example. And yet, people still within Washington intelligence agencies refused to believe the Soviet Union was using lethal chemical weapons in Afghanistan. One colleague at CIA developed a briefing and report that said Afghans were reporting symptoms caused by bombs and shells, nothing more.

Q: How do you think this mindset developed?

CROCKER: It's hard to track. There was a battle out there at the agency, with analysts on both sides. Chemical and biological analysts were for the most part believers that agents had been used. People who were focused on conventional and nuclear forces just did not want to believe that the Soviets were interested in chemical-biological weapons. And so they had a stake in proving that well, they certainly wouldn't be using them. One of the arguments was they would never use them on people from Laos or a minor cause that would embarrass them. Three of us did a study of the area where Hmong lived in northern Laos and it turns out the Vietnamese had established huge bases and positions, military positions, and the Soviets were with them in a military buildup against China. And the Hmong were in the way, they were just a nuisance, they were in the way of this development. They weren't just like a bunch of animists living out in the jungle. Plus the

Hmong fought with US forces in Laos against the Vietnamese and the Lao. Basically the Lao treated them the way the Vietnamese treated the Montagnards. The Hmong people were much more sophisticated than the Montagnards. A Lao pilot told us that the Lao with Soviet help were spraying these villages to drive them into Thailand. Well, it worked. We went to Northern Thailand to these huge refugee camps where the Hmong relocated from Laos.

Another problem I ran into, even a few years ago, is that there were people in State who weren't happy with the Secret War in Laos, especially those on the Vietnam-Laos-Cambodia Desk. We met resistance trying to paint Laos and Vietnam in a bad light. Ed McWilliams, the FSO who first compiled the Hmong stories about chemical weapons was in a battle with this office. I never completely understood this because some people I know really well who went out to be Ambassador in Laos turned on this subject. And it turns out it has to do with a division about the Hmong who helped our military, that group of Hmong under Vang Pao who have been associated with drug dealing. But those who fought with the Hmong gather each year on the mall and they have a plaque at Arlington Cemetery. I spoke to this group for several years. There is another Hmong organization that is supported by some in State. I have been told by people who call State asking for information on "yellow rain" that they are told that was just Al Haig propaganda.

Q: Could you mention something about your work in INR.

CROCKER: Those were frustrating times. INR had, I consider, a very sophisticated view of the Warsaw Pact threat. And one of the reasons was our boss Bob Baraz, who was a Russian and a brilliant person and a brilliant military analyst, looked at the Soviets in an informed and realistic way.

Q: And also we didn't have a budget bias.

CROCKER: Yes.

Q: A problem that the Pentagon had.

CROCKER: Tony Lake, the head of the NSC once said that the INR morning summary is *the best* thing to read in Washington. Nothing is better written for senior people and in English and it's the best there is. And several others like Brzezinski said the same thing. It broke my heart when they got rid of that. We weren't subjected to policy pressure and policy people could not edit nor change our reports. It certainly was you know, nothing like the Pentagon or CIA where there was high level influence. I speak from experience in both places.

Q: I understand because I was in INR. If there are too many layers, by the time your piece reaches a decision maker it has been altered, watered down or changed to reflect policy interests or concerns.

CROCKER: I liked working in DIA where the editors did not mess with substance, only grammar, and they consulted you about any changes. I always felt strongly about the integrity of the analyst and the important role they play in the intelligence system.

INR publishes the Morning Summary and my office played a major role because we covered worldwide political-military issues. During the first furlough I had about 26 people and I was told I could only have three people. I think that was including myself actually. And everybody else had to go home. But no idea when they'd come back or if they'd be paid or anything else. It was a horrible time. So if you remember the INR Summary got more sophisticated, not like the CIA color publication, but it was fancier with desktop publishing and pictures and maps. I picked the desktop publishing guru and my best analyst who could do the world. And that was three of us basically. The summary contained numbered pages, no graphics, and was very simple. We got feedback from our high-level readership at the White House, Defense and State that they loved the simple format.

Q: OK. All right. Today is the 27th of April, 2012 with Gary Crocker. And Gary, you made some notes and I'll let you take over from where we are.

CROCKER: It's interesting that the person who was pushing the Soviet threat and who listened to my briefing and then wanted me to give it to everybody, was Dick Holbrooke, who I think people thought of as some kind of liberal or something. I found him to be very bright and well informed on Sino-Soviet affairs. It was Holbrooke who supported us in our efforts to stop the Soviet use of chemical and biological weapons and their brutal occupation of Afghanistan.

Q: Well, were you getting questions like OK, the Soviets were going to do this, but we're down here below China. What does this mean to us?

CROCKER: I would summarize the attitude as concern that after leaving Vietnam in 1975, the US was withdrawing from Asia. A number of events in Washington had fed that view. Brzezinski wanted to change that view, thus our briefing trip in 1977. There was an interagency paper addressing this problem. I put in a footnote to the recommendations that said no one remembers what the Israelis said, only what action they took to solve a problem. My point was that we need to demonstrate our leadership and resolve in the Pacific. But the challenge for the Carter administration at that time, and Brzezinski was adamant about this, was that we need to convince the Asians that we haven't left Asia. That's really the purpose of the 1977 trip is to go out and assure them that the Sixth Fleet will still be there and our troops will still be there and, and we'll be working with the Australians and the Japanese and the South Koreans.

Q: Tell me. Did you get the feeling that, say at this time or at any other time, that you were considered sort of the rogue elephant running around talking about the Soviet threat while others were trying to poo poo this within the government? You know, because you

do have sort of a Chicken Little problem.

CROCKER: And actually, that's one of the reasons I'm bringing this one up. In the 1970s there was a tendency to exaggerate the capabilities of the Warsaw Pact saying they could run across Europe with no problem and they could do it with 24-hour warning. I was in a group, which would include people from CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency and the Army, that I think presented a more realistic threat. It was true that the Warsaw Pact comprised a large military formation and the Soviets were expanding into Africa and the Middle East. And they replaced us in Vietnam. But to be credible, the threat should not be overblown.

Q: Well, of course too in a way, the problem with the Military, they had budgetary considerations.

CROCKER: Oh right.

Q: And so, I mean they had a financial stake in how they presented it.

CROCKER: I worked in Defense in the Pentagon for four years and I worked both in the Defense Intelligence Agency as an intelligence analyst and then for the Air Force as an intelligence analyst. At State there was a different atmosphere. Defense has to do long range planning to build weapons and bases. State wants to do long range planning, but finds itself putting out fires as George Vest once said.

I enjoyed working with Holbrooke. One day he said we're going to go to the United Nations." He didn't say, "Ask your boss if you could." And my boss did not say I couldn't go. Holbrooke cleared it with the White House. In one case I went up there to brief the Mexican Foreign Minister who was on his way to China. And Dick wanted him to take a message to China and bring back information. And I was there to provide the briefing material. We also have Afghanistan to carry over. They're invaded in '79 and that's going to carry over into the Reagan administration. The whole yellow rain issue, the issue of chemical weapons use in Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan is going to be a *big* issue in the Reagan administration. We never got really good evidence in the Carter administration. They kept asking, you know? Have you got the proof yet? Poland also carries over. When Muskie was Secretary he paid close attention to Poland. I took the opposite view from Afghanistan when I predicted they would not invade Poland. I briefed Secretary Vance and his counselor that I did not think the Soviets were making real preparations to invade, but were only trying to intimidate the Poles.

Q: Muskie was Polish.

CROCKER: Yes. During the Carter administration and into the Reagan administration I had the unique opportunity to brief the press and appear in television talk shows and documentaries. Unusual for an intelligence officer. I've been on a number of programs, mostly about yellow rain, but also about the Soviet threat. Being in INR I was asked to speak publicly when analysts from other agencies were not allowed to discuss sanitized

information. I did occasionally get in trouble, usually when someone accused me of leaking classified information. I also did a lot of public speaking around the country on foreign affairs and current issues. On each of the main issues I briefed congress or was backup for a senior person. Starting with Holbrooke, I briefed heads of state. He had me brief the Japanese Prime Minister at Blair House on the Soviet threat and on Japan's involvement with the Soviets. When I showed the Prime Minister a Soviet aircraft carrier in a Japanese built dry dock he looked at me and said, *(with deep voice)* "Not on my watch, Mr. Crocker."

In this period I take my lawsuit against the department and go from being a Foreign Service Reserve Officer to GS (General Service) -- GM they called it in those days. That's kind of a long story, not worth telling.

Q: Well, we'll talk about it.

CROCKER: I'd gone quite a few years without a promotion and I had great ratings and everything and I was just being told by our Personnel Officer, "Well, that's the Foreign Service, it is slow." And it turned out I wasn't in the Foreign Service system. That the Foreign Service Reserve setup was different. But our personnel officer misled me. I found out by going down into the bowels of State Personnel and finding that when you came in as an FSR (Foreign Service Reserve), like a lot of lawyers, doctors, scientists, specialists (that's who were brought in as Foreign Service Reserve). So I was called a Political Military Science officer. And what happened was that Ben Reid and Harry Barnes had really decided that there was no need for the Foreign Service Reserve anymore. There had been 20 people in my cone, and only two left. We would never be promoted. They had offered the others GS's or they'd been, you know, contacted and out. So I did a very thick brief and started with the Foreign Service grievance board. This man had 90 days to look at my case and in 90 days he hadn't even looked at it. Matter of fact, he was against the Foreign Service Reserves. With the head of the grievance board helping me I was awarded two years back pay and a two year back promotion, making me an instant senior civil servant. George Dragnich, the other person in my cone, elected to go in the Foreign Service and retired as a career minister.

Q: Well, before we get into that, you sort of became the voice of the Soviet threat, you know, on TV programs and other things like this. You mentioned trouble. What sort of trouble could you get into?

CROCKER: Let's see, a couple of good examples. Under Carter we wanted to push the fact the Soviets had a large biological weapons program. And we briefed a guy named Bill Beecher of The Boston Globe on background. And he published the whole story. And of course, there was a big stink about leaking classified information. On Afghanistan, I appeared in a television documentary about Afghanistan and how poor the Soviet troops had done. I went into all the diseases the Soviets troops were catching and other problems and the fact they were using lethal chemical weapons. It was a pretty detailed documentary and the first of several that I did. So anyway, CIA came formally to my boss and said I leaked all this information from highly classified documents. The

problem was these people who are accusing me sit behind computers and they live in this isolated world where all they have is the classified information. In my case, I was debriefing doctors and journalists who had been there, especially French. I had Afghans living down in South Arlington that I was debriefing who had just come from there. I had plenty of unclassified sources telling me what was going on without relying on classified sources. One was the medical situation in Soviet forces and another was their evidence of chemical weapons use. And I talked to academics. And I'd been to conferences. I actually went to three Afghan tribunals, where I got a lot of my information, in Norway, Paris, and Geneva. They tried the Soviet Union for these atrocities in Afghanistan. Each one of these countries -- particularly Norway -- had lost reporters there. Two women doctors from Médecins sans Frontiers traveled to Masoud's camp (an Afghan freedom fighter) for long periods of time and kept me informed. I got in trouble on two other issues. One was Yemen -- I think maybe I mentioned before that I spoke and wrote about the Egyptian use of lethal chemical weapons in '63 and '66 and I was initially brought on the carpet and told that President Reagan and Mubarak had a deal that we would never bring up the fact they used chemical weapons in Yemen. The other problem I got onto you was with Cuba. The lady I had used from the Merck Company who'd gone to the Soviet Union, also went to Cuba and met with Castro because she was going to have Merck maybe take over this big two billion dollar bio research facility that John Bolton (Under Secretary of State) was convinced was making biological weapons. So I thought, "Well hell, why don't we just let Merck go over and find out," Well, I got raked over the coals for participating in that and having anything to do with Cuba. It was one of the great opportunities we had for Merck, taking over that facility. Because Castro was losing it, it was deteriorating. And I said, "What better way to find out whether he's making biological weapons. Let Merck go in there," you know? Because Merck had already helped us by traveling all over the Soviet Union and telling us about the former biological weapons facilities. They'd done an incredible job helping us on that. They made Merck fire that lady, Ellie Fagen, for meeting with Castro. I never talked to the press unless I had permission from a senior official or was on a committee to sanitize classified information. Now, early in the Reagan administration I briefed Diane Sawyer several times on Poland, when the Soviets were putting pressure on the Polish government. Also, I wrote articles in The New York Times with my name on it.

Q: You mentioned yellow rain. And you know, we were sending teams in to investigate.

CROCKER: That's a good place to segue in, because we go to a whole new dimension on yellow rain when we go into the Reagan years. First, in this transition we did a national intelligence estimate as we started in the Reagan administration. So this is a highly classified one that has all kinds of information in it, including information from other countries. My job was to take that national estimate and write this white paper called "Chemical Warfare in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan, a Report to Congress from the Secretary of State, Alexander Haig."

Q: When?

CROCKER: March 1982.

That's our first white paper, it's sort of semi-official maybe, but the Secretary signed it. This is a sanitized version of a national estimate. And this got wide play all over the world actually. We did extensive international briefings. We wrote this out at CIA and with the participation of the Defense Intelligence Agency. This was an interagency project, but with some disagreement within agencies. The starting point of yellow rain was October '78, when Holbrooke makes the first really public statement about it. And as I mentioned before, Ed McWilliams was the Foreign Service Officer who interviewed Hmong victims who had been exposed to the gas or seen the victims and everything. McWilliams sent a large compendium to the United Nations. That was the beginning of the investigation. We continued through 1979. We sent people out to the camps. We had discussions with the Lao. We sent in an Army medical team and they came back and said these people definitely had been exposed to chemical agents. We briefed the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where Mathew Meselson of Harvard first disputed the government evidence. I was there for that one. We demarched the Soviet Union because the chemicals came from them. We also raised it in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. We had now accumulated all the evidence, scientific evidence, which was verified by scientists all over the world. In addition we examined the collected material from attack sites in Laos and Cambodia and eventually from Afghanistan. That data appears in the classified and unclassified versions of the first and second reports.

I used to get the question, "Well, why would the Soviets allow the use of chemical weapons for such an unimportant reason and risk political condemnation?" My answer was basically that the idea was to drive the Hmong out into huge refugee camps in Thailand. They didn't really want to kill them all, but they wanted to poison, you know, their crops and cattle. And in the process, people died or got terrible skin lesions. The Lao and Soviets had built military facilities against China in Northern Laos and the Hmong were an irritant. There was a motivation. And obviously in Afghanistan the motivation was to kill the Afghan resistance and destroy their morale. Fighting in Cambodia involved several different groups against the Vietnamese. And we ran operations through this whole period and into the Reagan administration to get information, even provided cameras to the Mujahideen to take pictures of gas attacks. We had people bring out samples, we had people going in and examining victims. I mean there's a lot of evidence, including sensitive intelligence from NSA and other places. This was an international investigation involving government and non-government organizations as well as private individuals. We had all kinds of defectors and witnesses. Other governments like Australia, France, Britain, Germany were also sending people in there, finding out what was going on. But the entirety of the evidence was insufficient for some people because of a wide range of opposition to the US accusations, skepticism or downright opposition because of politics.

Q: OK, I mean you're getting information, you're getting statements and all. Why would there be resistance within I assume the academic, the scientific side?

CROCKER: Opposition was varied. First, on the scientific side there was a belief that the signing of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Treaty, which was ratified in 1975, and the

Geneva Protocol from 1925 had made these weapons illegal and stopped their use. There even was a UN report before all this happened that said since World War I there had been no persuasive use of chemical or biological weapons. There were charges made in World War II and Korea that were not internationally accepted.

Q: Ethiopia?

CROCKER: Ethiopian use led to the 1925 Geneva Protocol as well a German use in World War I. In 1963 and 1966 Egypt used lethal chemicals on the Royal Yemen people, but this was never properly investigated or accepted as a treaty violation. I mentioned before that I got in trouble speaking publicly about Egyptian use in Yemen. I discovered old intelligence about the Egyptian Air Force dropping chemicals when I was investigating the case to compare it with Soviet use in Afghanistan.

Q: Was it also the fact that you were accusing a major power of treaty violations?

CROCKER: Yes. There was a reluctance internationally and at home to accuse the Soviets even after they invaded Afghanistan and used chemical weapons. The UN investigated the reports from Afghanistan, but never actually accused them. According to my research, the only country the UN directly accused was Iraq for the chemical weapons use on Iranian forces. It reminds me of the time I briefed the US Catholic bishops who were visiting NATO. I commented that their letter on nuclear disarmament only mentioned the US unilaterally disarming. They said “Well, we believe you should deal quietly with the Soviets and not openly accuse them.”

I strongly believe that it is important to let the Soviets know that their behavior is not internationally correct and there are consequences for treaty violations. So many times my colleagues and I argued this in interagency meetings and lost. Let me give you Secretary Muskie's thoughts on this. We talked for more than an hour on the 8th floor balcony just before the end of the administration. He put it very well, I thought. He said, “We boycotted the Olympics when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. But over on the strategic side, business goes as usual on the arms control negotiations.” And Muskie says, “You can't jerk around the American people.” He said, “You can't, I have been all over this country, I ran for President, you know? I know what these people think out there. You can't condemn the Soviets for one thing and continue to do business as usual on other matters.” There were those in the arms control business who thought that nuclear arms control was far more important than chemical and biological weapons, there were even those in intelligence and the military who said these weapons were obsolete and the Soviets didn't even make them anymore; more on that later. Keep in mind that President Nixon abolished the work on chemical and biological weapons in 1969 which led to a negative attitude on even defense work. The Soviets not only did not stop their work, they thought we had secret programs after revealing so much publicly about our weapons programs. The military saw our new threat analysis concerning new agents and delivery systems as something that would require spending more money on programs they did not want. We were just learning about new Soviet agents from the use in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan. Later we will learn the threat is much worse and they have been working to

defeat the NATO suit and mask.

Q: So the threat is increasing while the US has downgraded its capabilities.

CROCKER: Harvard Professor Meselson is the main antagonist against all our evidence. He debated me on television and in Congress, he's everywhere, fighting this subject. And he hasn't quit, because he just called a guy at State and said, "Would Gary Crocker talk to me?"

Q: This is when?

CROCKER: This is three days ago.

One of the things I want to point out is that these issues don't die. Denny Lane who collected the evidence from Laos along with Ed McWilliams is now in the Proliferation Bureau at State. I said to him that my guess is that Meselson is still trying to get a Nobel Peace Prize." He's been fighting for years to get it and we have all kinds of people sending letters saying he's been proven wrong on so many things, why would you give him a Nobel Peace Prize? He first approached me in Geneva after he did his own investigation on the reports from Laos. He concluded that the yellow spots on leaves were from bee pollen. He held several scientific meetings with his like-minded friends challenging the US evidence. One person who was with him in Thailand and published an article turned out to be his wife. He co-opted some people from London, Australia, others, all who were basically Soviet apologists and convinced the US was making the accusations for anti-Soviet propaganda and to increase spending for chemical weapons in the US. Our next national estimate and white paper was in November 1982 from Secretary Shultz with more evidence from Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan. Blood samples were new and flew in the face of Meselson's bee droppings theory. In one case we had blood taken from victims on camera by an ABC film crew. We had ABC film right there, drawing the blood, documenting it, kept the camera going to film it being put on a commercial plane and taken off in Washington by Army specialists and taken to Fort Detrick and other labs for analysis. The blood contained the mycotoxins we said had been used in the first report. Meselson never had a good argument for the blood analysis and millions of people saw the documentary. He appeared in the documentary saying the mycotoxins would not cause the symptoms. He was followed by scientific demonstrations by non-government researchers that proved the toxins caused the massive bleeding through the skin reported in Laos. The Shultz report made a tighter connection between Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan. The same chemicals and toxins were used in all three countries according to testimony, samples and sensitive intelligence. There is no way that these victims from three different countries and different tribes of people could have coordinated their stories. The common denominator was the Soviet Union who produced the agents and weapons. We know what's in the Soviet inventory, I said in the documentary. Later, of course, I go to the Soviet Union under the Reagan administration and I see the weapons. To give you an example, the Afghans described this bomb coming down with a parachute and it had nerve gas in it. The CIA and others dismissed this as Afghan exaggeration. Well, I was in a tent in 1990 in the Soviet Union and all the

munitions they possessed were displayed with details about the weapons. I said to the CIA guy, "Take a picture of this. See that? It's about that big."

Q: We're talking about something about two and a half, three feet?

CROCKER: Exactly the dimensions the Afghans described over and over. And it has a parachute. And it's full of nerve gas. And I called the CIA guy to come over with his cameras. The CIA position was that the Soviets stopped making chemical weapons, they weren't interested because they had short-range nukes, so they had got out of the business. I don't think it's necessary to go into the details, but let's just say a bunch of people at CIA totally misread some highly classified information. They were misreading data from Warsaw Pact documents that did not have real Soviet data because the Soviets didn't trust their allies. The Soviets had their own planning documents that we hadn't seen. The Pact documents did not have information about the use of chemical and biological weapons. The absence of chemical and biological weapons led some analysts to believe the Soviets were no longer interested in these weapons.

Another significant obstacle was the scientific view, expressed to me by Meselson, that scientists didn't like that we were talking about using biotechnology to make bad things to kill people. They were pushing worldwide biotechnology to help people. Therefore they questioned our evidence and found ways to prove it wasn't valid. One scientist reflected the view that he would have to be at the attack site at the time the chemicals are used and collect samples with his own tools and identify without doubt who delivered the agents. We have to do the best we can on the battlefield, which has rarely been available for on sight collection. But we also have a lot of intelligence about who was flying then, the weather, and military communications about the attacks. The US government's work was not shabby. We checked every piece of evidence against other information.

Q: We're talking about the national estimates?

CROCKER: It was reported in the winter of 1979 there was an attack on certain villages, OK. And it was this kind of gas. We actually went as far as checking the weather for that exact day of the reported attack. The analysis was comprehensive. We disregarded evidence that could not be verified. It's also important that the United Nations sent a team out to Thailand to investigate CW use in Laos and Cambodia. They also sent a team to Pakistan to investigate reports from Afghanistan. They went to the border and they interviewed people. And they published that report in 1981. It contained interviews with many of the same people we talked to plus other information. The head of the UN team was an Egyptian named General Ez. I spent time with him and the first thing I said to him was, "Well, General Ez, were you trained in the Soviet Union? Did you learn all about chemical weapons in the Soviet Union?"

"Yes," he said. "The reason I say that" I told him, "You say in one place that you found the evidence persuasive. Those are your words, the only place you said that that you found the evidence persuasive that the Soviets use such and such a chemical on the Afghans, particularly in the underground waterways. I'm going to tell you why I think

you knew what agents and delivery systems were used. When you investigated what was used in Laos and Cambodia, you never really trained or you didn't really know what mycotoxins were, you never heard of them in the Soviet Union. But with Afghanistan you knew what weapons and agent the Soviets used in that particular circumstance. General Ez gave me a nod that I was right. The UN report never directly accused the Soviets, but it went further than the other reports. Keep in mind that the senior official at the UN in charge of investigating chemical weapons use was a Soviet. When we briefed him at the UN he handed the report to his Soviet assistance and said get this to Moscow.

Q: What changes when the Reagan Administration comes in?

CROCKER: Everything changed. Afghanistan was not the only trouble spot. The Soviets found Carter weak and started dipping their toes into places like Angola, Ethiopia, Syria, Iraq and Libya. They sent 10,000 tanks to Libya. There was not any significant push back from the US. Their influence increased in the Middle East, Africa, even Vietnam where they built bases. This new administration comes in and they're saying Carter was weak and the Soviets are increasing the threat to the US and its allies worldwide. The first week of this administration, a Colonel at DIA, Defense Intelligence Agency, and I had done a briefing under Carter just at the end of the Carter administration. This briefing was on the Soviet threat in the Southwest, forces facing Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. It was a new briefing about a threat that hadn't really received a lot of attention. But it did receive attention because we were thinking of moving forces into Iran to get the hostages out of Tehran. The question was what would the Soviets do if we throw the RDF, the Rapid Deployment Force, under General Kingston, into Iran. Then there were questions about the Soviet's intentions in Afghanistan toward the Strait of Hormuz and Pakistan? This was new strategic thinking. The briefing was highly classified and used charts. In the audience was Richard Burt, the new Assistant Secretary for Political Military Affairs, who's going to be a major player in Washington with aspirations to be Secretary. He's definitely going to be a heavy-duty player. And he's got Blackwell. Do you know who Blackwell and Dobbins are?

Q: They are hardnosed Foreign Service Officers.

CROCKER: Yes. Blackwell and Dobbins are his deputies. I have a rough start with them in the beginning but they are very supportive later. In this briefing, I was practically thrown off the stage. They say there will be no more talk about Soviet weaknesses. They want to know why my briefing does not have more about nuclear weapon and conventional weapons superiority. I replied that was appropriate in Europe opposite NATO but not in this theater where Soviet forces are weaker. The divisions they sent into Afghanistan got their butt kicked. This did not go over well with the new crowd that wanted to stress the Soviet threat to Southwest Asia and paint the Soviet military as 10-feet tall. This view was very prevalent in the Reagan administration as you know. The irony was that I was hawkish on the Soviet threat but was not afraid to point out their weaknesses and had published intelligence papers on the subject. For example, I did a highly classified paper on moral and discipline in the Soviet Army. Some of us in different agencies believed that the Soviet threat was exaggerated. I did an interview in

Playboy Magazine, believe it or not, and it's a long interview about the use of chemical weapons and the Soviets. At the end of the interview the writer said "Well, I'm sitting in the State Department cafeteria with Gary Crocker, the last Cold Warrior in Washington."

I don't know if you know who Belenko was. A Soviet pilot defected to Japan in the highly sophisticated Foxbat, providing us with valuable information about their planes. Now, later on in my life I actually fly in and see an exhibit of all their planes. As I told you, I wrote my thesis at GW (George Washington) on comparing the U.S and Soviet technology and research. Their weapons and equipment worked but it was not gold-plated. Next we move to the Polish threat problem, that the Soviets are threatening Poland.

Q: Meaning we were concerned that the Soviets might move into Poland.

CROCKER: Right. This is what I considered the longest day of my life, and I'm going to tell you this story and it'll make a lot of points about Poland and the situation at State. I had already briefed Diane Sawyer, the journalist, about Poland with my view that the Soviets were positioned on the border, but did not appear to be preparing for an invasion. There was also information that the East Germans were heading to Poland, but it was not confirmed on the ground. A very senior Polish official said, "It's going to be our duty to fight the East Germans and it's going to be a pleasure to fight the Soviets,"

Q: This is 1981. Alexander Haig is Secretary.

CROCKER: The background is important. I was the intelligence person on Richard Burt's (Assistant Secretary for Pol/Mil) committee on the Polish situation. A general from the White House staff who advises Haig makes it clear that the Soviets will invade Poland and it is time to implement the grand plan they have been working on for this contingency. This general has been briefing Haig. The plan is to break out of arms control talks, send large numbers of troops to Europe, and numerous other Haig wish list items. Then this general says the Soviets had taken the Poles' ammunition away from them. That is when I raised my hand and said, "I'm the intelligence person here and there is absolutely no basis for that." This general was really scary and I think Burt and the others were happy I took him on.

Q: This is a weird story.

CROCKER: Oh it gets weirder. Early one morning I am sent to brief Secretary Haig in a small back office and he's got a table and maps and calipers. And there's all these people standing around. "Go, get in there quick, they're invading Poland," a staffer says. I go in and the Secretary says "When does the main force hit the border?" And I said, "Excuse me? I'm the INR briefer and I am here to brief you on Poland. He says, "Well, the Soviets are invading Poland." I said, "They're not invading Poland." He says, "Oh yeah. Bill Casey (Director of Central Intelligence) and his deputy Bob Gates called me this morning." Now, here's the lesson. Gates and Casey came in early. Gates was a Soviet analyst. They read raw traffic early and decided there were indications that Soviet forces

had started moving into Poland. Senior people should never read raw material unsupervised. Haig blew me off and stated "I'm on my way to the White House to brief, you know, and we're going to implement all these plans." So this begins the start of a very long day. I meet with Ron Spiers, Assistant Secretary for INR, one of the really great foreign service officers. By this time I realize that the Soviets are worried about their two divisions stationed in Poland and their dependents. They are bringing people out secretly because they have a status of forces agreement with Poland regarding increasing or decreasing their forces, called the Northern Group of Forces. General Jaruzelski is the leader of communist Poland and is in a bunker because of the critical situation. We had very sensitive information from a Polish General for decades and were in the loop on Polish and Warsaw Pact planning. George as we called him has since defected and you can read about him. I see Haig five times during this day. So I'm going to shorten this, because it's not until a little later in the day that I know and tell him what's happened. What's happening is the Soviets themselves are worried that there's going to be another "Prague Spring of 1968" in Poland.

Q: A Polish version, to be sure, that does happen.

CROCKER: Right, but Jaruzelski decides to declare martial law to placate the Soviets and stop an invasion or any harassment of Soviet forces and their dependents. Haig stated that Jaruzelski betrayed the Poles while I believed he took the step to save Poland, not to please the Soviets. I'd already gone on record with Secretary Muskie that I didn't think they'd invade Poland. His counselor Marshal Shulman had asked me if the Soviets would invade Poland, reminding me that I was right when I told him and Secretary Vance that the Soviets would invade Afghanistan. He didn't believe me then. This time I said "No, I really don't because there are no logistics indicators that they are preparing to fight a strong Polish army." If you're going to do something for real, it's different. You break out the ammo, you put extra fuel cans on your tanks and you make extensive preparations.

Q: Does Haig ever believe you?

CROCKER: Eventually, but he says he got better information from somewhere else that convinced him, even though I briefed him on the sensitive information several different times. Finally we go to a full staff meeting. Have you done Negroponte yet?

Q: No, I need to.

CROCKER: You might ask him about this meeting. Several times he stopped me in the cafeteria and said, "Gary, I remember that day, by God, you were right." He says, "I didn't believe you about Afghanistan when you briefed the Secretary. I didn't believe you on Poland." But he said, "You were right." I started the meeting with a briefing. Ron Spiers had already taken the Secretary aside and here was the conversation before the staff meeting. I hope this surprises you, maybe it won't. Ron Spiers told him that he should go to Saudi Arabia to sign the AWACS (Airborne Warning and Controls) deal today. Now, he said, if the Soviets invade Poland and we're wrong, you can make this trip back, or whatever, but you really need to make the trip because we're convinced they're

not invading Poland. And you're going to look foolish if you cancel the trip because you think they are and they don't.

So now, I should say it's only a while later that I understand what was going on in the State Department that had nothing to do with Poland. It had to do with the AWACS deal in Saudi Arabia. So those on the staff who didn't want him to go to Saudi Arabia were all saying, "No, the Soviets are going to invade, you don't want to go there and do that."

Q: AWACS deal is considered anti-Israel.

CROCKER: Yes, right. And obviously the other side -- well, let's call 'em Arabists -- I don't think Arabs and Zionists is a very good term in the State Department, but let's do that for purposes of discussion. The Arabists are saying they're not going to invade Poland and you should go to Saudi Arabia. So it has nothing to do with their views on Poland or anything I say. The meeting ended when Haig got up and said, "I'm on my way to Saudi Arabia," and he walked out the door. That was the end of that.

I think -- it's just one of those things that happens to you in your career. I had been there since probably six, seen the Secretary five times, kept running back to read more intelligence and brief other people, and had people looking up info for me. So I mean I'd had an unusually busy day. I come back into the office and my boss chews me out for not keeping him informed. Ron Spiers interceded, led me away and told my boss to cool it.

Q: What was the CIA role in this?

CROCKER: Let's see. CIA is tracking this and they have kind of a different view than the Defense Intelligence Agency about the Polish issue. They're a little bit hard nose on it actually, but they got to see some photography before all the rest of us. They got to see some information in the morning because they control that particular type of intelligence. I'm going to tell you this because I briefed Diane Sawyer, the TV correspondent several times on Poland.

Q: Very well known and smart.

CROCKER: Diane Sawyer calls me early in the morning at home and says she has found out that two Soviet divisions are on the Polish border. And I remember thinking who's leaking information, because the only people who knew what she learned that morning was CIA, because the rest of us hadn't got it yet. So she was literally sitting out there getting the information and calling me to verify whether those two divisions were doing what they were doing out there. Anyway, does that answer your question?

Q: Well, I mean the CIA was posing this as an imminent threat.

CROCKER: It's very important not to ever say the Pentagon or the CIA or State because they're such different opinions within each agency.

Q: I mean I think this is one of the things that's very interesting.

CROCKER: Yes. I have had important differences of view from CIA and some bitter battles. But I have also worked closely, in some cases many years, with their analysts. The CIA has very talented, experienced people. The top level of CIA can be very political and on occasion tailor intelligence to support policy. Other agencies, including State, do the same at the policy level. I am an old-fashioned intelligence officer who believes that it is our mission to provide policy makers with the unvarnished truth. If they choose not to believe it or want to ignore it then they can do so at their peril. We do the policy maker a disservice if we manufacture intelligence.

Q: In a way, it's a little bit dangerous. I go back to, what's his name, you know, during the -- Henry II or something when they say, you know, he tells a couple of knights, "Won't somebody rid me of this troublesome priest?"

CROCKER: Right.

Q: And you know, their Bishop of Canterbury is killed. But the problem is if you're talking to the top person.

CROCKER: Right.

Q: The President, and basically intelligence people come in with bad news. Because otherwise it would be overt. And so you're coming in with bad news. And I think there's a tendency to say, "Can't we do something about it?"

CROCKER: One view is that you give the intelligence to the policy maker and your job is done. My view is that if I believe that I or my group of analysts believes our assessment is right and important, then we have a duty to keep pushing our assessment. A key to convincing a senior person is to convince his or her staff, preferably before briefing the senior person. The same is true with foreign officials.

Q: Right.

CROCKER: So many times I have attended a briefing overseas where we start at the top with some new intelligence and the Head of State, General or Foreign Minister looks at his head of intelligence for confirmation. If we have not briefed the intel guy he probably shakes his head no. So you do it the right way, which we've done, you go over and you brief people around him and you brief the intel guy. Even *better*, is you bring the intel guy to Washington and you take him out to the CIA and show him the evidence. You can't believe how many times they do it wrong.

Q: Oh but I can. I have seen it.

CROCKER: Many people I briefed as staffers became ambassadors, deputy or

undersecretary's or even acting Secretary or senior people on the National Security Council. When Reggie Bartholomew was Undersecretary I spent several years briefing his staff. In all cases the staffers had been given special clearances to see the material I brought with me. Some of these people, like Jim Goodby, Tom Pickering, Murphy who became Assistant Secretary of the Middle East, David Newsome who became Deputy Secretary and others I briefed over the years in different positions. I spent a lot of time with the Political Military Bureau my whole career. I mean PM is sort of the main bureau I worked with and knew the best. You may remember that Les Gelb basically brought into the Carter administration all of these wiz kids. Remember the McNamara wiz kids. Most of them came from think tanks.

Q: Yes, with a strong emphasis on systems analysis.

CROCKER: That group of people did very well and many rose up in the ranks of the government. I interacted with most of them and Richard Clarke who ended up in the White House was my boss in INR.

Q: Well, did you find that at this point -- I keep coming back, I have to state a prejudice, I served in it for a while. But INR, of the intelligence agencies, seemed often to be the most on the target with less layers up to the Secretary.

CROCKER: Most definitely. I think when I was an analyst at DIA I had to go through four or five colonels or something like that. And I would say that many times in INR almost nobody saw what I wrote that went to the Secretary. In some cases it was because I was the control officer for very classified intelligence and one of the few people and in some cases the only one who could write about the material under very controlled circumstances. INR had very talented people and for the most part their views were respected by the front office of INR and their bosses. Sometimes there were exceptions, usually when a new office director came in from overseas and wanted to edit everything. In most cases these seasoned analysts could write extremely well and had extensive contacts. The INR summary was written to the Secretary and there was no other document in Washington written that way at a highly classified level. It also had limited distribution so few people in Washington knew how good it was.

So a lot of people didn't know we were right. You'd be amazed. I mean the Director of CIA and Secretary of Defense got a copy, but Congress did not get a copy. So a lot of people didn't know, let's say, that we were way ahead on some subjects like Afghanistan. There's case after case. I mean I think we were better in the Middle East. We were certainly better on Iran-Iraq. And on Afghanistan, we had Eliza Van Hollen, the wife of the former Ambassador in Afghanistan. Eliza was right on the money. Eliza was never in the military, strictly a political person, but had been all over Afghanistan, knew all the U.S. projects and everything. And Eliza kept writing that Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was a bad guy and shouldn't be trusted. And that's who they were giving the Stinger missiles to. I was in Peshawar and briefed by the CIA Station Chief. And they were dealing with Gulbuddin and they weren't dealing with Massoud. They should have been dealing with Massoud.

Q: Massoud was called the Lion of Panjshir.

CROCKER: Correct.

Q: He was assassinated about the time he was considered for President.

CROCKER: Incredible. He was a Tajik, so according to a Pashtun or any of those snooty tribes who studied in London and everything, he was, you know, basically a toilet cleaner, someone to look down on. Finally, I remember sitting with Eliza one day and CIA reported that Gulbuddin was a bad guy. She says, "Finally, after all these years, they get the word." Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, if you don't know, is one of the head Taliban and he's one of the baddest of the bad. But the best Eliza story is about the "big airstrip" the Soviets built in Afghanistan. This is a big meeting at the White House. The majority were convinced that the Soviets were building a strategic airstrip in Afghanistan to target Southwest Asia. They had already briefed key leaders like the Australian Prime Minister. Eliza, who's a very quiet person, says "Excuse me. That's not an airstrip." She says, "My husband and I started that as a big irrigation project by Americans contractors," The room was totally deflated".

So we told the Australian Prime Minister that it was not an airstrip. Because he had already made a public speech, he said he would not change his story because they should have built one there.

Anyway, many people have complemented the INR summary, which doesn't exist anymore.

Q: Well, you know, one of the sort of disturbing things I've got from one of these interviews, I was interviewing Phyllis Oakley. And Phyllis was saying she used to go in and brief Madeleine Albright. Phyllis was head of INR. And at one point she was told it was no longer necessary because Madeleine was being briefed by a CIA representative. And here is one of the most agile and probably accurate intelligence organizations, which belonged to the State Department, being cut out of briefing the Secretary. She felt it may have been this chemistry, either between Madeleine Albright and herself or Albright's staff, which didn't like her.

CROCKER: I first worked with Phyllis Oakley when she was the Afghan Desk Officer, occasionally when she was Assistant Secretary for refugee affairs and later when she was the head of INR. I would doubt that Secretary Albright had problems with Phyllis, rather the cause was a long-time attempt by CIA to grab the briefing function from INR. First I think they were jealous of the INR summary for the Secretary because people would rave about it and here they spend a large sum making this color, overnight publication with one of the best printing presses in the world. INR only used graphics and color later in the game. And it drove 'em crazy, they told me so. Now this is straight from CIA telling me it drove them crazy. I first alerted Ron Spiers that the CIA was briefing the Secretary without his knowledge. When Warren Christopher was Deputy and then Secretary he

would call me to join a CIA briefing because he trusted my view and was not sure about the CIA briefers. Mort Abramowitz, as I remember, was considering letting CIA people in the building take our material to the principals instead of the INR briefers. I argued that the old INR briefing system gave our people access to the senior policy makers and we should not give up that advantage to tell our story. Secretary Shultz didn't trust CIA nor did they trust him; therefore, CIA did not cut in on our briefings. INR analysts also provided special assessments to Shultz on Saturday.

When Dick Clarke was the Deputy in INR I lost my position as the control officer of sensitive material and I continued to complain about the lack of security but it only got worse. Thinking back over the security issues, I am sure Phyllis was caught in a CIA power grab. The next attempt was installing special computers in senior offices on which they could get intelligence without having a briefer come to their office.

Q: Did you find that the Reagan Administration was more likely to buy into the biological warfare business? Or were the same sort of concerns of financial control and all that still working with the new group?

CROCKER: Well, their approach was totally different. They wanted to gather real evidence to make our case. Before it was an interagency group of analysts trying to sell an assessment about treaty violations. This new group set up a whole interagency committee on the use of chemical and biological agents. A disadvantage was that many people here and abroad saw Haig as very anti-Soviet and considered our assessment as propaganda. I remember, I was sent to the Hill to brief a whole group of Republicans and they handed out a button, had a yellow rain drop crossed out, along with pictures of victims. I complained that this was a serious human rights and arms control issue, not some propaganda project. Richard Burt, the Assistant Secretary of PM saw this as a chance to bash the Soviets, but he had good people around him like Jim Dobbins and Mark Palmer who took the issue seriously and gave me tremendous support. Where this ends up on the "yellow rain" issue is that Dobbins decides that I will head an interagency team of senior defense, intelligence, military, scientists and public affairs specialists to brief governments around the world. We spent five weeks and went all around the world briefing on this. And we started in Europe, briefed the MAC (Military Affairs Committee) and the political committee (ambassadors). In Europe, we met a lot of people, talked to a lot of people, talked to the Germans, and met with the French to compare our information to their information. We found great support for our assessment in Europe. We went to Pakistan. Ron Spiers was the ambassador there. And we went to Peshawar to meet with the Station Chief. We interviewed lots of Afghans, and did a whole lot in Pakistan. Went to Thailand, went up to the border, interviewed Hmong who had experienced chemical attacks before they escaped from Laos to Thailand. We also went into Cambodia and we actually went to a camp and interviewed people from Cambodia about chemical weapons, and worked with the government. And it turned out the King of Thailand and his family were heavily into chemical analysis and provided independent information. We went to Hong Kong where I debriefed Soldiers of Fortune Magazine editor Jim Coin who had gone into Laos. We went to China. The Chinese provided me all their evidence. They had come to the same conclusion, they'd done a lot

of collection and analysis because they were providing weapons to at least one of the groups resisting the Vietnamese, Sihanouk's group.

Q: Sihanouk was still involved?

CROCKER: Yes, his people were heavily armed with Chinese weapons. We met all these resistance groups in Cambodia and took all the evidence they provided. That was our longest stay of course. The Chinese were very interesting. The Senior Minister provided me information and their assessment in a private meeting while my team met with their scientists. The Chinese Minister said he could not make a statement in Beijing, our countries were hardly speaking at the time, but I would see support from Chinese officials in other countries (which did happen). There was a side issue where I offered help for their troops who had been blinded with lasers by the North Vietnamese in 1979. Then we went to Japan. Japan of course had the famous scientist, Ueno, who had concluded that mycotoxins were used as weapons in Laos and Cambodia. Spent a good time with senior Japanese officials, including one I met when he was at the embassy in Washington. And then we went to New Zealand and they weren't as much into it, but helpful in some ways. And then we went to Australia where there was a big division of view about whether this was true or not. Pro-Soviet or communist spokesman disputed the US evidence, but the Ministry of Defense had collected good evidence that supported our position. I did address parliament. And lastly, my team wanted to mutiny, but I made them go to Ottawa because I promised the Canadians we'd end up there and tell them everything we learned. There were quite a few Canadian scientists involved, including a Canadian epidemiological team that went into Laos and Cambodia and concluded that there were chemical weapons used from an epidemiological standpoint.

Q: Very interesting.

CROCKER: So anyway, that was a big trip and many reports and collected tons of information. It was a very successful trip. This was all, again, supported by Richard Burt's office who was the head of the Interagency Committee on this subject.

Q: What was sort of you might say the final result? Did this bring pressure on the Soviets?

CROCKER: The Soviets published a number of so-called scientific papers stating that the U.S. had used chemical agents, in particular Agent Orange (a defoliant) that killed or injured people in Vietnam. A number of very prestigious scientific organizations in the world all pronounced the Soviet report to be rubbish, that it was just totally unscientific. It claimed that the US defoliation caused elephant grass to grow which caused toxins to spread. In fact they used actuary data on illness and death and attributed it to US agent use. Professor Meselson of Harvard and colleagues of his managed to damage the US evidence with reports that natural causes caused reported symptoms.

Q: This is the professor who claimed the "yellow rain" was actually bee droppings, not lethal toxins.

CROCKER: Correct. Even today, I get calls about the “yellow rain” case with some saying “Well, we called the State Department and they said, ‘Oh, this is just an Alexander Haig propaganda thing.’ There was nothing to it.” Meselson loved that. He’d used that in briefing, “Well, the State Department doesn’t believe it, you know, Gary’s running around doing this, but the State Department doesn’t believe it.” Phyllis Oakley was a great help on Afghanistan and became Ambassador in Laos. And I have never talked to her personally, so I’m not going to say anything about what her opinion is. And the other person is Wendy Chamberlin who when she was working for Christopher was heavily involved in this “yellow rain” business and she was also Ambassador in Laos. Wendy told me she didn’t believe chemical weapons were used. I’m not sure about Phyllis actually. But I did learn there was a split in this country about the Hmong leadership. For many years I was the only one from State that attended a Hmong ceremony on the mall along with military and CIA people. At Arlington Cemetery we put a memorial to the Hmong people who had valiantly fought with the Americans in the Secret War in Laos. Every year about 4000 Hmong gather on the mall to remember the US-Hmong partnership.

Q: Next time we will discuss Poland, the Iran-Iraq war and some of the issues related to the Soviet chemical and biological programs.

Q: OK, today is the 21st of May and I am talking to Gary Crocker. We have a number of new issues to discuss.

CROCKER: Sure. The Iran-Iraq War is timely because we moved from the Carter administration, Vance as Secretary and then Muskie, into Reagan with Al Haig as Secretary. That’s where we were. And the issues that transcend the administrations would be the US prisoners at the embassy in Tehran, Afghanistan, the Warsaw Pact threat, the use of chemical weapons in Laos and Cambodia and Afghanistan, and Poland. And I believe I talked about the Asia trip to brief NATO and countries in Asia about the use of chemical weapons.

Under Secretary Armacost and several other people wanted to negotiate with North Vietnam. And that was very unpopular in some circles, particularly in the Pentagon, and in State Department for that matter. I think that there was in the beginning a problem and the Soviets, after talking to Soviet Generals and others, perceived Carter as weak and this was the time to get into Angola, Ethiopia, and elsewhere and then eventually they invade Afghanistan. Feeling that we weren’t ever really going to use force, it was all about diplomacy, and we were backing out of the world. So I think that where Korea is important is that Carter changes that by keeping the force in Korea. And I think Brzezinski had a lot to do with it. Brzezinski organized a big national strategy paper. I remember making inputs into it and working on this paper which asked how do we look tougher. It was saying how do we project an image -- this is 1977-- a much stronger image to the world? They had a list of options. I thought they were all bad. They were

things like increase the defense budget or give more speeches. And I wrote a piece, which made it up through several drafts, that said the world respects Israel and people take Israel seriously. And why is that? Because if you kick them, they'll kick you harder. They don't come back with a half measure, they come back hard. They don't let anybody push them around. It's action. It's not speeches, it's not defense spending, it's none of the things listed in the report. You're going to have to actually show proof that we're staying in Korea, make sure the Sixth Fleet is still steaming around the Pacific. You have to start some strong national security discussions within the area. I think Brzezinski and others began to see that we can't just talk about this, we're going to have to actually show we're strong. Particularly after the Soviets invade Afghanistan, we're going to have to look tougher. He also has the Polish crisis and our prisoners in Tehran distracted him from having any kind of strong national foreign policy. Our trip to Asia was part of that change in strategy.

Q: Did you get any impression about the Indonesian element and our strategy in Indonesia?

CROCKER: Well, we had a strong ambassador, David Newsom, former Deputy Secretary, who was the ambassador. He set us up with very strong discussions about U.S.-Indonesia relations. I found no animosity within the various Indonesian military and political people, but real interest in working with us. They took on board the whole Soviet threat, what the Soviets were up to, and the balance with China, which was, you know, our whole pitch. And then we did Malaysia and Singapore, which were also very fruitful.

Q: Thailand wasn't included.

CROCKER: No, we didn't do Thailand, when you think about it Thailand would be in kind of a different category there. Although we had a big force there, winding down in Thailand after Vietnam wasn't an issue.

Q: Putting this thing together, do you recall, did we see Vietnam as essentially being an ally of either the Russians or the Chinese, or to being quite apart? I mean wasn't it shortly around that time the Chinese and Vietnamese were actually fighting?

CROCKER: In '79 they have a fight, an interesting conflict. Here's what I'd say. I think at different times in the policy part of Washington they had different views about China and Russia. But I think the intelligent people, Brzezinski being one of them and others who really did understand the history and what had happened there, knew what was going on. I actually did my graduate work at George Washington and studied the theory that China and Russia were in competition for Vietnam. They were not colluding, rather they both wanted Vietnam to fight the U.S. And once you understand that you begin to see why it's a little messed up in terms of arms flow and different support. The Vietnamese would be more prone to side with the Soviets, take their equipment, and their advisors. It becomes very clear when the Soviets build a big military base at Cam Ranh Bay, our former base. They had submarines there and ships and a port. I think the

Vietnamese feared and didn't like the Chinese. They took help from them, but I don't think they really liked them that much. And they're right on their border. The Soviets wanted credit for beating the U.S.

But it was definitely a competition rather than the theories from some circles about collusion. There were papers written in academia and think tanks about how the Sino-Soviet rapprochement was a threat to the world. Most of that was hooey.

Q: I remember those theories.

CROCKER: In 1969 there was a battle on the Sino-Soviet border. In 1979 China only got one mile into Vietnam and it got a bloody nose.

I may not have mentioned it right in line with this whole story, Holbrooke said, "I want you to brief Japanese Prime Minister Ohira." The CIA had a fit that I was doing this briefing and not one of theirs. They said we're the ones who brief Heads of State. But Holbrooke said, "I don't care what you do, I want Gary to do it."

Q: Did you find the CIA had a different pitch than you did?

CROCKER: Often, as I have been pointing out. In this case President Carter and Admiral Turner, head of CIA, were in conflict on maintaining U.S. forces in Korea. There was an important reason I was briefing the Prime Minister.

I briefed the Japanese Prime Minister with the pitch that the Soviets were bad. I used lots of pictures about Japanese complicity with the Soviets, helping them build a big dry dock. I showed him pictures of the Soviets ships in the Japanese built dry dock. He looked at them -- weren't too sure if he was awake or not. (He was called Sleeping Buddha.) I'm on my knees before a coffee table and he's sitting on a low sofa. He looked up and said, "Not on my watch, Mr. Crocker." He was relatively new. That briefing went extremely well. I had known people in the Japanese embassy, had them over to my house for dinner, and later when I took my big trip in 1982, I was treated extremely well by Japanese officials.

Q: How about Korea? South Korea? Were you called to go there or not?

CROCKER: No. I actually have pretty much nothing to do with South Korea in terms of writing papers or analyzing. I had Frank Jannuzi working for me covering Asia. Frank became one of the State Department's leading Asia experts

Q: I would think that whatever you're doing when you're in Asia, the one place where all hell was likely to break out was the North/South Korean border.

CROCKER: Right.

Q: And I would have thought that this would be, you know, sort of top on your list.

CROCKER: Well, in terms of my office, I had people working on each continent. And Frank was incredible. Very strong player. We consulted on issues like the national estimate on warning in Korea. I used experience from working on warning in Europe. That estimate gave me a lot of lessons about warning to apply to Korean assessments. “Untrained” people were making speeches about how long it would take North Korea to run over the South. They did a big study on warning of war in South Korea. I also worked on a national paper about South Korea’s nuclear, chemical and biological programs, which we knew very little about. I was struck by how secretive North Korea was, how well they were able to hide programs. I remember we got a defector, one of the very few I ever remember from North Korea, and I was in a room listening to the guy debriefing him. He was a very senior official. He had never seen a remote control for a television. I mean even though he had all these privileges, he was isolated from the modern world. He of course had never traveled outside of North Korea.

Q: Well, did we consider this a danger that these guys did not understand the outside world?

CROCKER: There was concern about North Korea, but North Korea and the threat was not number one. I mean if you just went down the list and think about the Soviets in Afghanistan, it’s all about Soviets in Africa, they’re arming Syria, they’re arming Iraq, and they’re arming Libya. And in the Secretary’s Staff meeting, North Korea was not the highest priority; the Soviet Union, China, and the Middle East were the priorities.

Q: Well, it deserved our close attention. As someone who sat for three years sitting on the border of this place, I mean, you know, the Soviets had a very good feeling for the United States and all. But the Korean peninsula, I mean you had the North Koreans living in sort of a Never-Neverland.

CROCKER: I agree. North Korea opened their country slightly to international teams to provide food. The people responded that, “Dear leader” is going to take care of us, this food must be from the “dear leader.” Really a brainwashed population. I found Kim Jong-Il very scary. He in some ways reminded me of Stalin mentally because I think he was paranoid, maybe schizophrenic even. I don’t know if you know the story about how he kidnapped the movie producer and actress.

Q: Please tell the story.

CROCKER: I actually tried to get this story in the policy arena. He wanted to make a movie and win an award. So he kidnaps a producer and a Japanese movie actress in Hong Kong. And they made a movie. And they actually got invited to go to the Hungarian Film Festival where they defected. Now, this may sound silly, but I’m half serious here. I wrote a paper to Tom Pickering I believe. I said, “Here’s an out of the box idea,” because we were trying to negotiate with him, we were trying to talk to him about getting rid of nuclear weapons. I said, “This man is obviously infatuated with the movie business, right? So you have two options. One is you send a movie crew to North Korea and say do

a movie on his father or something. Make sure you have a director's seat with his name on it. And send, for example, Spielberg or somebody to do a movie. Even better would be to bring him to Hollywood with a promise that we wouldn't capture him or anything. And in exchange, we had to have some serious discussions of getting rid of his nuclear weapons." So what I was saying was half serious, but it might actually have worked.

Q: It's crazy, but plausible.

CROCKER: I had a similar conversation about Khomeini. This was a serious proposal and I actually went to a meeting at The White House and they were talking about sending a team with satellite photography to show Khomeini about how the Soviets were bad. And I said, "Look at this guy. He is a 13th century mullah. If you want to reach him, we should devise some way to let him know we were going to arm a rival mullah. Then you're in his frame of reference. He can understand there's a threat problem. But you've got to deal with him in that sense. You can't show him satellite photography of the Russians or something. You've got to deal with him where he is." They never did, of course. They sent him a cake or whatever it was.

The other issue I wanted to talk about, just very briefly, that carries in between Carter and Reagan, was Cuba. Some very unusual things happened. In my office in the Bureau of Intelligence there's an old OSS safe back there. That's where the Japanese codes were kept actually. Well, I rescued many valuable documents that were being thrown when they ripped out the huge safe in the Bureau of Intelligence. I mean a big safe full of records and classified reports that couldn't be sent to normal storage. So I rescued a huge volume of reports on the Cuban Missile Crisis. And I read them when I could. The Control Officer became my boss in the Bureau of Intelligence, Dean Howells. So I'm already into this and I've read all this material that hasn't been looked at in years. The Soviets send fighters, new airplanes with a nuclear capability, to Cuba. I was called up to see Secretary Vance and Marshall Shulman, his Counselor. And he said, "I would like you to take time off and go back to the Cuban Missile Crisis and tell me what the agreement between Kennedy and Khrushchev was, because we're thinking of challenging Russia for illegally putting these fighter planes in Cuba that can carry nukes to hit the United States." So I did. And I went into the bowels of the State Department. There's a big place with all these records. And on trays, rolling trays, there are boxes covered with dust.

Q: I went there one time.

CROCKER: They have not been opened. And I had boxes of all of the famous people from the Kennedy era like George Ball and Bobby Kennedy, and all these people that were part of the missile crisis. And I proceed to go through these boxes. Only one obviously had a good secretary. That was George Ball. His material was organized. And so I was able to find in Russian and English all of these different papers related to their discussions. And I could read Russian relatively well. But I did get some help on some sticky points. So to make this a little short, I went back to Vance with my report. And my report was you haven't got a leg to stand on because in fact there was no formal

agreement. There is no signed document. As a matter of fact, a lot of the material that I've read in the outside books about the Cuban Missile Crisis are really not that accurate. What it was is the U.S. side translated and wrote, "Offensive weapons," meaning offensive as a military term (offensive/defensive, offensive weapons). That we cannot tolerate these offensive weapons. In Russian, the word used means repugnant in a sense. It means those weapons you find "offensive." Khrushchev never said in any of this Russian material that they put offensive weapons in Cuba. He said those weapons you find objectionable basically is the Russian word. I said to the Secretary, "You actually haven't gotten some kind of legal agreement between Khrushchev and Kennedy that you can cite and say, 'You can't put those airplanes in Cuba.' Now, you can just say we don't want those airplanes in Cuba, get them out of there. But you don't have an agreement." This whole interest in Cuba and that business starts some intelligence collection. So later down the line we get some information that we can't believe. I say we, it's the CIA and myself. We brief Henry Kissinger and senior state officers on this development. In the beginning the Soviets put a brigade of Soviet troops in Cuba. They were there to train Cubans. Over time, the Cubans thought they were better than the Soviets. The Soviets did not go home. What happened is the brigade had always been there, but intelligence never picked up on its presence until a new intelligence capability picked it up. So here was a Soviet brigade that all along has been sitting down there in Cuba and is kind of just doing its own thing. And we found out it was there. It actually didn't cause much of a stink. There were no big headlines.

Q: Well, later the Soviet brigade became a cause célèbre.

CROCKER: Yes, under the Reagan administration it was part of the anti-Soviet theme. And Kissinger, what he really wanted to know from me was did he miss something when he was Secretary and when he was in The White House. I replied no, we didn't have that intelligence capability, it wasn't something that really shows up in photography or whatever, and all of a sudden we got a new capability and found it, there it was. So it's not like, you know, somebody didn't brief him or something.

Q: Well, now we have the Iran-Iraq War to discuss.

CROCKER: Yes, we make the transition on a number of issues as we start with Alexander Haig's tenure. Those include the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, the anti-Soviet campaign about the use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan, Laos, and Cambodia; and the Soviet threat to Poland. There's also much more emphasis on propaganda, if I may use that word. I attended three Afghan tribunals, which were set up to try the Soviets in absentia for Afghanistan. The first one I went to was in Norway. They had lost some Norwegian journalists, the Soviets had killed them. Another one was in Paris and the other one I went to was in Geneva. And I was one of the State Department people going who had spent a lot of time working on Afghanistan, but I didn't testify before the tribunal. And a lot of Afghan leaders were at all three. And they even allowed women to break the rules and show their skin where they had been beaten or tortured. They were interesting, but didn't get much play in the United States. But there was a lot of work done to bring Afghans here, let Reagan meet the freedom fighters.

There were a lot of things done, a lot of pushing reporters to write about Afghanistan as it began to fade in the news. I don't know if I've mentioned it to you before, but I had met with Marvin Kalb, the journalist and broadcaster, quite a few times. And I remember seeing him in the hall and said, "Why can't we get journalists in America to write more about Afghanistan? Dan Rather supposedly was in Afghanistan, he actually wasn't, he was on a hill on the border. Here's what Marvin Kalb said, he was so good. He said, "Look, the United States being bad is news. The Soviets being bad is not news. Everybody knows they're bad. So pushing the fact that they're bad, you know, is really not news."

And I said, "But they're using lethal chemical weapons on the Afghani people. I mean they're bombing and they're doing all these terrible things to them. They're even -- these Afghan tribunals I mentioned were trying the Soviets on the basis of the Geneva Genocide Convention, that the Soviets were violating all 10 points of genocide in literally eliminating tribes, targeting tribes, taking children to the Soviet Union to be retrained, you know, all these terrible things. But there was a lot of work done. I don't know if I showed you this last time -- but we even got this on the front page of Parade by Al Santoli. We supported an ABC full-length documentary on the use of chemical weapons in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan. I published a piece in the State Open Forum on the use of chemical weapons and the Arms Control Disarmament Agency followed with a piece saying Gary's right. But IO (Bureau of International Organization Affairs) wrote a piece in here saying, "Don't completely go that route, we're not sure, we think there's better ways to do this than this kind of attack on the Soviet Union." So IO has a watered down position, but saying, you know, it's not that we don't believe what Gary said, but we think the way to handle it should be different.

Q: More quietly, I assume.

CROCKER: Than the way the Haig administration had done it, which was interesting. I just got a phone call that Matthew Meselson of Harvard, who was the bee theory guy, who challenged me on television and at conferences, got into the open forum magazine. Somebody who didn't agree with my story got Matthew Meselson to write it -- I didn't think the open forum used outside people. But here was the attack against the government's position right in the Open Forum by Matthew Meselson.

Q: Who's Matthew Meselson?

CROCKER: Now, he is an amazing professor at Harvard who is a bit of a dilettante. He interferes in all kinds of issues. But he was heavily involved in chemical and biological weapons issues. When we were saying that they were using toxins and chemicals in Laos, Cambodians and in Afghanistan, he published a report that this was all about bees. Bees swarm up in Laos, these bees swarm and they drop a yellow substance containing pollen. And he said all this material we'd collected was just bee droppings and that the bees feed on flowers and they cleanse themselves. Furthermore, he claimed these basically ignorant Hmong people didn't understand and thought that the "Yellow rain" was being dropped by an airplane. Meselson basically took each piece of our story and attacked it. But he

didn't deal with Afghanistan. Every time I debated him I said, "Well, I have 100 descriptions of a chemical attack in Afghanistan that matches the same thing in Laos and Cambodia." The common denominator here is the Soviets, but he wouldn't deal with Afghanistan, it didn't fit his theory. And he went on like this for years and years. He basically used friends to support his views. The New York Times published his reports all the time. Also the science writer at The Post. He made a big mistake on the anthrax release from the Soviet Sverdlovsk plant in 1979. He took these so-called Soviet scientists (later proved to be KGB agents) around the country saying that anthrax tainted beef caused the problem. He just never quit. Two friends of mine were publishing books on this whole subject. He went to the publishers and persuaded them not to publish the books. He never stops. And so then he became very active saying there was no Soviet biological weapons program and went over there and visited the Soviet facilities at their expense. And he said that we'd totally exaggerated the Soviet chemical weapons program. Well, later I'm going to tell you that there's absolutely no doubt about the enormity of the programs. We went there and saw all the plants. And defectors came out and told us how huge both programs were. Well, then he kind of did a soft-shoe shuffle. He's trying to get a Nobel Peace Prize for work he did in DNA, but his checkered past in dealing in politics in the name of science probably weakened his chances. And he wants to talk to me. I just got a call and he wants to meet with me. I don't know. He's getting old, it might be his last hurrah for me to admit I was wrong. All of us who worked on this in the old days are still in touch. I'm talking scientists, attachés, Foreign Service Officers and intelligence analysts.

Q: Let's talk about the Iran-Iraq war.

CROCKER: An interesting thing is as I dealt with people in other agencies and within the State Department was how many people hadn't done their homework on Iran and Iraq. They hadn't really taken a hard look at the history and why the dispute led to this war. But in particular, that the Soviets had completely armed Iraq. I mean there was a time when they were really in power. And remember the time that the communists were in power, and Saddam Hussein at 19 was the guy brought in to kill the communist leader in Iraq. I mean he had an early career as a well-known assassin. And that was sort of his forte. And he was hiding off in Syria or Egypt, one of those two places and worked back and forth. But they had gotten heavily involved with the Soviets -- even before Saddam Hussein came along. And in the beginning even got chemical weapons from the Soviets. They actually provided chemical weapons for Iraq. Iraq treated the Kurds horribly and had gassed them way back in the '70s actually. That's one of those things where the agency and I didn't agree until years later.

Q: Why, I mean, I wouldn't think there would be much dispute about that.

CROCKER: Let me give a better example that will explain this phenomena. In 1963 and 1966, Mubarak was head of the Egyptian Air Force. They dropped lethal chemical weapons on the Royal Yemeni Forces in '63 and 1966. Egypt dropped lethal chemical weapons that they got from the Soviets. They didn't make them themselves, they got them from the Soviets. The Red Cross was screaming, you know, we either have to have

a lot of gas masks and protective suits or we're leaving, we can't do this because of this gas. Well, the Red Cross normally doesn't do that. It's very unusual. There's a lot of other evidence. The British did some investigation and affirmed the attacks. The United States never said anything about this issue. One of the reasons given is we were in Vietnam and as time goes on we're accused of using Agent Orange. And generally the policy view was let's don't get involved in it, let's don't investigate. And there's not a lot of precedent for investigating chemical weapons anyway. That comes later with "yellow rain" when UN teams go to Thailand and Pakistan.

Iraq is coming along building chemical weapons and of course eventually you'd get a really bad element running that country. They actually start in about '82, '83 trying to make their own chemical weapons with Egyptian help. And they developed a number of agents, including biological. Saddam was working on some wild weapons to get a long-range capability.

Q: Long-range gun and all.

CROCKER: Yes, the gun and he had these ramps to increase the flight of missiles. And he got lots of help from other countries. Saddam Hussein begins to get real expertise to help him and he gets the German company Imhausen-Chemie to build a big chemical weapons factory in Iraq. And he gets some other people to come in and help him. And then he uses it, when they really get going he actually uses mustard gas in the beginning on Iranian forces. There's a question here: who's the bad guy in some ways. I mean in State Department you've got a real dislike of Iran for what they did to our diplomats. And there is this attempt to woo Saddam Hussein and "bring him into the family of nations." Secretary Shultz doesn't agree with this strategy. Shultz is really upset that we got this mad man Saddam Hussein and I'm of course sending him reports all the time about the use of chemical weapons on Iranians and the Kurds. But he's getting resistance, lots of resistance to going after and censoring Saddam and imposing sanctions. They not only wanted to get Saddam Hussein in our camp basically. They even gave him intelligence information to help him in this war. Later, in '86, they send me to Israel to brief the senior people in Israel that Iran's the bad guy and I get an earful, obviously from Israeli intelligence. We talked with Rabin and Perez and others, like Sharon, but I got a real earful about Iran and Iraq. I was told privately that we Americans are totally naive and didn't understand how bad Saddam Hussein was. Later we're going to talk about Shultz's environment and what happens with the Kurds and at the end of Shultz's term we have a very important development that happens there on the Iran-Iraq war.

Q: Well, at the time, what were the Iraqis after?

CROCKER: Saddam Hussein is a guy who doesn't quite understand what's going on out there and kind of lives in a weird, self-centered world.

Q: He's a yes man. I mean he lives with yes.

CROCKER: He lives with yes men. Everybody's scared to death of him. God knows how

many people he killed before he became a leader. Yet, like other dictators, he wants to be loved and accepted as an international leader. And he wants people to come to Iraqi conventions and stay in his palaces (eleven I believe). I once asked the ambassador from Iraq here about this whole subject. And he said, "You just don't realize who we are." I mean, you know, "We live at the cradle of civilization in Mesopotamia," and he told me how important Iraq was historically to the world and how Saddam Hussein restored them to power. He said Saddam Hussein is going to restore our pride and people will be coming here and they'll come here to study, et cetera. And remember, he's kind of a secular Muslim. He's not like Qadhafi who had his own brand of socialism and Islam that he preached. Saddam Hussein was just a really bad dictator and not a religious man at all. But he wants to be a leader of the Muslim world so he's building all these mosques and building all these palaces. He had all this support originally from the Soviets in that period when the Soviets were pumping military material into this area. That eventually goes away of course. But he sees Iran as his main enemy. What this ambassador from Iraq said was you don't realize they're insects -- the Iranians -- they're insects and we use any means to wipe them out. And then he didn't deny using chemical weapons. This is in a meeting in Washington, DC. And interestingly, that line that he said I'd heard before by the Italians about the Ethiopians when they gassed so many people. It's one of the first cases after World War I, one of the first cases is in Ethiopia.

Q: And later the term was used on the radio during the Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Africa.

CROCKER: Really?

Q: They were called cockroaches.

CROCKER: Right. Saddam felt he didn't have to worry about the U.S., that we didn't like Iran. So his threat assessment was he didn't have to worry about the Americans stopping him and they're helping me because they don't like Iran. He felt he was in good shape and he's got the Soviets with him and he's even got something going on with Qadhafi that was kind of weird. Also Saudi Arabia doesn't like Iran as well as others in the region. They don't like what's going on there. And so he kind of got away with it basically. And living high on the hog, he's got oil. He's got a restive Kurdish population that he deals with harshly, of course. My feeling is that he had a grand view of himself as becoming this big Arab Sunni leader. And that he was the vanguard against the Shia. And he's got these other Sunni allies who were supporting him with silence. And Egypt had helped him. Anyway, later this story has quite a twist. I mean we get up to '89 and '90 we have a whole new story here. Those who were coddling Saddam Hussein, like Donald Rumsfeld, lead the charge against him.

Q: Given your interest in the Soviet Military -- here you're getting Iran, which essentially was armed with American weapons and Iraq with Soviet weapons.

CROCKER: Right.

Q: As I gather, it has happened again and again, the Soviet military equipment didn't do

too well.

CROCKER: I may have mentioned my master's thesis compared U.S.-Soviet weapons development. The Soviet military was kind of overvalued in some ways. The issue is can the Soviets use their own equipment? Well yes, they can use it, but can the Syrians? The problem is the Soviets are lousy contractors. So Qadhafi got 10,000 tanks. He didn't get any manuals, he didn't get any training, he didn't get a contract with PNE or somebody to come help them with manuals and technical assistance. They didn't get any of that, they just sell them the tanks, usually in exchange for all kinds of products and international support.

Q: Yes, could you give me some examples?

CROCKER: When I lived in Russia we saw third world food and other commodities traded for weapons. I don't know if this surprises you or not, but one of the things that arms contracts included was a commitment to vote with the Soviets in the Olympic games. We wrote a lot about this in my office, these strings that were attached. And with the Iraqis, you know, they didn't have a lot to offer, but they were important to the Soviets. And of course the Shah was our guy in Iran so they went with Iraq. Later Saddam, during the Iran-Iraq War, was not as tied to the Soviets and their equipment. He was buying French weapons, for example. But the problem with the Soviet equipment is that they just didn't provide the maintenance contract to go with it. And a lot of people didn't know how to use it. This was very true of Egyptians in Russian air planes.

Q: Well, I'm told -- talking to somebody, I think it was DCM in Egypt at one time, and was shown -- I mean our equipment, taken to a warehouse, where they're full of a million different pieces of parts to service the airplanes.

CROCKER: Yes. Well, there was no comparison. I know -- I remember from the '73 Middle East War and then later, some comparisons of the Israelis, the pilot training. It's not so much the aircraft is so superior, it's the flying of that aircraft and the ability to use that aircraft and use its capabilities. I interviewed lots of pilots for my thesis. It's really whether you as a pilot, first were young enough to be in the generation of the plane as opposed to an old colonel who flew one in World War II. And now he gets this new plane and he's going to fly it the way he did the plane he used to have. That's a good way to describe it, the Israeli pilot knew how to get the most out of this aircraft. And most of them had been trained in the U.S. to fly them anyway. We had almost laughable information about Egyptian pilots. For example, "Israeli aircraft insight, I'm bailing out." The very poor performance of the Egyptian Army and Air Force was because they were following Soviet tactics. And they were doing that with Soviet advisors and they got killed going up against the Israelis. I would say in some ways Soviet equipment was good rugged military equipment, like a Kalashnikov rifle. In Russia I got to see lots of planes, they're not really pretty. You get inside and they're pretty uncomfortable, you know. But they flew and dropped ordinance. I mean in some ways, one could say, these are just war machines that are going to get shot down and everything, so why do you spend 14 million dollars building a high tech airplane. There are people saying we spent too much money

and get fewer planes. They spent far less money and get thousands more. People in this country have argued that subject (Dr. Fubini at the Pentagon). But generally, what I know about the navy is they had the ship and they had the munitions, but they didn't have the good procedures that our navy does aboard, fire control for example was like rudimentary. I had a fulltime navy analyst this whole period we're talking about. I have a fulltime navy analyst writing and briefing me about the Soviet Navy. Belenko, the B25 pilot, flew his plane out to Japan and we got to interview him. When he went on a U.S. aircraft carrier he said there's nothing in all of the Soviet Union, military or anything else, as efficient as this. We don't have this kind of efficiency he said, and he found it hard to believe.

Q: Or you know, it's taken decades of flying.

CROCKER: Yes. Right. I mean it's part of our culture or a German culture or others to be proud of what you do and efficient and make them work well. It's not part of Russian culture, just go look at their buildings. I watched one being built. We sat there for two weeks watching them build all these apartment buildings, which was near our place where we stayed up in the Urals. And it was amazing to watch the poor construction. And if you go to Moscow most of the good places are all built by the Germans or somebody else. The Germans built most of the nice hotels in Russia. I always had to stay in the Stalin era hotel, the Ukraina. Throughout the Soviet Union the Soviet troops we saw were poor quality. I wrote a number of papers and was on TV talking about how poorly the Soviet Army performed in Afghanistan. They had poor hygiene, disease, and lack of initiative. I wrote a lot of papers about the Soviet Military, their morale, discipline, and corruption. Probably one of the biggest problems in contrast to the United States is that everything comes from the top. Whereas, we put the leaders down at platoon level and if they see something they are supposed to use their leadership ability to counteract that problem. A Russian -- I've talked to many, many Russians about this. If they approach a problem contrary to what they were told by higher authorities, they do not counter their orders or use initiative. You either sit there and wait for higher headquarters to make a decision or you just go and follow orders even if you know they are wrong. They don't really teach leadership. Basically they teach their officers, "You do what we tell you to do," you don't deviate. The other thing I would say quickly is they didn't have sergeants. Soviets' officers are expected to know everything. A Soviet general told me that.

Q: Well, I have an interview with Admiral Crowe who is part of our program. And he talked about when he had the Head of the Soviet Military come over when he was the head of our military and took us around a full tour of the place and the man who was head of their defense later committed suicide because one of the people tried this coup against Gorbachev. The Soviet General said they don't have the non-commission core that the US has. And I can speak as somebody who was a simple air man, an enlisted man for four years. I came away with a great respect for the sergeants. You know, I didn't particularly like them. But boy, they were good. You know, they made the business work.

CROCKER: Right. Actually, Colin Powell, in this Sunday's Parade Magazine, has a line that says You as an officer should remember your drill sergeant's name. I remember my

sergeant's. I will say one interesting thing though on my first day in the Army a Captain gets up and says, "Now, the Sergeant's your backbone, you Lieutenant's got to trust your Sergeant." Then the Major comes aboard the bus and says, "Just let me tell you, Lieutenant, when you get in trouble the Sergeant will not be there."

Q: But during this Iran-Iraq War, I mean from your perspective in whatever we were doing and looking, were we trying to tip towards Iraq?

CROCKER: Oh, absolutely.

Well, basically Iran's really the bad actor here because of Khomeini and this bunch of ideological, radical Muslims. We think we can control Saddam Hussein and bring him into the family of nations. I was on the record against that view and often told to shut up. I used to say that my only ally in the building seemed to be the Secretary of State, you know, because he was really opposed to what they were doing, both CIA and White House. I mean he was caught in a bad situation. I will never forget when I briefed him one time and he went right through the ceiling on Saddam Hussein. I told him Saddam had gassed the Kurds. He said, "I'm going to sanction this guy." And he made a public statement. I would defy any researcher to find that statement. It's gone. And he put his view in a bill. Two Senators within the last years have said they wish they'd supported Shultz and not supported killing this bill. But they put it in the postal bill because they knew it was going to get pigeon holed and shelved and not ever see the light of day. I went down on the Hill with Shultz and saw this first hand.

Q: Were you up against orders to say during -- when Iran-Iraq came up were you testifying to the fact that somehow or another Iraq was a good guy and Iran was a bad guy?

CROCKER: No, I refused to stop writing about Saddam being bad. Wayne White in INR wrote many intelligence reports picturing Saddam as the bad actor.

Q: And I have interviewed Wayne.

CROCKER: Yes. Well, Wayne to me was the quintessential intelligence analyst. I mean he was really good and we were close. Our office and the political office of INR worked hand in glove with no problems. This wasn't always the case with other political officers. We were very much opposed, usually, to the CIA point of view on Iran-Iraq.

Q: Why do you think the CIA took a different view?

CROCKER: It was mostly going along with the White House and everything about coddling Saddam. And we weren't into that at all in my office. As Shultz pointed out to me one time, Iraq captured a CIA spy and hung him out in front of the embassy. And Shultz was reminding me he just could not abide this business of coddling Saddam. We believed Iraq and Iran were both bad. It wasn't quite the same with Mubarak in Egypt. That was a close friendship with the Bureau of Intelligence. Several people, George

Harris was one, would meet with him all the time. Therefore I was told to stop talking about him being the head of the Air Force and using chemical weapons on Yemen. That was a forbidden subject. I mentioned it one time up in New York on a briefing I was doing for the Council on Foreign Relations. I said something about it, and I was just brought in to the Egyptian desk and told never to do that again. We don't talk about Mubarak's chemical weapons, he said, he made a deal with Reagan that the U.S. would not discuss his role in Yemen.

Q: Yes, later when Iraq moved into Kuwait, Mubarak was trying to say, "Oh, he really won't do that and all." I mean, you know, Mubarak supported Saddam.

CROCKER: Right. Well again, he's not Shia. He was Sunni. He didn't like the Shia, remember. And all those people, the Muslim Brotherhood and everything were the ones that he didn't like. And they think Sadat was killed by these people. So he has no love for that fundamentalist Muslim bunch. And Saddam Hussein is, you know, against those guys. He's a Sunni secular leader. So they're obviously going to have more in common than he's going to have with the others. And like I say, that whole Shultz thing is later in '88, '89 when this all comes to a head, this whole issue breaks because of Saddam Hussein's use of chemical weapons on the Kurds. And of course when he invades Kuwait the jig is up on coddling him.

Q: Did you have any reflections of our passing military intelligence to the Iraqis?

CROCKER: I couldn't cite chapter and verse, but I know it was done. I mean I know people were involved. Just like before there were these friends of mine who were going to Iran, giving the Shah anything he wanted.

Q: Oh yes, I mean our whole -- I've talked to people who say we weren't allowed to report on any negative Iranian actions under the Shah. I mean it was rather disgusting.

CROCKER: Right. I remember Wayne White talking about what they knew about the Shah's Secret Service and everything. And all the terrible things he did. Some of these issues I don't really understand and later I get a better appreciation because I get access to some information or I talk to somebody somewhere. The best example was when I briefed Secretary Vance about the Soviets invading Afghanistan and he is totally thinking about the raid that I don't know about that's going to go into Iran to try to save the hostages. I mean he's trying to focus there and I'm trying to tell him there's something going on over here. But I would say if you probably had to look over decades and decades of foreign policy and the State Department, the one that probably is the wildest in terms of different positions is the Zionist and the Arabist.

Q: Yes. Did we see this Iran-Iraq war as a blood bath with hundreds of thousands getting killed with no discernible progress on any side?

CROCKER: I actually was emotional about this use of chemical weapons and killing

Iranians because we had just been through the use in Laos, the use in Cambodia, and the use in Afghanistan. And we'd been around the world. I told you about the trip where we went all around the world for five weeks talking about this. The UN had sent investigative teams. We actually established a rapid reaction trained team, an international team in the UN; that if it happens they can send this team right in to get the evidence. So we had been through all that. Now, what does Saddam do? He just comes out and blatantly uses chemical weapons on the Iranians. The ones that are alive are sent to Europe to three hospitals and treated for mustard gas blisters. I talked to the Europeans involved. Saddam thumbed his nose at international treaties; he ignored the work of previous years. And I mean that shows you how screwed up Saddam Hussein was. That he was building chemical weapons like crazy and that he had no reservation about using them, believing there would be no condemnation. Now, in some ways, he might have gotten that view from the fact that we could never get the UN to come out and accuse the Soviet Union of using chemical weapons in Afghanistan. So we never got a good declaration from the United Nations against Laos, Cambodia, and Afghan use. My opponents said that the UN never came out and really supported the U.S. position. Well, guess who was the head of the UN investigation? General Ez, a Soviet trained Egyptian, I met with him numerous times. And guess who was the head of the investigation at the UN? A *Soviet* was in charge of that investigation.

Those of us that worked on the "yellow rain" business, we helped write the UN charter on how to investigate and how to get teams set up. And the Australians were main players and others trained rapid reaction teams for any reports of use. And those teams went to Iraq and Iran. And it's all on film and documented. And the Iraqis were so blatant in falsifying evidence. For example they tell the UN team where to put their detector. It was blatant trying to manipulate the investigation. It's the first ever UN reporting that accuses a country by name, Iraq, of using chemical weapons. That was the finding of the investigation. And that's what had Shultz screaming.

Q: Well, did you find with all this that you were sort of being pigeonholed as the "yellow rain" guy and therefore disbelieved?

CROCKER: All of us that worked together -- the Army, CIA, DIA, scientists, and politicians were pigeonholed in a real battle with different parts of our government, other governments, and private critics. And a lot of it I understand, while others were pretty dishonest in my opinion. Generally they're saying there's other priorities. One that I dealt with that I was thinking about recently was a move to give a 100 million dollars to Laos for hospitals. Well, there's no way that money's going to get approved if I'm saying the Lao are complicit with the Vietnamese and the Soviets and dropping lethal chemical weapons on the Hmong; therefore, they tried to kill this in VLC (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia desk). They were really joining forces with the people that were opposed to it because they wanted to give this money to Vientiane. And I'm saying, "Last time I checked the leaders in Vientiane are still the same bad guys that were in charge when we were in the Vietnam War. They're still there, as far as I know. I mean I never heard of any revolution in Vientiane where the Lao now had a democratic government." And that didn't go over well. So it's funny where the allies were. You'd have some people on the

Hill that were really into this, like Congressman Jim Leech or Norm Dicks, both good supporters. Leach and I went on “Good Morning America” together talking about this. He was a big supporter because somebody in his district brought him samples that they brought back from Laos after having been with the Hmong. And they gave them to Jim Leech and he gave them to the scientists and the scientists found the toxins in there that killed people. So he became a real believer. So did Norm Dicks, an old friend of mine from Washington State and a number of other congressmen. Oddly enough, we had a lot of trouble in certain sectors of the U.S. Army. Didn’t like this story for some reason. And the Army had hired Matthew Meselson as a consultant. At CIA we had analysts working on these subjects together. But then at other levels of CIA there were people that fought us tooth and nail. Some of it to this day I still don’t understand. I did an oral history with the CIA on this subject. They’ve got people saying it never happened and other people saying it did. I kept asking could you find out why I had a private secret meeting with a CIA agent who said he could collect tons of information, but was told never to support this issue or collect information. I never got an answer.

Q: OK. Today is the 24th of May, 2012 with Gary Crocker.

CROCKER: In 1983 I leave for Switzerland and there’s sort of several major things that happened before that trip that impacted what happens there. So I’m just going to mention them briefly.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: I mentioned that Richard Burt, Assistant Secretary for Political-Military (PM), sent me on a five-week trip around the world to brief NATO officials in Pakistan, Thailand, China, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada.

There was great interest in going out to the world and pushing the idea that the Soviets had used chemical weapons in Afghanistan, literally violating two treaties and that they had been used in Laos, in Cambodia, and even some in Thailand, across the border. So it was decided that we would send a team around the world. And they picked me to head that team. And the team was made up of a very senior Defense Department person, scientists and analysts from Defense, particularly the Army, a Senior National Intelligence Officer from CIA or the DCI I really should say, some CIA analysts, a senior person from the Political Military Bureau, and a person from the Arms Control Disarmament Agency. So it was a well-represented policy and intelligence team. And we went off and briefed NATO first, both the political committee and then the military committee. And it was very well received in NATO. NATO had put right into its threat assessments that the Soviet Union had provided other countries chemical weapons and that they had used them in Afghanistan and provided them to the Lao and Vietnamese.

Q: And also in Egypt against Yemen or Iran.

CROCKER: No. We really weren't there to discuss the history of the Soviets providing them to other countries, but rather the subject of current use and the need for a UN investigation and of course we were getting that underway. The UN was finally investigating all three places, but they didn't go into any of the countries, of course. I mean they were not allowed in Laos, Cambodia, or Afghanistan. So they did it from the outside. So it was very successful. On the NATO trip we met with Ambassadors and discussed how their countries felt about this. And of course quite a few of those countries had provided information to the United States for our report. When you read the criticism of this period it would appear that it was U.S.-only. And of course there's a great contribution from the British, from Germans, from the French, the Japanese, Australians, all provided the benefit of their own investigations into this and that's partly why we're going on this trip is to meet with the governments and their scientists in each case to compare our results with their results.

Q: Well now, given the group in the United States was in denial or trying to refute this did you find similar groups in other countries too?

CROCKER: Particularly Australia, but in the United Kingdom it wasn't so much an opposition as there were people who really doubted the scientific evidence, not so much the human testimony of the people. A major part of this issue is there's a thing called a GC Mass-Spec (gas chromatography-mass spectrometry), which will determine what a material is down to say two-parts per billion. It can find very small amounts of material and identify it, OK? Well, our scientists had identified these mycotoxins, these toxins through this system. The British weren't using quite the same system and weren't getting the same results. So we connected their scientists up with our scientists to solve that problem. In the French case, they did it the way we did it and had absolutely no trouble with our results. They got the same results as we did, the French did and the Germans. This is a very interesting thing about international affairs. Neither the German nor the French went public. Now, the British certainly did and the Australians did, as I'll mention. But the problem is the Germans said to me, you know, Germans talking about chemical warfare is not going to help you.

Q: Understandable.

CROCKER: And that was true, because I was sitting in Geneva one time and a German Ambassador raised his hand and said something about World War II and Russians using chemicals and the Russian Ambassador of course just attacked his statement and reminded everyone it was Germans who used gas. And so in other words, there's no way he could win even in a modern argument. The Germans provided us invaluable information, and ran their own operations, particularly into Cambodia. The French don't talk about their chemical or nuclear capabilities. The French never mention how many nuclear weapons they have by policy or that they even have them sometimes. I mean they really are very quiet about that subject or anything to do with chemical weapons. And meeting with the French on that particular trip, after NATO, we did go to France, we found out that they had some very interesting relationships in the field of chemical warfare, particularly with us and others. So they weren't going to talk about it either.

They'd be glad to behind closed doors, they'd give us their evidence on illegal chemical weapons use and that they were using toxins. So that was a plus, in a sense, but you would have liked the international support to back our case because you had these people just saying it was Al Haig propaganda. And of course it would have helped if we'd had a whole bunch of countries around the world say, "Wait a minute, we've investigated it and it's true." We leave Europe with some success, particularly I think for myself because the Germans briefed me behind closed doors. I did know a good number of senior Germans, including the head of their equivalent of the Defense Intelligence Agency. I had known him in NATO for years and I was shown a lot of evidence and explanations from some real experts. They knew what they were talking about. And it might interest you that it was the first time we learned that one of the main sources in Afghanistan was a journalist who worked with the Germans. He had been behind a tree when a Soviet explosive came down and he got these terrible blisters from the blast. And the Germans were able to decide, based on long experience, that first the French way long before the war had developed a way of putting an agent into basically diatomaceous earth. Something porous. If you saw diatomaceous earth under a microscope it looks like pollen almost, it's got all these little holes in it. And of course our point was that they had used pollen as a carrier for the agent. That was the U.S. point of view. And so it was interesting, the Germans said, when we got him back and in the lab we realized that that little particle from the blast had made a little volcano-like thing on his skin and was penetrated with the agent. And he'd seen it, he took pictures of the shell, you know, so he was as far as the Germans were concerned, it was a Soviet chemical attack in Afghanistan. And that he had experienced this. In Pakistan Ron Spiers, my old boss, was the Ambassador. We were treated extremely well, taken up to Mari to the ambassador's residence up there, close to Kashmir. And he gave us access to all the attachés, everybody, including the most interesting part of that trip was to go actually to the border, to Peshawar, and to meet with the agency people, the British, others who were working the problem there, and get a lot of information about what chemical weapons were being used. We had a program they were implementing, which was to provide cameras and other devices to the Mujahideen to actually film these attacks and then get the film back to us for analysis. Which in the end works, by the way, and I still even have one of them. It shows the Soviets coming in and the cloud and the chemical attack. It was hard to refute, it's really pretty good hard evidence. We spent a lot of time collecting the evidence. And this was a chance for our whole team to go to Peshawar, talk to the people who were implementing our collection strategies there and trying to find out more. The British were doing a great job collecting samples after a chemical attack, collecting samples and other kinds of things. And of course hundreds of interviews with Afghans about what had happened. So we did Pakistan, which was very interesting and very fruitful, and went on to Thailand, which is the major focus. Mort Abramowitz is the Ambassador, Stapleton Roy is the Deputy. They were a little dubious about our teams coming, I must say. But we had full support from Washington to do it.

Q: Well, the yellow rain, so-called yellow rain rebuttal, was concentrated pretty much in the Thai-Laos area.

CROCKER: Yes. The critics rarely dealt with Afghanistan because it didn't fit the

paradigm. It was hard to deal with Afghanistan because of the way the agents were delivered, the stories, the pictures of the shells. And our relationship with the Mujahideen. We had a relationship there, we were working with them, and they were going in and out so you had a chance. If you compare that to Laos, we've got almost nobody going in and out of Northern Laos. Nothing like what you had here. And also, we had better collection, daily collection coverage because we were collecting on the Soviets in Afghanistan. So to give you an example, when an Afghan told me about a chemical attack, he described the symptoms and he described the color of the shells and the whole works, OK. Now, I have on that same date, same time, sensitive intelligence, technical intelligence, that tells me there was a battle on that day in that place and the weather was as he said and we have information that the Soviets talked about delivering the chemicals. So in other words, I can take one day and say I can confirm through a number of sources that the chemical attack took place on that day. An interagency team of people worked around a table together, comparing all this information. In Laos we did not have the intelligence, you're relying a lot on Thai intelligence and occasionally what you can get from a few mercenaries. But you don't have that ability to pinpoint an attack. You might know of an attack and I can check the weather that day, I can find out if any Soviet planes flew that day or something. But not the kind of evidence to nail it down the way I could in Afghanistan. Mort's very courteous and granted us everything that we needed. It's interesting, the royal family in Thailand are chemists. They love the fields of biology, chemistry, etc., and were very interested in this subject. And one of them was working in the laboratory where they were analyzing samples and finding results similar to ours. So that was interesting. We go up to the big refugee camp in Northern Thailand where there's actually no Americans. It's mostly British workers up there, medical workers working with the refugees. And we were able to interview refugees who said they were in chemical attacks and they could show us their blisters and things that happen to them. So we were able to interview people and we had with us, I should have mentioned, probably one of the more important people on the team was a forensic pathologist, Kit Green, working for the agency, who was very knowledgeable.

Kit was able to examine victims who had just come out. It's quite a thing to get out of Northern Laos. I mean we're not talking about an easy thing to do to get out and cross that big river and get into Thailand. Kit was able to look at some people, get some fresh stories to add to this very huge, original interview done by Ed McWilliams, the Foreign Service Officer. Ed could speak the language and he had interviewed a long list of people about all their symptoms and what happened and the bleeding through the skin and all this other kind of thing. We brought back pictures, lots of samples of blood and all kinds of things we brought back to throw into the pot. Whether we convinced at that time Mort and Stapleton Roy, I am not sure. That's for another day. Mort will eventually become the Head of INR down the line. But before that he and I were supposed to go on a briefing trip and he would say, "Yes, I was Ambassador and I believed the evidence". That never happened.

Q: Looking at this at this point, how effective was this type of warfare? I mean you're going to get world criticism if you're caught, so it bloody well be doing an awful lot for you.

CROCKER: OK. This was a constant question in press conferences. I probably did 200 press conferences on the subject and been interviewed for TV and books and everything. Why would the Soviets risk their reputation to do this? And the other one would be well, weren't they just experimenting on little yellow people, you know, to see if it'd work if they ever had a war with NATO. So the first one doesn't understand why would they would risk it. Here's what, after years of work on this study, talking to people, here's the truth of the matter. The truth of the matter is the Soviets had supplied chemical weapons to Laos and Vietnam. That's a fact. That we know. We know where they were stored, we know planes carried it, we know how they carried it, rockets and different weapons that had the chemical in it. Now, the first is why would they do this? Well, I think if they had used mustard gas or nerve gas, it would be more believable. There are people who actually went into a village where people were hit and there were dead bodies. If it was mustard or nerve gas, you could have probably got an international investigation -- people would have been appalled because they would have known what it was. And it would be clear and everybody knows the Soviets had mustard gas. So the thing is, nobody had ever heard of trichothecene toxins or mycotoxins. Or, you know, I was briefing with Jeane Kirkpatrick and she said, "I just don't think I can say trichothecene on the air," -- we were doing a Voice of America broadcast.

And I said, every housewife knows what poison is. You got chemicals and you got poisons and you got bacteria. And so just call them poisons because that's actually what they are. Mycotoxin is basically a fungus that grows at certain places, but certainly not in Laos or Cambodia. It grows in the tundra, in cold areas. You find it in Canada, Northern Japan, and Russia. It's not prevalent in the rest of the world. Now, Matthew Meselson of Harvard went to great lengths to show that it had shown up in Brazil. None of that ever panned out. But this is mainly where that problem exists. The Canadians are real experts on this, that's why they helped us so much. The Canadians were extremely helpful. So anyway, by using a toxin, which at least the Soviet General sort of indicated later, much later to me, that yes, they had developed these things and as pesticides basically, mycotoxins as a pesticide. It's kind of a funny thing to do, but that's what they did. Basically what we agree on is they really weren't trying to kill off the Hmong and have thousands of bodies laying around. And they certainly weren't experimenting because they didn't plan on using mycotoxins against NATO when they've got V agents. Why would they do that? The idea was to destroy the crops and poison the cattle, make people sick, and drive them out of Northern Laos. Did that work? Absolutely. Go to the refugee camps in Thailand, thousands of Hmong people. Where are they now? They live in the United States. They aren't in Northern Laos anymore. So if the objective, as I believe it was, was to drive them out of there, and then you would ask why do they hate them so much or, you know, what was the reason? Well, then I got to that answer by going to people who looked at Laos, particularly photo analysts, and I said, "What is it about Northern Laos? Tell me, I don't know anything about Northern Laos? Tell me about it." Well, turns out the Vietnamese with the Soviets had developed huge installations all along the China border, all kinds of things directed at China. And the Hmong were living right there in the way. They were in the way. That's where I conclude they were a nuisance. And of course the Lao didn't like them. They considered them savages, much

like the Vietnamese considered Montagnards to be savages. So I think people were misunderstanding what this was all about. The Soviets weren't risking their reputation because you could even say, "We've still not proved this case." Because it was mycotoxins and some guy from Harvard was able to go around the world and say the Americans are wrong, it's bee feces and just bee droppings. There was enough doubt raised because it was so difficult to prove and difficult to go into Laos. Now, in Cambodia we actually sent people right into the attack site where the attack took place, got the blood samples right from the victims, got the soil samples and the leaves and maintained a chain of custody all the way to the lab. So it was somewhat different in Cambodia. And it's what Richard Burt called the smoking gun because we got the blood analysis and it was filmed the entire way by ABC who was doing a documentary on this and filmed from the time they took the blood from the victim all the way on the plane to National Airport where the scientist takes it to the lab and unseals it and puts it in the GC Mass-Spec. They had this whole thing covered on film for chain of custody, which is pretty unique actually.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: What we have in this case is something that was kind of misunderstood. But to make it even worse is that our analysis was that it wasn't only about toxins, because if you look at the range of symptoms, there were other things used as well as the mycotoxins, maybe some nerve gas because some people were just killed. So it was more than that, but that was just too much for the press and everybody to handle when you complicated it. Your story just starts going downhill because you can't satisfy them with definite answers. This was not easy. This was tough. Afghanistan, in my view, was easier because of the access and whatnot and I thought we made a good case. And later we proved when the Soviet Union falls and people start revealing information, including Soviet Special Forces (Spetsnaz) telling us the truth, telling us that they used nerve agents in Afghanistan.

A lot of Soviets served in Laos, but I never debriefed one. After Thailand we fly on to Hong Kong for some informal meetings. We fly to Beijing. I am separated from the group, taken with a Minister, just the two of us, for him to tell me things. And the rest of the group goes off and meets with their scientists. And they'd done similar work, they'd gone and selected samples and had arrived at a decision that it was mycotoxins and other kinds of agents.

Q: Who were the Chinese?

CROCKER: The Chinese were sending their own people to Cambodia, but not Laos; that was the Soviets' domain. But they were all over Cambodia providing Sihanouk Chinese weapons. So the Chinese are providing the weapons to the groups opposing the regime in Phnom Penh. The Thai let us go into their prison camps and refugee camps while we were in Thailand and we were able to interview Vietnamese prisoners. We interviewed Cambodian civilians and leaders. When we go walking into a village we don't know what's going on with all these people walking in our direction. You can see them on the

hills. We come to a huge clearing and all these Cambodians, colorfully dressed, in a large circle. Thousands of them. We walk into the center. They don't know we're an intelligence investigative team from the United States. But they think we're there to help them. We don't even know what the deal is. We've met with Sihanouk's people and other opposition groups. I think there were four to five groups opposing the current regime in Phnom Penh. We are actually, it turns out, in Cambodia. It was a symbolic thing. You crossed the border, you're in Cambodia, which the State Department would probably have opposed if they'd known what was going on. And we very naively were there. We interview a lot of people and talk about the chemical attacks on Cambodians and we get different information. That was a pretty fascinating experience.

In Beijing my team gets quite a bit of information from the Chinese scientists. Remember, and this is 1982. The Chinese are not talking to us officially. There's no other teams going into Beijing. We did meet with the embassy officials. The Chinese wanted us to be there. They wanted to pass on information. But they also wanted assistance.

Q: Since the Chinese had been under the sponsorship of Chinese communists and linked to the Soviet Union for so long, had they adopted the chemical warfare side of chemical and military doctrine?

CROCKER: We know almost nothing about that subject. They have really good security on that subject. North Korea was hard enough. You could have boiled that report down to a few pages of actual information. The China program was extremely hard to discern. I mean we know it was there and we knew about a few facilities. In some countries people have come out and told us they worked in a program. For example, high level defectors from the Soviet Union would tell us all the details. That had never happened before and never from China. My team comes out with all kinds of good information from China. But it's this Minister who is very well educated who talks to me.

Q: Chinese Minister?

CROCKER: Yes, he speaks perfectly good English and he wanted to assure me that there couldn't be a press announcement out of Beijing. There certainly couldn't be one when we were there. But he said I should watch the international press and I will see Chinese support for the U.S. view on the use of chemical weapons. And sure enough, later on a Chinese diplomat in India or a Chinese diplomat here or there would affirm that lethal chemical weapons were used in Laos, Cambodia and Afghanistan. One of the more interesting things that happened on this trip, and had nothing to do with chemical warfare, they had had their war with Vietnam in 1979 and they had this problem of so many Chinese troops developing eye problems from lasers.

Q: Lasers?

CROCKER: And they wanted help. They didn't quite know what to do about it. I promised help and that was arranged. I quite frankly don't know what happened, whether we sent a team over there or not. But there was an agreement that we would help them.

Q: What is the solution? I mean the troops wore goggles, I would assume.

CROCKER: Right. I know from interviewing our pilots that the glass is protected. Some of our pilots got hit with laser beams. I don't know a lot about this. I mean I've actually sat through a briefing, but I didn't understand most of it. I don't know if the Soviets provided it to them to try out or they worked it out or maybe some other country came in and helped them develop it.

Q: The Soviets, I believe, developed death rays.

CROCKER: Way back when, when I worked for the Air Force I worked on Soviet research and development and out of the box programs. The Soviets had this charge particle beam project. The Air Force view was they set off a nuclear explosion in a sphere and that energy went down and was held in capacitors for a point of time and then changed into a beam and shot down a tunnel. That was the Air Force view. Other agencies didn't agree with that view. I found it persuasive. We had some people working in this field. In fact, the Soviet research was similar to the one in Switzerland and France where there is a huge accelerator. I received a briefing at the facility. The question is, can you shoot a proton, an electron, or a neutron? Is there any way to control them to use as a beam? Certainly they were way out there spending research and development money on advanced programs. It would seem logical, given the military relationship, the Vietnamese probably studied in the Soviet Union.

We walked away from China saying this was a really big success. They were also helpful under the table in the UN. Then we go onto Japan. We meet with their scientists, but in particular a fellow named Dr. Ueno who was one of the leading experts in the world on GC-Mass Spec and mycotoxins. Professor Meselson in the TV debates we did would always put down the scientists who supported the U.S. view.

Q: This is the Harvard professor?

CROCKER: Meselson looked down on Professor Mirocha from Minnesota who was our lead scientist who made the discovery that these were mycotoxins, trichothecenes. He found them in the samples. Well, Meselson quite a few times put him down as kind of a third rate scientist and his lab was denigrated. When we got to Ueno, I mean we walked into Ueno at the lab and the first thing Dr. Ueno said to me was, "Now, the leader is Dr. Mirocha. Around the world, we all follow what he has to say. He's the guy that led the way on this difficult world of toxins." It turns out this was a controversial and difficult field that scientists argue about, but they cause bleeding. It turns out that experiments at Texas A&M with T2 toxin, which is the main one we find in the samples, caused bleeding in terminal cancer patients. Just like the Hmong described it, the blood comes out of the skin and out of the eyes. Meselson and others said these Hmong were just making it up, they were ignorant people, naturalists, and they don't understand science and medicine. It turned out, there was a lot of good work done around the world on these toxins. Now, Meselson's on camera saying toxins don't cause these symptoms although

he didn't know squat about toxins, quite frankly. And he was saying these things earlier, that it wouldn't do this, you'd have to drop tons of it but of course the experiments showed he was wrong. But he just keeps changing his position. It's interesting he wants to talk to me. And I'd be curious to see if he's still singing this same song, particularly his view that the U.S. government was wrong about the Soviet chemical/biological program, which has been 100% proved to be huge. We've been to the facilities. We've got all the defectors. We did Japan, talked to Ueno and had good meetings with the government of Japan. One of the main people from the Foreign Ministry had been a good friend of mine when he was in the embassy here, and he set up a big banquet for us. We were very well treated in Japan, of course Dr. Ueno provided his evidence and his information. Then we went to New Zealand. New Zealand people were interested to hear what we had to say. They were not negative. But they didn't have any independent investigation or evidence.

I don't know from your experience if you ever dealt with New Zealand, but my experience at the United Nations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, New Zealand was a great friend to the United States and a great ally when you need an impartial person. There's two people that all countries seem to respect if you want a respected impartial chairman that is Canada and New Zealand. Those two countries were trusted as neutral.

Next we went off to Australia. Now, that was a much richer environment because the Australians had done a very serious investigation, sending sources in and collecting samples. Later on in the story Australia becomes a big help to United States foreign policy on this whole subject and proliferation. But they had within their ranks what the Australians told us were communists. One person had written a book that this was all made up by the United States, it was published in Australia. Australians had gone to Laos and Cambodia and said there was no such evidence. A few of these were in the government itself. But there was a hard line Prime Minister, the government itself and the researchers in military intelligence were all right down the line on this. No doubt about it, they were with us. I was asked to speak to their whole parliament. I addressed a very large body on this subject and I did a TV and radio show. When I got to Australia I did a whole public affairs program and briefed reporters. Australia, of course, is really interested in Southeast Asia. Then we go off to Hawaii for meetings with the military. We were on the road for five weeks and my team was ready to go back home. I had promised the Canadians we would address senior members of the government and parliament. The Canadian scientists had been extremely helpful and the Canadian epidemiological team had done scientific work in Thailand, in Cambodia and Laos. They concluded the issue was not some communicable disease, this was in fact chemical warfare. Very supportive of our position. I drug them to Canada -- they lost all our luggage and we were all in Hawaiian shirts. Some of the Canadian government thought it was pretty funny that we appeared before them in Hawaiian outfits.. But again, the trip was very successful because we had people from various universities and both the military people and the private scientists. And a good number of Canadians came to Washington to help us. At any conference held on this subject, they would be there, to testify in support of our position. The senior people in the Canadian government told me they appreciated our briefing on what we learned on the trip.

We returned home for many briefings and completed a third national intelligence estimate (the first estimate was from Haig), we turned that national estimate into an unclassified Haig report, a white paper, sanitized version, and then the next one was a Shultz report in '82. And that was the sanitized second national estimate that we did. And then there's a third national estimate that really had solid scientific evidence in it. I mean we really had learned our lesson down the way on how to gather and present evidence.

When I returned from Geneva "yellow rain" didn't go away. The opposition is stronger. Some of my publications on this issue are in '85. I'm not working fulltime on this, but I did publish a paper in the open forum. And a fellow named Mark Palmer, whom you may know, organized my knowledge on the subject.

Q: I've interviewed Mark.

CROCKER: Yes, great guy. He's in PM at this point, and says, I'm going to assign a secretary to you and I want you to just spill everything you know about "yellow rain", everything you can think of. Mark published my papers saying the government's case was right. I have great admiration for him in some of his endeavors. He wrote a good book.

With Mark and others, mainly in PM we had more support within State and the government to come out and argue our case.

I should be clear that there's no chemical weapons being used in Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan in the mid-80s. It's all pretty much ceased. But a State Department team was sent to Thailand and they issued reports that were all negative and saying they could find no use of any chemical weapons. Well, of course not. As I try to tell a number of senior people, they weren't using them anymore. But this team was sent out to prove that we had been wrong. It was the Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia Desk intent to prove we had been wrong. All of their cables find their way to the press and Professor Meselson.

Now, the reason I kind of went a long way to tell this story is because it sets the stage for what happens next in the Iran-Iraq War.

We became kind of a group of experts to advise the United Nations and writing reports on how to do a proper investigation. Basically saying we started blind and got criticized and blasted by guys like Meselson questioning everything and questioning the human testimony. We were able to draw up a workbook for the UN on how to investigate properly. On the first big test, the UN investigation was done on Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan and it was a shoddy kind of political job. I mentioned before that the investigation was run by the Soviet official in the UN. The results of our report lead to trained people, with proper kits, Mylar bags, and containers that won't contaminate evidence. Iraq and Iran were the first tests. The final UN report accused Iraq by name of using chemical weapons in violation of the Geneva protocol. I think this trip was pretty important and it also did what our policy people at State wanted; securing international

support. I would consider it a fairly successful foreign policy program.

Q: That is an amazing story.

CROCKER: It wasn't the end. This whole issue comes up again.

Q: Well, what about the U.S. Military? I mean obviously if you've established that it's at least optional Soviet Military doctrine to use this. You've got to have countermeasures. And you mentioned before that these countermeasures get bloody expensive. What was happening on our side?

CROCKER: I think this is the right time to segue to my first report from Geneva after I had been talking to our commanders in Europe and talking to other military people, including views on the Soviet doctrine for CW/BW's (chemical weapons/biological weapons) and the threat it poses.

Q: Did you publish anything?

CROCKER: I published a number of articles, which was unusual for an active intelligence officer. This is one, the Defense and Technology Magazine. And then I appear in a big long article in The New Yorker, and Playboy Magazine. A writer from Playboy put a comical spin on a serious subject, and I should have known better.

In The New Yorker, his final line was something like, "Well, here I am. I'm sitting in the State Department cafeteria over a cold cup of coffee, staring into the eyes of one of the last Cold Warriors." It turns out the author was also a friend of Matthew Meselson, so I was suspicious. It's a very long, convoluted article with Meselson's view. It was a little ironic that I who always talked about how we exaggerated the threat of the Soviet Union, but on the other hand was hard line on the chemical/biological weapons side.

Q: When did you go to Geneva?

CROCKER: In 1983. Right before we go to Geneva, to set the scene for why I went there, we had a huge interagency argument over the extent of the Soviet chemical/biological weapons programs. There's pretty much agreement that there is a chemical-biological weapons threat at this point. The document that's produced does lay out that the Soviet Union has pretty extensive chemical weapons stocks and does have a biological weapons program intended to develop offensive weapons. At this point the Soviets have not admitted to even having any chemical weapons. They certainly don't admit to having biological weapons. They say, "Sure, we do biological research as defense in case biological weapons are used on our country by the United States." And that's what they said about chemical weapons. Well sure, we have chemical weapons, but we're only looking at how to defend ourselves. And all this money we spend on our vehicles and our airplanes and our ships is to protect them from nuclear/chemical/biological weapons, and they just spent far more than we did. Later,

when we go there we see even more than we knew about; every vehicle, everything has got some kind of protection system. In other words, their doctrine was that they might have to fight in a chemical/biological warfare environment, therefore their troops and equipment had to be protected. Where they had, say, thousands of a vehicle called a TMS-65, which is a great big jet engine on the back of a big truck, forces move in front of that jet engine and it blasts them and cleans off the chemical agent. We had two experimental ones up at Aberdeen. We had nothing even remotely close to decontaminate a large force. We never thought about it, didn't do it. The other reason to do it was to see if the Soviet one worked, build one like it and see if it worked. We didn't build protection into our tanks. I mean there were some rudimentary attempts later, but I mean right from the get-go the Soviets built vehicles with some chemical alarms and protection. We have quite a debate, as I'm leaving town, but the estimate is published pretty much along the lines that my colleagues and I agree on in terms of that threat. The national intelligence officer was out of the army chemical weapons program, so prone to believe the threat. He was a general in the U.S. Army. As I'm leaving the State Department a team under a State Department Foreign Service Officer is sent to Thailand to investigate all these reports about both Laos and Cambodia. It has none of our people in it, nor any intelligence people or anybody remotely involved in this. And that I'll deal with later. So this is when we go to Geneva. I applied for a fellowship award from the DCI, Director of Central Intelligence. They look at hundreds and hundreds of applications and they decide which one's going to get this. Now, it's a pretty plum deal. You get one year anywhere you want to go, all of the housing is paid for, everything's paid for. You still are going to receive your salary. And you have to propose what kind of research you're going to do, what you're going to write, what you're going to accomplish in that period. I took my family and we live out in a little village outside of Geneva, and I'm welcomed into the U.S. mission and given an office. And I knew a lot of people in the mission from arms control negotiations. There were many negotiations there. You had START -- the SALT (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) in Geneva. You had the Conference on Disarmament, which dealt with the comprehensive test treaty, chemical treaty, biological treaty and a long list of international disarmament type issues. When I started it was the Committee on Disarmament, later the Conference on Disarmament. It's about 40 countries, 40 ambassadors, and the membership changes. Fairly serious negotiating group.

My plan was to talk with U.S. Military and European political officials about the CW threat. And I mainly lay out the support that I got in Europe for the view that I held back in Washington on the estimate. I thought the Soviet chemical weapons stock was much larger than the rest of the community did. So I was in a lone footnote for INR saying I thought it was much bigger, that they had underestimated the size of it and the magnitude of the program. CIA was on the low side, DIA higher, Army a little higher, and I was oddly enough way out there with a much higher number. I pointed out that what I was learning was that this was a much bigger priority. I learned at NATO that we need to spend more time studying the Soviet system and the Warsaw Pact system and paying more attention to their planning and their doctrine. Would they use it or not, would they use it only with nukes. One of the organizations we got this for was the U.S. Air Force in Europe. The general said he lacked firm information from the intelligence community for planning. He said they plan on the basis that the Soviets will use chemical weapons and

that we need to have defense and better suits, better masks, better alarms. But we're having a hard time getting the money for that, he said. Because in the Army, once Nixon got rid of the chemical weapons program, they also canceled a lot of the defensive work and things to protect our forces. I wrote a major piece about retaliation and that we needed to better understand how the Soviets would use CBW in wartime. Some people in Washington were saying the Soviets had decided they didn't want chemical weapons anymore, they had deemphasized them and were just going to rely on tactical nuclear weapons. I think I mentioned to you before that it was a misreading of Soviet information. I write back about those kinds of subjects and attended lots of different meetings with people like the Swiss. I met with them and they showed me their NBC (nuclear biological chemical) protection and plans. They're really crazy about protecting their country from chemical biological weapons and nuclear weapons.

I was able to meet with the army people, the EUCOM and European Command, and U.S. Air Force Command. The reason this is important, we're about to get serious about a worldwide chemical weapons treaty. There was a seriousness in Washington by Richard Perle in defense and others that we were going to write this treaty finally. I went to my first meeting in Geneva in 1977 on drafting a chemical weapons treaty. The biological weapons treaty, I think I've mentioned before, was done in '72, ratified in '75. Just after I get there. But with no verification. So people like Richard Perle in Defense and others were saying this time, this treaty was going to have verification. We're going to have a way to verify if a country says they have 10,000 tons we're going to verify they have 10,000 tons. So I'm sitting there in Geneva in 1983 and a U.S. briefing team comes. And all of the ambassadors in town have gathered and they bring the new secret U.S. proposal, which nobody's seen yet. It's called "Anytime, Anywhere, Within 24 Hours." I mean way off the chart that the United States was willing to accept any investigation anywhere within 24 hours, anytime, anywhere. I believe they knew nobody in the world would agree to that. Nobody would agree to that. It was a killer, it was a treaty killer. And the Soviet sniffed it out and said, "Fine, we'll agree," and that just blew the whole game plan. It was a stupid move to begin with.

Q: I agree.

CROCKER: And of course right away what happened is they proposed it and people in other parts of the government said, whoa, wait a minute, you know, you think you can just waltz into a public company in America anytime anywhere and just show up and the government says they can come right in and look at the facility. You can just imagine this absurd little game blew up in their face. And of course they proposed it to the world and then had to pull it back. And the Russians said, we'll gladly agree to that. Some ambassadors walked right out of the meeting in Geneva. They were expecting a sincere proposal by the United States on how to get this treaty moving. And of course it didn't move for years until most countries took the chemical weapons issues seriously.

After the failed U.S. briefing the Vice President of the United States, George Bush, comes to Geneva to make a speech to the Conference on Disarmament about his personal view about chemical weapons and the need to get rid of them. And he makes a very

strong pitch. It's a very good speech. I had lots of plans to run all over Europe and do research for my study program. I didn't plan to stay there in Geneva. My first stop was the talks in Sweden.

Q: The Helsinki Accord.

CROCKER: Yes. I went to Stockholm and I met with them and I actually became very good friends with Bob Woodward who I worked with in Geneva. I wrote a lot about that because I thought it was important, the CSCE (Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe). Afterwards, I went to see Mort Abramowitz in Vienna for the Mutual Balance Force Reduction talks that were going on. My office had always written on that subject. I spent a lot of time on that treaty. So I met with Mort, did some work there. But while I'm there I meet doctors who have treated Iranian victims already. This is in '83. Already we have Iranian victims of mustard gas from Iraq. There's three main places the Iranians were taking their victims in Europe to be treated for serious mustard gas. One of them was in Ghent, Belgium where Dr. Hendricks was treating them. He gave me a detailed briefing on his inspections in Iran where he saw victims. But he had also been down in Angola and other places where chemical weapons use was reported. And he had written a lot about this and worked with the UN. He was one of the people who worked on this whole idea of the team concept to quickly go in and investigate. And Dr. Hendricks decides to hold a very large international conference in Ghent. And he asked me to be a main speaker. So I wrote a fairly long piece about the use of chemical weapons in Laos, in Cambodia, and Afghanistan and made that presentation. Many people came from all over the world. And many of the people who came were all these people that we had met on our trip, Dr. Ueno from Japan, the Canadians, reporters; all these people came to basically share their evidence to support the U.S. system. But also Meselson came from Harvard, along with Julian Perry Robinson from England, and other friends. The Australians showed up, even the Yugoslavs. Well, lots of people showed up and presented papers on all kinds of subjects. The Yugoslavs provided me information that was useful years later during the Balkan War.

I wrote a little report about this and predicted it would become important. I suspected Yugoslavia had chemical weapons based on the expertise shown by the two officers I met with. The Chinese also came. The Chinese again were helpful and they came and spread the word that they agreed with the United States. Meselson gave his pitch that this was all a U.S. government fantasy. I'm still working on "yellow rain" while I am on this sabbatical. So now the next big thing that happens is I come in one morning and the 40 ambassadors find a report from the Iranian Foreign Minister has been put on each person's table. It documents all of the uses of chemical weapons, the dates, how it was delivered, the victims, the symptomatology, and all the scientific information. The Iranian Foreign Minister actually tells me this, "Well, we sort of went on the basis of all the work you Americans did when you went up to the UN and proposed how to do a proper investigation,"

He said "We understand you had trouble selling your case. So we've not only documented it, we've sent the victims to three different hospitals in Europe." I said, "I

know, I've seen them." I almost got in trouble for meeting with the Iranian along with a CIA person, but the results were worth the interview.

They leave all this evidence and he makes a speech about Iraq. Later we gather with the ambassador to the CD in the mission. There is a DCM that runs the mission and coordinates with the international agencies in Geneva. We get into the meeting and the ambassador has these documents. And he said, "Who the hell knows anything about this subject?" And everybody says, "Gary, he's the guy who's been running about Washington briefing on the Iraqi use and raising hell and trying to get people to listen to him." I became the point man in the mission.

I point out that there will be a problem because the Iranians have raised this several times at the UN and in Washington, particularly to the State Department. We've just been blowing them off. Now we are stuck because they documented it. They followed our advice, so to speak, and they documented the evidence. The first thing I recommended: report this whole episode, we'll get somebody who's leaving soon to get all these documents back to Washington, and I said, we need to follow our own advice and ask the Secretary General to send in an international investigation *now*, immediately. That's what we preached, you know, so that's what we have to do. Then I said, "And the fact is, they did gas them. That's a fact. And they were widespread.

And Washington did go to the Secretary General and the Secretary General decided not to go through the General Assembly or the Security Council. He decided that he had the authority to send the team himself. So he just called up trained people and deployed them. And this team went into Iraq and Iran and of course came out with their report. Consequently, I became an "employee" of the mission. My point is that I spent a lot of time in my office for a good while and became the drafter of cables back to Washington.

Q: Can you talk more about your meeting with the Iranian Foreign Minister?

CROCKER: We met right out in the open at the Palais. I don't know whether he was smart enough to know who I was, but I never told him I'm Gary Crocker from the Bureau of Intelligence. We sat there and debriefed him and he gave us details about the attacks. There was confusion about how much agent Iraq had and what kind. This is early in the game before we had some really good sources inside the Iraqi program. But at this point, we're talking '83, this is right in its infancy and the Egyptians had helped them build the agents. And later there was confusion whether or not some of this agent was Iranian, because there was some rumor we may have given the Shah chemical weapons. I know that a lot of people I know in the chemical weapons business went there. He certainly was spending money on chemical defense, but the question is whether he also had weapons. One of the reasons is we know agents were used that Iraq didn't have. Because later we know everything about the Iraqi program. We have incredible sources later. I'm really part of the mission team and I'm reporting to the ambassador and got to know the DCM very well. His wife was the public affairs officer and enlisted me on many occasions to brief the press and foreign embassies and international officials.

Geneva was a rich environment, plus I traveled extensively. I went to Finland. It turned out the Fins had done incredible research on chemical weapons and biological weapons and had air samplers that tested the air from the Soviet Union and were picking up particles from the Soviets' big chemical testing ground in Shikany. I think they were glad somebody from Washington came there to actually hear their story and how much work they had done plus they supported U.S. views. I also worked on the margins of the Strategic Arms talks and when they weren't in session I played tennis with Ambassador Nitze.

I also went to Brussels a good many times for meetings with people in Brussels, NATO and SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe). I did write a fairly comprehensive report on yellow rain based on my meetings in Ghent with Professor Hendricks and two international conferences in Ghent where they produced documents on all the different views about Soviet use of chemicals, plus other developments around the world. My briefing was published. I might have mentioned that I developed a close relationship with the United States Information Agency (USIA) through the wife of the DCM at the mission. In addition to speeches I wrote several papers on chemical and biological weapons which USIA sent out worldwide, she once told me they went to 180,000 recipients. I later traveled for USIA to Europe.

Q: Well, as this goes on, I mean you're talking about investigative results, which are accumulating more and more evidence.

CROCKER: When we get to the Iran-Iraq business, that's when all the attitudes changed. Meselson wrote a piece he was ridiculed for. He wrote a piece in The Washington Post that he didn't believe the Iraqis were using all these chemical weapons. Meselson's view is that he was a chief drafter of the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention which has no verification mechanism. He thinks it's a great treaty and that it has stopped the development of biological weapons. He believes that we have all these great developments in biology that can help the whole world. He told me I was tainting biotechnology by saying the science was used for warfare. Bill Clinton got very involved in the work on these really exotic agents that could be devastating if used on a population. This is in the book Germes from the New York Times. A lot of other people were just skeptical of the evidence or they were skeptical because they loved nuclear weapons, and not CW/BW, which they found nasty.

Q: I would think that the commercial side would like to push the threat.

CROCKER: I can tell you that once we got rolling in about 1981, more and more people believed the threat. The University of Florida under the leadership of a former State Department Ambassador started writing, publishing books and speaking about the chemical issues. Their favorite line was, "It's not a matter of if, it's a matter of *when* the Soviets will use biological weapons."

The contractors came rolling in, the facts be damned. I mean they just came rolling in with all kinds of project money. And this really accelerates when Iraq uses it and we're

thinking about going into Iraq after they had invaded Kuwait. Then there is a push to vaccinate our troops and we've got to worry about the threat. My neighbor was one of these guys with the big huge contracts. He said that interest in CW/BW goes up and down.

Q: Were you involved with Meselson in Geneva?

CROCKER: I didn't mention before. He actually showed up in Geneva, made contact with me, and invited me to breakfast at the nice hotel in town. He pulled out a little sort of cube with a bee in it and he began to tell me that he had gone to Thailand and developed his bee theory. He believed that what we called "yellow rain" chemical weapon attacks were actually swarms of bees that defecate after they had been eating pollen. The droppings make these little yellow spots that we had identified as having toxin in them dropped from an airplane and he was saying that was from bees. And he also then proceeded as he does for many years and still today to discredit each part of the story. I challenged him on each point.

For example he had heard that the Lao pilot really had lied about something. But what I've noted for many years to people is he didn't have a good story on Afghanistan, it didn't fit his paradigm of the swarm of bees coming over. I had a lot of evidence the Soviets used chemical weapons. And as the years went on, once the Soviet Union left we got all kinds of people, former Spetsnaz officers, telling us about using chemical weapons. And later, as I mentioned before, we all gathered at the University of Ghent with Professor Hendricks who is a scientist who's very interested in the use of chemical weapons. He gets involved in many cases through time, including Iraq-Iran. While I'm in Geneva in '84 Vice President Bush, as I pointed -- came and spoke to the Conference on Disarmament. This is the 40-nation Conference on Disarmament under the United Nations that was drafting a chemical weapons treaty to curb the use and production of chemical weapons. And actually, there was a whole arms control side of this that I hadn't mentioned before. Blair Murray and Arch Turrentine were from the Arms Control Disarmament Agency and they were working on the arms control aspect. How can we have a better treaty to control chemical weapons? And so I participated in that negotiation on the treaty. I first attended in 1976 and then several years after I left Geneva. Eventually they get a treaty. I'm trying to make a segue here because the issues go back home with me to Washington DC when I leave Geneva in 1984.

Q: Well, they don't go away.

CROCKER: Right, they don't go away and so I want to mention one more that is a little strange actually. All the ambassadors in Geneva, including those from the ILO (International Labor Organization) attended a meeting. The speaker is the head of the Organization for the Study of the United States in the Soviet Union, Arbatov. He gave a speech and afterwards we all said, "what the heck was that about?" And it was like he was warning that the United States and the Soviet Union were about to go to war. Well, this is Ronald Reagan star wars time, the leadership in the Soviet Union is paranoid. Andropov, the former Head of the KGB, is in charge.

We really don't know quite what's going on in Moscow and his speech was like doom and gloom. And this was new. Now, later when I get back to Washington I learn about double agents and all kinds of information going back and forth about what the Russians are up to. A lot of this is in a book by the Soviet Ambassador to the United States.

Q: Dobrynin.

CROCKER: Yes, he wrote a book called Breaking With Moscow. He said that if he reported the truth that the U.S. was not preparing for war, he would be recalled. He therefore, told them what they wanted to hear. Eventually that situation in Moscow goes through several strange periods.

Q: When did you leave Geneva?

CROCKER: In 1984 I returned to the Bureau of Intelligence. I remember I just got back and I went out to a national intelligence estimate meeting on the Soviet chemical and biological weapons program. In my year in Geneva I kept up on the issue. I didn't have the access in Geneva to the very high level intelligence that I had on a daily basis in Washington. At the meeting I'm appalled that the group of people, particularly out at CIA, have turned the national estimate into a softball. It said the Soviets really lost interest in chemical/biological weapons and rely on tactical nuclear weapons. It stated they reduced the threat and only 10% of all the chemical weapons are in weapons, the rest is bulk storage to be used at time of war. It really played down the biological weapons side. I was furious. I went over to the Defense Intelligence Agency and read these very highly classified documents, which have all been released now by the way. These were lesson plans for the Warsaw Pact officers at the Soviet General Staff School. So we had some access to the Soviet officers' courses. I spent a lot of time reading all this and realizing that there's a difference between what they teach their Soviet Officers and what they teach Warsaw Pact Officers. In the latter the chemical and biological data is missing. It used to be there and so the assumption of the CIA analysts was because we'd been getting these documents clandestinely for a long time and chemical weapons disappeared, CIA analysts assumed they don't teach it anymore, they're not interested in it anymore. They were wrong, they still taught it on the Soviet side, but they stopped talking about it with their allies. The clue that put me onto this was the nuclear data was wrong. I knew the nuclear data, the real nuclear data, and I knew they weren't telling the Warsaw Pact allies the truth. They weren't telling them the real capability.

Q: Did this get straightened out?

CROCKER: Yes. I organize my allies in the other agencies. I had a good relationship with Bob Gates. He's not the DCI at this point in time. Casey is the DCI. But I had a good relationship and I had been recommended to be the National Intelligence Officer for Chemical/Biological issues. Are you familiar with the National Intelligence Officers?

Q: No.

CROCKER: Well, in the old system before they created the National Director of Intelligence the Director of Central Intelligence was not only the head of the CIA, but he's also the head of the intelligence community and all the agencies. And under him, he has a group of people called National Intelligence Officers. Many of them are military, generals and admirals. Some are civilians, even from academia. There's one for the Soviet Union, but generally only political issues. Then there's one for strategic forces and there's one for general purpose forces. And I think there's one for navy too. There'd be a Middle East NIO (National Intelligence Officer), a Latin America, etc. A National Intelligence Officer coordinates community activities and chairs a national estimate. So when I go to a meeting, let's say on the Soviet ground forces, it would be an army general who was the chairman of that national estimate. And this is not really well known in America how this all works. And then all the agencies bring their positions to the room and sometimes this takes many months to draft a particular estimate. It could be general, for example Soviet strategic forces or more specific, like missiles. It's highly classified. Or it could be a special issue. Let's say the Secretary of State sends a request for a special estimate on Syria. Senior officials may need the best intelligence view on a subject. Or it could be a long range assessment of the Iran-Iraq War and who's going to win and what are the key factors. Special National Intelligence Estimates may have input from The White House or agencies. Differences appear in footnotes. I would say the Bureau of Intelligence believes the Soviet chemical weapons program is much larger and I would state my evidence. Or the Air Force would say we totally disagree that the Backfire Bomber is not an intercontinental bomber. National estimates I'll just say before I move on are extremely important and important historically as a database. They go all the way back to the '50s, the national estimates do. A national estimate is the recorded view of all source intelligence at the time of everybody's position. So let's say some guy writes a book and he said, "The CIA predicted the Soviet Union was going to invade Afghanistan," I can go back and get the national estimate and show that they didn't.

They're very important historical documents. I protected them with my life. I had this big vault full of all of them going way back. I had to fight like hell to keep them. And relying on the CIA's huge library is not a good idea because they often called me and asked me for a copy of a SNIE or other document.

The National Security Agency, NSA at Fort Meade, I think has the best database. I have been able to go back 20 years and say, "Remember that report?" They were very good. And of course they're computer geniuses and built these databases.

Anyway, Bob Gates and I differed on the estimate. He's supporting the CIA.

Q: At that time, how was the head of the CIA, William Casey, seen? Because for many he was seen, particularly after we got involved in Iraq, as sort of a malign influence.

CROCKER: Glad you asked that. When I got my award to go to Geneva Casey gave a talk and he kind of mumbles. He's not a great public speaker. But he really supported us on the use of chemical weapons in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan. He used to work for

the Red Cross and he went to his Red Cross buddies to get us some help. At one point he gave me an office at CIA to produce the paper I showed you, the Al Haig report. I was the chairman and I wrote the draft of the national estimate. He gave me tremendous support. And he was very active and he was very active behind the scenes traveling incognito. I hope you find this very interesting. The CIA officer who briefed the President of the United States in the morning over quite a long period of time published a book. But before the book was done he did a lecture for intelligence people to hear. I asked the question, "What influences the President of the United States when making a decision to change his mind or strengthen his view?"

And he said, it is different for every president. Some read and really like to read and others don't read at all and they just want an oral briefing. For most of them and in particular Ronald Reagan, it was the person who could articulate the situation the best and put it in the frame of reference of the President. Where he came from, his experience, and his experiences were important. And he said the best of all the briefers was Casey. Casey could sit down and spin a story and tell a story that would put it in the President's frame of reference so he understood exactly what the situation was, what the evidence was, and would in some case change Reagan's mind.

Q: Well, I've interviewed Chester Crocker, who was Head of African Affairs in the State Department. And he found Casey and the CIA actually were so close to the white South Africans that Chester Crocker basically had to develop his own intelligence service within the State Department to find out what the CIA was up to.

CROCKER: That's very true. I remember the period well. I got involved in the South African business and CIA involvement. Because the time Chester Crocker is talking about is when CIA was really big on covert action.

Q: It goes back to Iran and Mosaddegh.

CROCKER: Yes, it's a long history of mostly failures and bad outcomes.

Q: I mean that still rankles.

CROCKER: In the case of South Africa, they had chemical weapons and we were getting reports of them being used in Mozambique, Angola, and other places. And they send a CIA officer to South Africa and he comes back and tells us there's nothing. A friend of mine who was investigating CIA involvement with Savimbi in Angola believed they were involved in smuggling ivory and covert operations.

I do remember the African bureau having some real problems with the agency. And I even had problems with the agency. I remember Joseph Nye from Harvard was on the National Foreign Intelligence Board or something. He gave a speech at State and said the Defense Intelligence Agency support the military and whatever the military wants. And of course INR supports the policy of the Secretary and the policy bureaus. But in CIA "we're neutral," he said, "and in CIA, we are just trying to get the best assessments and

the truth for the President.” That’s pure bologna. Joe Nye came from Harvard and doesn’t know what he’s talking about. I was in the Defense Intelligence Agency. It is independence from the military services. Sometimes the services are *furious* with the Defense Intelligence Agency’s assessments. It’s a good organization and it certainly doesn’t tailor everything to support the joint chiefs and all the rest. They respond to providing intelligence to the commands. Go to any Policy Bureau or talk to somebody who has been in a Policy Bureau at State and say, “Do you find that INR is very supportive of your policy?” That’s a real joke. I mean we *never* cleared intelligence with the Policy Bureaus. Never.

And our Secretary’s morning summary had no input from the outside, and it was one of the best documents written in Washington every day. And it was very factual and full of good intelligence and went straight to the Secretary and a very few people in Washington and it did not go to the Congress. We did not send it to Congress. That was always a bone of contention. I had long experience with the agency, I spent a lot of time out there. They are very tuned into The White House and the President’s needs and whatnot.

Q: Well, I think that briefing acts as a conduit.

CROCKER: On a number of occasions I actually wrote some suggestions, one to Tom Pickering, that I think it’s absolutely wrong to have a CIA briefer alone with the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and the President. Now, I realize that’s really sensitive, but if the Secretary of State himself can’t know about that, I mean there’s something very wrong here. I happened to be on the seventh floor and I saw this CIA briefer up there and said, “Well, that’s really odd,” and went back to my boss Ron Spiers and told him something was wrong. The rule was the CIA was to keep the head of the Bureau of Intelligence informed about anything they were telling the Secretary so that he doesn’t go up to see the Secretary and then get blindsided. The head of INR is a member of the National Board of Intelligence.

Ron Spiers raised hell and said, he’s my boss, I want to know what you tell him, period.

In a paper to Tom Pickering (he asked for suggestions) I recommended that there should be representatives from State and Defense in the room. We’re usually fighting the agency on a position and certainly Defense is.

An attempt to coordinate was called the National Intelligence Briefing Book. That was a real pain for 10 years or more that I did it, because they would argue with your submission. They would challenge your view. The Head of INR was supposed to know what was in that oral briefing for the President, but I think often we didn’t know. I understand all the highly classified material because through most of my career in the Bureau of Intelligence I was a Control Officer for very high level CIA human sourced documents, classified documents, and briefed them to high level people. For some cases I had to get a signature from the Undersecretary and Deputy Secretary.

Therefore, my return to Washington starts off with a big debate over the Soviet

chemical/biological weapons program. And this gets more interesting in 1987. 1984 is a very important year for an entire new subject that in the end enlists thousands of people. That's called the Proliferation of Chemical/Biological Weapons. Now we're not talking about use anymore, we're talking about proliferation. In '84, you basically have an odd situation that the United States is *the only country* in the world -- believe it or not -- the only one that admits to having chemical weapons. The British have actually destroyed most of their stuff and so they would admit they used to. Remember, in '69 is when Nixon gets rid of the chemical corps and we destroy some of our chemical weapons and all the biologic weapons. We admitted to having chemical weapons (nerve gas, mustard), provided a document to the United Nations on how much we had and what we were destroying. It's called Form Four in the UN. Not a single other country admits to having chemical weapons at this time frame. I always said it's an odd negotiation, because when I went to the conventional forces or strategic forces talks at least everyone in the room agrees that they're negotiating about something they have, right? But you go to the chemical weapons talks or the Biological Weapons Convention, and you're talking about abstract capabilities. At the time we are mainly talking about Russia, China, France (never admits possession), and North Korea. South Korea, Israel, Taiwan were the sort of suspects and then Iraq is coming along because they are using it on the Iranians.

Q: How about Libya?

CROCKER: Libya is part of the new story. I have this map which shows the suspects -- Libya, India, Brazil, South Africa. The Warsaw Pact countries were all suspects. In the beginning we're getting these dribbles of information about others, particularly Libya, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Iran. We all suspected that we were helping the Shah develop chemical weapons. Might even have given him some. And then of course he goes away, which means Khomeini and the bad guys have got chemical weapons. That's a soft story, not a lot of evidence on that one. So anyway, we started getting this information. I say we. I wrote I think probably the first paper, which laid out basically all this suspect information. And I divided it up between hard, we know for sure, ones we really do suspect, and then countries to watch, like say India. In other words they have the capability to make it, but we don't see a weaponizing type program going on. I mean we did this pretty exhaustive study, highly classified, and I sent it up to Shultz. And about that same time CIA did something sort of similar, which he also received. Well, Shultz hits the ceiling. He calls myself and Ken Adelman -- do you remember Ken Adelman who was the Head of the Arms Control Disarmament Agency, a real character. John Hawes, who was in PM at the time, was also there. That's Wendy Chamberlin's husband at the time. So there's not too many people in the room. Shultz says that he had read my memo and wants to know what the hell are we going to do about this. He puts Ken in charge working with PM and myself. It was important that all these countries had chemical weapons without our knowledge. My count was up to 22 and that's going from like 10 to 22 practically overnight. We developed an interagency group, met regularly and we started intelligence collection, even sting operations.

Q: Sting, entrapment type operations.

CROCKER: Yes. This took us to a whole new level of intelligence. Most of us worked military intelligence. We now had to learn about the business world in order to play this game. This is a very complicated field, involving thousands of people. Agencies had their own proliferation centers. I guarantee you, if you went back to the early '80s there's no such thing as a proliferation center, there's no studies in proliferation, there's no proliferation contracts. It's a new subject. And remember, the Soviet Union hasn't fallen yet either. I mean we aren't to that point where all these Soviet analysts had to go find work somewhere. So the Soviet Union's still a big threat and all these people are still working on that. And terrorism hasn't happened yet, remember. So we don't have terrorism centers. So it's basically still conventional analysis going on on the big issue countries, but all of a sudden the Third World has entered the picture. In the whole world of intelligence, you put your big money and your satellites on major threats. A lot of the people who worked at high levels were strategic people. It was all really about Russia and China and the Middle East.

Q: Well, essentially isn't this the poor man's nuclear weapon in a way? I mean it can be done without the huge infrastructure it needs for nuclear weapons? Or not?

CROCKER: I was on the Hill for a hearing showing the increase in CW countries. Everybody was making statements without evidence. I mean we proceeded cautiously. And this is not published until I think 1988.

Q: You're showing the map.

CROCKER: Yes, in The Christian Science Monitor.

It was a huge research paper that was hand carried to me when it was printed and I was told to take it to Shultz immediately. It was a complete expose of everything that's going to happen in the next four years. It's called "Poison on the Wind" written by Seth Carus who becomes, with Gary Thatcher, close friends of ours. But we're in 1984 when this is all new. People had never heard about some of these other countries. And it's pretty new that the four main countries that we target and are interested in are Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Libya. And it is decided we're going to focus on them, but meanwhile, we'll pick up new information. Does South Korea have them, for example? We start finding out countries have had it all along and we never knew it.

Q: Which countries?

CROCKER: A lot of it is a leftover from World War II. Case in point, Yugoslavia. I had mentioned to you I think in 1984 I went to a conference at Ghent University where I presented a paper on the use of chemical weapons and I met these Yugoslav chemical weapons experts. They had documents they had published. I suspected at the time that these officers knew a lot about hands on chemical weapons. And that's what led me to start investigating others. During the Balkan War in the 1990s we find the storage facilities and much of the rest of the program. But we had Yugoslavia on the suspect list in this '84, '85, '86 timeframe. You might be surprised we found out eventually that

Spain still had chemical weapons. The Warsaw Pact countries had Soviet weapons. The East Germans had developed their own. It turns out they were heavy into chemical weapons. Bulgaria had them, Poles not so much, but they had Soviet weapons like Czechoslovakia. Then we get into the Middle East, Latin America, and South Africa it turned out had a pretty sizable program. But there are others. Israel of course never has admitted nuclear or chemical anything, but they certainly were on our suspect list. Iraq becomes obvious because they started using them, however, some of us tried unsuccessfully to tell them that the Soviets provided Iraq with chemical weapons in the 1970s and they were used on the Kurds. The intelligence community verified this later. Egypt was counted because the Soviets provided them with chemical weapons in the 1960s. Later Egypt makes their own with Swiss help. In 1988 the Swiss admit they built the plant..

Q: They used them in Yemen.

CROCKER: Yes, in '63 and in '66, I described that previously. Our group becomes very proactive. We started going to U.S. chemical companies, Dupont and others. It's big now. I'm talking about the Pentagon and ACDA (Arms Control Disarmament Agency) and CIA, we're all into it and we have interagency groups, we're sharing this information in an interagency environment. We learned that Dupont will make some toxic chemical that's used for paint or something, and it's stored in a bonded warehouse and then somebody buys it. We asked Dupont who's responsible for the chemical. It would end up in Syria, and be used in the process of making agent, for example. We've entered a whole new world with the commercial people because of lax controls.

Q: What kicked this off really? I mean you've been preaching this for a long time, but particularly focused on the Soviet Union. But was there an incident or a person within -- this is the Reagan government -- who said let's get on with this, or what was stirring this up?

CROCKER: Well, I think the first thing that gets this going is it's being used in Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan. And there is the history of Yemen and new reports of use in Africa. There are people that fully believe it's being used and that Soviets are being bad and there are those that don't. And you can find them within the administration and outside. It was a debate and it goes on even to this day. I would say that I'm positive the proliferation effort starts because of Iraq; we find out Iraq is making chemical weapons and we find out an Egyptian is helping them, and then we find other connections eventually that a German company was helping them Iraq, Syria, and Libya. We find out 14 countries had companies helping Libya make chemical weapons at that famous facility, Rabta. There was little enthusiasm to accuse the Soviets and the UN waffled the investigation. But Iraq was different. Meselson actually wrote a piece in The Washington Post that he was not convinced Iraq used chemical weapons. This is after UN inspectors have been there collecting all these samples. I mean it was pretty obvious to everybody and the evidence was very good. Political problem is the U.S. does not want to accuse Iraq's Saddam Hussein of using chemical weapons. I went into an interagency policy meeting on how we're going to deal with Saddam. I gave my briefing and they just

almost threw me out and said don't you understand? Rumsfeld is taking millions of dollars to Iraq tomorrow and you're sitting here telling us he's violating international law. Now, the reason that's important is because there are international laws and there's U.S. law that you may not trade with a country that is violating international law. And so you could see that my friends and I are impediments to policy progress because we're saying you can't deal because Saddam is violating the Geneva Protocol.

Q: So the same people who coddled Saddam later are the ones who go to war against him.

CROCKER: Yes, Shultz was my only senior ally. We actually ran into a buzz saw quite a few times in this period. I was talking to an old friend from the Human Rights Bureau. Let's say they publish about some terrible human rights abuses in China. Meanwhile, over at the China commercial desk they're working like hell on trade issues. They don't want to hear about this. It messes everything up. Human rights analysts have been in the same position we were. The other one I may have told you was they were going to give 100 million to Laos for hospitals. They couldn't do it if the U.S. government is right that they're using lethal chemical weapons on the Hmong. So they joined with Meselson and whomever else doesn't agree with the intelligence.

Q: Yeah.

CROCKER: In most of our issues people become total believers because of overwhelming evidence. We had some people fight us on proliferation, but we began to find out that the more we dug -- learned about commercial cables and commercial traffic-- the better the evidence. Actually, two people in The New York Times brought all these cables to me and said this is not classified, these are commercial cables. They said the cables showed that Germany is building the chemical plant in Iraq and they're also in Libya building the well-known chemical plant in Libya. If a company wants to sell to Iraq, but it's illegal, they ship it all the way down to Brazil and over here and then over here and then eventually it ends up in Iraq. And they had all these dummy companies set up that The New York Times actually discovered. On the policy side is John Hawes from PM. Working with Ken Adelman and ACDA, we form a small group of about four or five people. At a meeting we asked how are we going to handle this proliferation problem. We can't do a U.S. only here; we need help from our allies. Some of our allies' companies are the ones building the plants (Germany, Switzerland, South Korea). Here's what we thought up. We thought which country could we call on to chair this effort. And we thought about the Canadians, of course, New Zealand, we ruled them out. And then we finally said well, it's obviously Australia.

Q: Why Australia?

CROCKER: They're respected in the Western group. This group is not going to have the Soviets or other irresponsible countries in it. They had done a lot of work in the chemical/biological weapons field. They graciously accepted it and our first meeting was in Paris. John Hawes and I and a few others go to Paris and we have the first Australia

Group Meeting. We wrote up some rules and it was decided that we would only deal with the four countries: Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. We did not want to make this go much bigger than that because then we get into some real problems. And there was going to be some national problems with the countries invited to participate here, for example, Italy. Later on I will brief Italy, in '86, because they have strong political and commercial ties with Libya.

Q: Libya had a lot of oil.

CROCKER: The Italians were afraid we were going to bomb the Rabta facility which we didn't of course. They thought we'd go bomb the factory. That starts the Australia group. I don't know if you know, but it still is in existence today. Most important was that we had to start identifying chemicals that are used to make weapons and commercial connections that support these programs. Eventually this'll go in the treaty when we finally get the treaty signed, but right now we're not working with a treaty. We come up with lists of prohibited chemicals to make warfare agents. There is no real legal standing but we have an international agreement with all these countries. It's France, Germany, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, and some Europeans. We also pushed countries to declare their programs to the UN as they are supposed to do under previous treaties. They're supposed to file a form that says we are producing and we do this and we make these agents and whatnot. And of course the U.S. is the only one that has at this point. This undertaking is very successful -- I remember going to the second meeting and France was very good about hosting this particular group. I am very proud of my role in forming the Australia Group.

Q: Weren't you getting screams from Germany, for example?

CROCKER: No, Germany was a special case. The Foreign Minister was heavily involved in pushing German trade. I remember we brought him up to Reggie Bartholomew's office when he was Undersecretary and beat up on him. The U.S. didn't have a business section at State Department and we didn't provide intelligence to U.S. companies. Almost all countries in the world do. They work very carefully with their businesses and they provide them intelligence information. We don't do that. We eventually did. I'll be a participant eventually in that process when we get into this. As you'll remember German politics is a bit controversial through Willy Brandt and all the different people in power. And Germany was really not very strict about what its companies were doing around the world. Neither was France for that matter, or Italy. I mean now they could actually point their finger at us and say we were providing arms all over the world. However, building chemical and biological programs was different, and we found allies in German intelligence and the military.

It has the stigma from World War I. I remember the meetings in Germany and we came up with clandestine type operations to penetrate these well known plants like Samarra and others in Iraq. Iraq was a main focus and an easier target. We have real international cooperation, finding out what the Iraqis were up to. This information was key to our success later. When we invade we have great information about how much they produced

and how much they used. We had Iraq nailed. Within the department I was building support because I briefed Undersecretary Pickering and Assistant Secretary Murphy on all these issues in some detail. They really sucked up all that information and put it to good use. The least information was on Iran. Thailand and other countries who were sending people to Iraq and Libya also provided information. The origin of Iran's weapons has not been terribly clear. But we will later learn that the Iranians provided other countries with chemical weapons. They were one of the proliferators. It's not illegal at this time to produce chemical weapons. You can produce all you want. The Geneva protocol is only about use. So it means it's illegal to use it on somebody and there's different interpretations whether Saddam Hussein's use on his own people, on the Kurds, counts under the Geneva Protocol. The Geneva Protocol of 1925 is a nation state document. It's about nation state against nation state. We do at least in our view solve that problem. Later a State legal paper will state that use on humans is illegal, even in your own country.

We learned a lot about Libya through these companies. And then we have Syria. Syria had a big facility called CERS, built with UN money to advance science. They built this place and they got computers and all kinds of equipment. It's supposed to be a study area and it helped Syrians gain information. Well, I said to a UN official, "Do you go visit there often?"

He said, "Well, actually we can't go there. It's a highly secured facility." Here's this very large facility and we know they're working on military programs. I presented to the Institute for Peace a paper that said what people have been doing in the past is saying you can't send military related things to Syria. I say that if we can prove CERS is making nuclear/chemical and biological weapons, they shouldn't even get toilet paper. Nothing. No computers (the argument was over sending computers). That's the way this game should be played. And Libya, nothing. As long as they're violating the Australian Group rules, the Western world has decided you will not build chemical and biologic weapons. If you haven't declared to the UN that you are a chemical weapon state you get nothing. That caused quite a stink with the trade people. I'll later come back to my time in Libya because we proved that sanctions worked. That sound familiar? I believe in my career that I can show proof sanctions do work. That you're hurting countries more than you think.

Q: OK, well I think Iran's the case.

CROCKER: We found one of the big Libyan facilities through a sting operation. There were some strange developments. We got information that there's Americans helping this process along, particularly two Iraqis linked to Senator Jim Baker in Tennessee. A press person put a camera in a suitcase and visited these very wealthy Iraqi millionaires living in Tennessee. And first they found out one of them was marrying Senator Baker's daughter, I believe. First they deny they sell to Iraq. And it turns out these two guys were helping Iraq and sending all kinds of weapons and chemicals. Senator Baker was not happy, but we nailed them. And there's more cases. The really big case was when we get Steve Engelberg and Michael Gordon of The New York Times involved in exposés of

German companies. Eventually, The Christian Science Monitor does the biggest exposé.

Q: What issue is that?

CROCKER: This series originally was in The Monitor in four parts in 1988. And this is the one I hand carried up to Shultz when it was printed. This was the whole story about the U.S. government and the Australia Group, it talks about all the countries. They had a lot of help from the intelligence community. And they included the whole Soviet program. We told everybody in the world where we had built programs. As an aside, we bombed Qadhafi's home in 1986.

Q: Did we use that opportunity to go after the chemical stuff too?

CROCKER: No. It's a good story to wrap up. As you know we only killed Qadhafi's son Seth's daughter, which is interesting because later Seth is the person we deal with when we open up Libya. I was sent to Italy in 1986 and the ambassador was Reggie Bartholomew. And I gave the briefing on everything we knew about Libya and that we would like to have the Italians help and get them to stop this. And at this time Qadhafi maintains that this is a pharmaceutical facility, that Rabta is producing pharmaceuticals to sell to the world. And so Bartholomew comes back and is the Undersecretary and we're talking about bombing Rabta. And I get a call and it says Rabta is burning. And we get all these photos and it shows flames. If you know who Reggie Bartholomew is, you will understand my predicament.

Q: No.

CROCKER: Bartholomew is furious, because this will delay plans to bomb Rabta. In that same day they figured out it was a ruse that Qadhafi pulled off. He had all these communications and police chasing around the country trying to find who burned it. It was really very convincing. Bartholomew was so mad he rarely ever spoke to me again. I was the bearer of bad news. In 1986 I go to Israel to do several briefings. My instructions were to convince them Iran is the bad guy, not Iraq. They've already knocked out the Iraqi nuclear reactor. This is a military to military conference that's held every year. And they briefed all of us on all of their information about Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya. And they were cooperating with the Australia Group. And it was pretty edifying how well Israel had penetrated all these countries. They told me that they had a special relationship with Iran. They said we like Iran, we know Iran is backing Hamas and Hezbollah and our enemy, but on the other hand no Jew was ever killed in Iran. I'd never heard anybody bring that up in the United States before. Israel made a deal, maybe including the provision of some weapons. I could never document that story if somebody really wanted to pin me down.

By this time Iraq's really using chemical weapons on people, and we've already got the victims who are in various hospitals in Europe. And the Iranians have dumped this big database on the Conference on disarmament. And there's a UN investigation. As an aside, I have a lot of relatives in Israel. I'm not Jewish, but through my wife. I went to Haifa

and Tel Aviv to visit these relatives. Some go back to Ben-Gurion; most have been there since the beginning.

Q: Interesting, that made the trip worthwhile.

CROCKER: I traveled all around Israel with the Senior Military Attaché. And at that time the Israelis were into Lebanon. And that's where I learned these are our allies, but this Attaché had to travel all the time to find out where the Israeli military was and what they were doing.

Q: Yes, the nuclear facility of Dimona or whatever it is.

CROCKER: The whole time I'm with him I'm writing information. They are allies and they share a lot of information, and they provided some of the best information about the Soviet use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan and Laos. And some of their scientists provided us incredible background.

Q: How did you find Secretary Shultz?

CROCKER: It was very clear to me Shultz felt he was really getting stuck by The White House, Oliver North and company, on the one hand, and CIA on the other. It meant that he was really getting undermined time and time again.

When Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons on the Kurds, that's 1988, I had been keeping Shultz briefed on proliferation. When I came back from Geneva I had seen the Iranian victims in the European hospitals. I actually found a little newspaper article from Vienna about this. This was an article from Vienna about how they were trying to treat these poor Iranians covered with mustard gas blisters. Several of them died. The Iranians were very clever. I mean they were getting no support because nobody liked them, so they sent their victims to these hospitals in Europe. Iraq was using mustard gas on them, as well as later use of nerve agents and other agents. So I happened to be the guy in 1988 that had to go up and see Shultz and tell him that they were gassing the Kurds and why we were sure. CIA took a position that it was just teargas on the Kurds and they were way over on this side and they had briefed as such. I enlisted the help of the National Security Agency to prove it was nerve gas. Shultz has been through this whole Iran-Iraq War; helped get a ceasefire. And the first thing Saddam does is launch 60,000 troops on the Kurds and drop gas all over them, including the well-known place – Halabja. I wrote several reports on this incident for the Secretary and others. I had contacts with the Iranians and others; therefore they had provided me with a book with all the photographs and all the evidence and when the attacks took place. Shultz was so damn mad, he was really mad that after all the international effort to protect the Kurds. (NATO had an operation to protect the Kurds.) Shultz is so furious, he wants to sanction the hell out of Saddam Hussein. Of course you know what's been going on, they've been coddling him, bringing him into the Family of Nations, showing him intelligence on the Iranians. He is really angry and he tells the press that he wants Saddam Hussein sanctioned. I saw the article. Shultz takes a draft to the Senate to sanction Saddam Hussein. I go to the Hill

later for support and to brief two senators. They put it in the post office bill and then it's pigeonholed. I mean they basically just stuck Shultz. Two senators years later talk about this, how ashamed they were that they went against Shultz.

Q: A footnote is a very interesting thing. When you represented your point of view, want to make a footnote, can they get rid of your footnotes? Can somebody expunge it?

CROCKER: No. Because all the agencies are at the meeting and one of the contrasts we have, my life pre-Geneva and post-Geneva, is I was a single actor. I was in an office and running an office, but everybody was kind of their own analyst, their own person. I may have had a Middle East analyst working for me, but he was working with the policy desk and the political office in INR. But I was the most independent of anyone at INR because I'd been thrust into this unusual role as an Intelligence Officer of being able to talk to the press and go on television and all these other things that had happened through the "yellow rain" issue. I was also in a documentary about the Russian Military where I said they were totally overrated. When I go to the CIA where they have the national intelligence estimate meetings, we were gathered around a big table with all the agencies represented. In this case, CIA wrote the chemical weapons draft and it was very much in their point of view. We were forced to go against this with our own agency views. And Defense (DIA) and Army certainly agreed with me. But they all kind of wimped out and left me hanging. So what happened is when you get to the final draft they may have tried to talk me out of it and I said, "Well, INR stays with its reservation."

Now, I have to go back and clear that with the Head of INR. I mean I'm not going to get to do that if the Head of INR says we're not going to support that. Before Geneva, nobody ever questioned me as the authority on biological and chemical weapons globally. If I took a footnote the Head of INR would have said fine, they wouldn't even have blinked.

Q: I understand.

CROCKER: Maybe not even care in some cases about chemical biological weapons, for that matter. This is all going to change as you and I have talked about, starting in '84. After the CIA draft when I come back all of a sudden there's interest in Syria, Iraq, Iran, Libya and chemical weapons proliferation becomes a huge thing, they establish proliferation centers.

Q: I mean basically you were supported by people who are dealing with the Soviet CBW threat and opposed by Soviet analysts in other fields.

CROCKER: Yes, and I hire chemical weapons experts to do this job, one in particular from Army.

My colleagues were saying the Soviets are going forward here on chemical/biological weapons and we're barely in business, particularly protection wise, mainly because nobody wants to spend any money on it. And our opponents say tactical nukes have

replaced chemicals. We win in the end. I stay with my footnote despite pressure on the head of INR, Hugh Montgomery, who was former CIA.

Q: What was the difference between the U.S. and the Soviets?

CROCKER: The argument goes like this. We did have chemical weapons still stationed in Europe. And it turns out, as time went on, we had no plan on how to use them. They were just there as a deterrent. There was no army plan that if we ever go to war there was some plan to use all these chemical weapons. Where the Soviets had a plan. I mean they planned on fighting in a nuclear, chemical biological environment. They protected their vehicles, they protected troops, they had lots of agent to throw at you. And they saw it as an important part of warfare, particularly even against the U.S. In the end we found out they were going to shoot ICBM's with smallpox on the U.S. I mean that was one of their plans. So over here on our side we're just paying lip service to it. We're not spending much money on it. And there is that thought in the nuclear crowd that if they use chemical, we'd use nuclear, which is an absurd concept actually. The doctrine of the United States was we will never publicly say what our doctrine is. I don't know if that's doctrine or policy, I guess that's policy. The reasoning was that we want the other side, whether it's the Soviets or anybody else, to never be sure about America and what it will do or when it might use nukes. We always want them to consider us a little unstable. They don't really know what those damn Americans might do. That was the policy, although some disagreed.

In U.S. exercises they follow a fixed plan. The book says you're going to execute the SIOP (Single Integrated Operational Plan), which is the nuclear plan, but you got to go through all the stages. I've been through quite a few big national exercises with the SIOP and some of them are in this '80s period here where it gets a little more iffy. Targeteers drive me crazy. I'll give you an example. I'm sitting in on a big exercise. There's a three-star general running this thing, and they're getting ready to do the SIOP in the exercise, they're going to execute, shoot the nukes. And I said, "General, I don't want to protest here, but you are shooting these nukes at army installations that are empty. I know all about the Soviet Army and at this stage in this scenario those troops have all moved from the USSR into East Germany and Poland to form the front, so they aren't there! Yet the targeteers list such and such army bases as a target.

The General said, "Go away, don't bother me." I mean we've got some bad stories coming up in the future here on Serbia where they try to blow up all the bridges on the Danube River because it was in the target package. It would have totally ruined the economy of Europe. Usually smart people can stop it, but not always. My team wrote a lot of papers about how the Soviet ground forces were getting bigger and they were spending more money and making more airplanes and the Navy was starting to get better and exercising more. And they were expanding. They were beginning to not only concentrate on the European front, which was this old Stalinist front, where you have your forces and you project beyond your area. Well, they had begun to implement the fronts opposite Iran and Afghanistan, and they definitely had strengthened against China, which had started back in about 1969. Some of us believed the Soviets were spending

themselves into oblivion. There were few consumer goods, but they're just spending like crazy in order to fight on all fronts. And they're going to bankrupt themselves, which I think they did. I wrote a paper about Marshal Ogarkov, who's an extremely important person in these years. Nobody ever got to interview Ogarkov either, I used to ask Soviets all the time.

Q: His position was Head of the Armed Forces?

CROCKER: No. That's the interesting thing. He is the head of an operational front headquarters. It would sort of be all the European Command (air, navy, ground) and all our big commands. It's a wartime command that in wartime would take over. We call them Unified and Specified Forces. The U.S. President actually can bypass the joint chiefs and everything else if he wants to go to one of those operational commands. Other Marshals were put in charge of these other fronts. Ogarkov though was publishing. Some of it was secret and it was leaked. But Ogarkov was arguing that nukes had no value. He said there's no way we're going to shoot nukes at each other. It's just a stupid concept. And we need, he says, to build up the conventional forces. Now, there were some people on our side thinking the same way. Remember, they're building the smart bombs and they're building all this new conventional weaponry.

Q: Which is opposed to the mutual assured destruction strategy.

CROCKER: Right, totally different. See, there's new thinking going on here and there.

And I published a paper for an academic conference in Wingspread. It was a big conference of academics and government people and I presented a paper saying The U.S. and the Soviet Union had Emerging Military Doctrines. One side says we hope to never use nuclear weapons, but as long as we have the nukes it will save the world. Well, I don't believe that. I've never believed that in a heartbeat. I never believed the Warsaw Pact was sitting over there trying to figure out the right mathematical calculated time to attack NATO. They knew better. They knew there were a million German reservists all armed and just waiting for them. And then of course as we get into this period I get to go to Russia in 1988 and see the ground and missile forces. Americans had never actually been on a lot of bases and seen all the Soviet equipment. And I come back and say, you know, this is a real third rate, third world country. Really they live in crappy conditions and the training's horrible. There was no way the Soviets were going to get together with a bunch of allies who hated their guts. The Germans, the Poles, the Czechs, were the allies who they were going to launch a war into Europe with. As soon as the Soviets start talking to them about war, they'll tell us because they don't want war.

Soviet leaders like Andropov and Gromyko had never traveled nor actually seen Europe and the United States and Japan. They never really had any feel for the West. And of course they're very ideological and they're also rich dictators. They all live in a very comfortable and prestigious world inside the Soviet Union. So God knows what they thought was going on with Ronald Reagan and star wars. They're all kind of paranoid anyway, it's not until later we start finding out that they really were sitting around

worried and talking about Reagan attacking them. And that's when you have Ogarkov and you have this buildup of the conventional forces. My analysts are writing excellent reports on this. We get an Interagency Intelligence Officer who comes out of the Army Chemical Core, a real expert, who had actually been hit by nerve gas. He was a brilliant man. And we write a brand new national estimate, do it all over again, and put CIA in the footnote. CIA was in the footnote saying we don't think they have a large stockpile of weapons. CIA says it's about 10% in munitions. There's an actual UN requirement if you have a chemical weapons program and a biological program, you're supposed to fill out this form and submit it to the United Nations.

Q: Well, what were you getting from the French and the Germans and the British?

CROCKER: We had an extremely good relationship with the United Kingdom. Very behind closed doors with the French and the Germans but definitely very strong relationships. What makes the UK different is that we share a lot of our high level intelligence. I'll bring that up a little later, but a lot of the really good intelligence came from the British. I have a close relationship my whole career with the Brits. There is this Brit named Rodney Wilkinson who's this genius about the Soviet Union -- the history, all the way back to the '20s about the Soviet chemical and biological weapons program. We enlist him on our side against the CIA. Rodney helps us on the new draft. And I went to London to see him many times. In 1990 when Baker was Secretary we actually have a standoff at the White House that I mentioned before. I was sitting next to Rodney with the British supporting my view that the Soviets had a large stockpile of CW.

One of the issues that's going on in this period is the U.S. Army binary weapons. The whole idea of making chemical weapons out of two fairly safe chemicals, which you store in two separate places so you don't really have chemical weapons, but when you stick the chemicals together in the shell, you'd have the two chemicals in the shell and then a burster would mix them and you'd have a chemical weapon, a V agent, we're talking about nerve agent here. People like Meselson say we shouldn't be making even binary. He's still saying the Soviet threat is not that great, we shouldn't be doing this. And he's arguing basically the CIA line. And we're saying they're producing new agents. I must say, I don't think I ever was a big proponent of binary or the U.S. spending a dime on making chemical or biological weapons. I learned all about the U.S. program in detail and I helped send to the UN a great big document that told every detail of the U.S. biological weapons program. It's almost that we should be ashamed that Americans were making *bullets* with biological agents in them.

Q: Yes. But your involvement in briefing the threat associated you with U.S. production.

CROCKER: Absolutely, producing viruses and fevers seems un-American, quite frankly. It's very interesting, we literally destroyed everything, shut down all the capabilities and the Soviets thought it was a trick, that we didn't, we were just faking them out. So they expanded -- at the time we got rid of it they expanded the program, big time, which is pretty crazy. I mean if they'd had really good intelligence they would have known we're out of the business, but they didn't and they were sure it was just a fake and Nixon was

faking them out. And they spent millions and millions of dollars building this huge capability from 1969 on.

Q: It seems historically they've always been suspicious of any Western motives, of what foreign Western countries say. The whole reason Stalin didn't believe English intelligence in World War II.

CROCKER: Yes, the problem with Stalin is, and we spent a lot of time in college studying Stalin and reading books about him, was that he was a schizophrenic. So when Stalin was sitting with Churchill and Roosevelt, he's in his comfort zone. He was funny and very intelligent, a great military mind. But when he's back in the Kremlin he goes paranoid. His palace in Georgia, he's from Georgia, was an *exact* copy of his residence in the Kremlin. So that when he went there it had to be *exactly* the same. And a lot of the people he killed were because of his paranoia and he killed a lot of people. One of the great Foreign Service Officers, Robert Service, wrote books about the atrocities and he put the killings at 40- 50 million.

Q: Well, I heard in 1994 a broadcast while I was in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. And I heard a Soviet commentator say that, "Well, we figure Stalin was responsible for about 40 million deaths of civilians."

CROCKER: Right.

Q: Not military.

CROCKER: That's not even counting the generals. That's not counting the military he wiped out.

Q: No, it was a different thing.

CROCKER: When I was in college I read Robert Service's books. He was shunned, you know, by the U.S. government because it harmed Lend-Lease. I remember Life Magazine did a big spread about how wonderful life was in Russia.

Q: Well, I'm reading right now a biography of George Kennan, our foremost Soviet expert, who would sit around and give lectures in about the '45, '46 period. And he was saying he was having a hard time getting the Soviet threat out to people, because academic professors who had committed themselves to this view following World War II and it was sweetness and light, I mean good old Uncle Joe.

CROCKER: Right, right.

Q: And they didn't change. There were activist women who had for years talked about "if we only talk nice to the Soviets."

CROCKER: That never ends, by the way. I remember my sixth grade class writing a

letter to Stalin telling him to stop the Hungarian invasion in 1956. Everybody's living in this nagaland from the end of World War II and then all of a sudden he launches the forces into Hungary and they're like, "Whoa, wait a minute, good ol' Uncle Joe, what's he doing?" Hungary creates a lot more hardliners on Russia. The conference I told you about in Milwaukee where professors said everything was our fault -- Stalin was just defending his country and we were the bad guys. I remember this professor saying, "Well, Mr. Crocker, you look a little puzzled." And I said, "well, my view is you have a right to your opinion and to write an academic paper." I said, "What bothers me is you would tell young people this distorted history and view of American politics."

Q: Was there another subject you wanted to cover?

CROCKER: Yes. I am sent to Israel in 1986. Dick Clarke wanted me to brief on our view of the Iran-Iraq war. The first briefing is to a joint annual U.S.-Israeli Military meeting on how NATO does threat assessments. I've told you before. Every year since I started in State I go to the NATO Intelligence Committee Meeting for two weeks and we write the threat for all of NATO. It's a NATO agreed threat document. It has several parts, one deals with the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact and the other deals with the Third World, mainly the Middle East. It's quite an interesting process where all the countries provide their positions and thoughts and changes to the text. These are all Intelligence Officers, admirals, generals at one level and the rest of us at another level. And we go through line by line, paragraph by paragraph, and it's an excruciating process. But everybody around the table can put their comments in. Now, some of the countries -- U.S., UK, Germany, France -- have their own intelligence and threat documents for planning. A lot of these countries don't. Turkey, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Norway, Denmark rely heavily on this NATO document and the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency sends intelligence to these countries all the time, sanitized secret level. And they rely heavily on that information they get from the United States. They don't have huge intelligence bureaucracies, collecting intelligence all over the world. I remember telling Secretary Shultz after I had put the documents down in front of him, "Have you ever heard of MC-161?"

He said no and he asked General Burns sitting next to him if he was familiar with the document, and he said, no, never heard of it. And I pointed out that there is a big NATO registry at the State Department and there's all these NATO secret and top secret documents there. I showed him the agreed NATO threat, MC-161. It's very watered down to make it meet everybody's concerns. The Norwegians for example -- the Norwegians are sitting up there opposite two under strength Soviet divisions. But the Norwegians' need to get money from their Defense Ministry, so we agree they're full strength divisions. So that's the kind of process it is. But it's a good process when you're dealing with that many nations where you have to come up with an agreed assessment that all countries agree for planning. We do a lot of briefings before we go to NATO so their representatives will understand our point of view. And we often come with wild changes that none of them have heard of and totally frustrate our allies sometimes with our changes.

So I brief the Israelis on how we do MC-161 because we're trying to get them into some

kind of a joint assessment business. I also get to go see all of their evidence on Iraq and Syria. They have incredible intelligence. It was really amazing how much they knew. So from a sharing standpoint, we get a lot from them. But my real job was to talk at a pretty high level to tell them that Washington really wants Iran to be the bad guy. And that Iran is supporting Hezbollah and Hamas who are for the destruction of Israel. Israel bombed the nuclear reactor in Iraq and was focused on Iraq as the bad guy, which we are beating up on the Iranians. We're telling the Israelis we're bringing Saddam into the family of nations. I didn't like having to do this briefing because I didn't believe it. I told them this was an approved briefing from Washington. I will tell you I was taken into a back room and told that any cooperation that we see between Israel and Iran has a purpose, which is to make sure Jews are not killed in Iraq. And there hadn't been any big massacre. Yet Iran's policy is to overthrow Israel, they've got Hamas and Hezbollah, they're supplying both the Sunni and the Shia group against Israel, but yet they don't harm Jews in Iran. Tom Pickering was ambassador there and we met at his house and Sharon was there and Perez and Rabin and everybody else important. I remember not liking Sharon too much, but he was still a general and a hardliner on the Arabs. I got to visit all of my wife's relatives, which go back to Ben-Gurion and I went to Haifa. The Military Attaché took me in a Jeep, around Israel. We did Lebanon because the Israelis were way into Lebanon at that point. He took me up to the Golan Heights and described how the Syrian attack had come. Only one tank got lost and made it into Israel in the '73 War. He told me how they'd positioned the forces, everything. It was very educational and useful because I ended up doing a good bit on the Middle East after that.

Q: How did INR change in this period?

CROCKER: INR was famous for publishing a highly classified morning summary for the Secretary and a very few other people, (President, Sec-Def, Director of CIA), but not to Congress. It was considered by many advisors in The White House to be the best thing to read in town. It's not glitzy and it was not in color. We used to mimeograph it but finally got Desktop publishing. INR briefers pack up all the high classified interagency reports in a briefcase, a locked briefcase, and sit with the Secretary, the Deputy, Assistant Secretaries and staff (DAS's) who are cleared. And he or she stays there with the documents in the old days and they all read them -- and answer any questions or you take questions back from them or they may want more briefing. And this was how I got to know George Vest so well and Jim Goodby and all the others, because I used to do that for PM and others through time. This begins to fade under Shultz. The CIA people infiltrated the building and in a number of cases the CIA guy would come down to pick up the briefcase and carry it to the officials. I was very unhappy with this arrangement. I could just see this was going to be bad. And as you may have heard, INR ends up getting into big trouble with the handling of classified information. I think they lost control. And I always argued with the Assistant Secretary for INR that INR's control was important, you don't want to ever give this up. This was INR's face time with the big guys. They did give it up. I think they lost great entrée to the top level of State Department.

Q: Yes, I interviewed Phyllis Oakley who talked about with Madeleine Albright at one point -- she used to give a briefing to Madeleine Albright. Oakley was told by one of

Madeleine Albright's Secretariat or Assistants or something that it wouldn't be necessary for her to do this anymore because CIA would handle it.

Q: All right. Today is the 25th of June, 2012. This for me is a very important day because this is the day that Kim Il-sung invaded South Korea. I just graduated from college and I had not served in the Military. So that started my involvement with government affairs.

CROCKER: Very interesting.

Q: OK. Gary, we had left this off when you were discussing who controlled the briefing material in the State Department. Do you want to pick up from there?

CROCKER: It changes with each Secretary of State, the attitude about intelligence and CIA and The White House and the relationships. We are now in 1987, Reagan is the President, Shultz is Secretary of State. And we're entering into a fascinating new year where lots are going to change. Gorbachev has become the leader, there's Perestroika, and there's the opening up of business opportunities in the Soviet Union. There's all kinds of arms control treaties we're going to talk about. This is really a fascinating time because from the previous year where I was talking about star wars and the evil empire and tension on the Soviet side. And all of a sudden, we're entering a whole new year. This is a fascinating year and I got to play a part in some of the important parts of it.

Gorbachev is the leader, Shevardnadze is the Foreign Minister. Already George Shultz, has established a very close working relationship with Shevardnadze. I was with him on several occasions. It was like watching family. It was like something just so new you couldn't believe it. Now, remember the Berlin Wall hasn't fallen yet. It's still the Soviet Union and it's still communist. Gorbachev opening up the Soviet system, relaxed the KGB Secret Service with 800,000 of them keeping this country under wraps, travel restricted, all the rest of it, and lots of secret programs. He's going to try to open this up, bring in Western investment, because they're really hurting, and it's become obvious that under Ronald Reagan our technology, our military has just gone far beyond anything they could ever imagine. And they realize they're not going to be able to compete in the modern world, economically, and they need the investment, they don't sell anything. I defy you, go back and find a Soviet product that anybody would buy.

Q: I have to point out, today I can't think of a single product except military hardware.

CROCKER: Also oil. Their cars are terrible. Who would buy one of those cars, except a Russian with no choice. They buy food, they don't produce food. They certainly don't make medicine. That's a subject we'll talk about later. They could make enough biological weapons to kill the world 10 times over, but they don't make any antibiotics. Can't find them in Moscow. Gorbachev also wants to reduce the threat. There was a *U.S. News* world piece in 1989 -- it analyzes his whole strategy of talking about nuclear arms control, chemical weapons arms control, playing the Europeans, (a very important part of

his strategy is you play to the Europeans). They say, we don't need to be spending all this money defending against the United States, we'll cut our budgets. Well, they already had cut their budgets so he's putting a little wedge in between us and our allies basically by reducing that threat.

Q: I want to just point out that as we're doing this interview we have also four of our interns here. So Gary is addressing them as well as me.

CROCKER: Later in this year I'm going to go out and talk around the country about what happened and the two things that I talk about when I'm down in Arizona was the fact that the Soviets finally admitted that they had chemical weapons. Now, maybe that doesn't sound like much to you, but we had been negotiating for *years* and I've been going to negotiations since 1977 to try to get a treaty to abolish chemical weapons. The only country in the world after negotiations that admits that it had chemical weapons is the United States. All other arms controls I've been involved in, like START, the strategic talks, and INF, which we're going to talk about today, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces, and the Mutual Balance of Forces, which is reducing the armies. At least both sides admit they have all the weapons. The chemical weapons treaty and the Biological Weapons Convention was such that only the U.S. had provided to the United Nations all the information about the biological and chemical weapons programs. Nixon abolished everything in '69 and we destroyed, or were destroying, everything. Not all the chemical weapons, but all the biological weapons. So we're the only country, which makes it an odd negotiation. So first thing I want to tell you about is in Geneva there's a Conference on Disarmament, it's 40 nations and some of the nations rotate. And they negotiate the comprehensive nuclear test ban, they do chemical and biological treaties, a whole number of other negotiations. In 1987 I'm sitting in the back and Ambassador Israylian is the Soviet Ambassador who we know very well. He's a very nice guy actually. And Ambassador Fields is sitting next to him. And at the beginning, Israylian said, "Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make an announcement." And he turns to Lou Fields and says, "OK, we have chemical weapons, are you happy? We have a lot of them. We have a big test facility called Shikany," which we all had been watching for decades. He invited all 40 members to come to Shikany and see samples of chemical weapons and see the testing and everything they do. That'll be the start of a process towards getting an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union on reducing chemical weapons and a worldwide treaty to get rid of them. This was like let's break for champagne. I can't tell you when you spend years and years beating on them to admit it and it happens, well, it's a new world. Our delegation did go to Shikany and they saw lots of weapons and displays, they could take pictures. We didn't have a lot of good information, and it turns out a lot of the things we thought were wrong. They had a much bigger capability for one thing. I should point out big differences on the nature of the Soviet chemical weapons program in the intelligence community. The CIA was adamant that it was much smaller, that most of it was bulk agent, not a lot of weapons. And they had a whole group within the agency that believed that the Soviet Union had lost interest in chemical weapons and were relying on tactical nuclear weapons. So right away you're able to point to these weapons and the dates on them, meaning they were just made. Later it gets even better because I'm there, I get to rub their nose in it. But this is a real change and a lot of people

have to run back to Washington and start rethinking their position.

Q: Was there a mindset, say within the CIA, why they had not sort of predicted the immensity of the chemical/ biological warfare capability?

CROCKER: Let me repeat myself for the benefit of the interns. Within the government at that time there were a very small number, about 50, who work on chemical and biological weapons issues, globally. I'm involved because it's being used on people in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan and I'm trying to stop the use of it against people. Some people, some in CIA, others, said, "Well, it wasn't even being used." They denied that. They looked pretty foolish years later, but you know, they were using it and killing people. Some were misreading classified Soviet documents. The best way I can explain it is the documents we had for a very long time were the lesson plans for the Soviet General Staff Academy, where they teach their officers, and the Warsaw Pact, their allies. What they failed to understand is what they were seeing was the sanitized Warsaw Pact lesson plan, so for the real lesson plan, you had to get to the general staff lectures to see the real information about chemical and nuclear planning.

I came back from Geneva and I read all the documents and said, they missed it. The clue was nuclear because I knew the nuclear data. And so I knew that the material most of the time was wrong, that they weren't telling their allies the real story about all these missiles and capability. So it was a misreading in some ways, but also politically motivated in some ways and, as Stu and I have talked, there's an attitude. We were called bugs and gas guys. We were chemical and biological weapon guys, and nuclear was where thousands of people were working and a very small handful doing chemical and biological.

Fortunately, our lot changes. We become pretty important, have lots more people when we get to the Persian Gulf War and our troops are threatened. Saddam Hussein has them and used them. We get more in vogue as time goes on.

The other thing I'll just mention in passing that happens when I was talking around the country was there was a huge radar being built at Krasnoyarsk and a congressman and a lot of other people got to go there and see it, because we were claiming it's going to be a big anti-ballistic missiles (ABM) operation the Soviets were building, which would be in violation of the ABM treaty. And they got to go see it. There was still some question what it was for, but it never got finished, I do remember that. So those were kind of two things that stood out.

Gorbachev wants to improve his image worldwide, get investment, he wants to downgrade the threat, and he wants to improve his economy so he can start competing. Now, partly what happened here is you had a very closed Soviet society. You'd be amazed how many Soviets had never been anywhere, Japan, Europe, they'd never been anywhere. Well, Gorbachev opened himself up and people are getting to travel. And they're coming back to the country saying, you know, "You are not going to believe what we saw out there." At this time we were bringing hundreds of people to America and to Europe and they were going back with their impressions. And these were mostly high

level engineers and politicians who found out they had been lied to. They got to see shopping malls. They got to see what people were driving. The United States and the Soviet Union started working on a treaty to reduce *all* intermediate nuclear weapons. I have a big map of the Soviet Union that shows the hundreds of sites where all these missiles were. And so we have to figure out a way to go all over this country and count all the missiles, find them all, you know, and make sure where everything is. And then we have to have a destruction facility for them. This is a major undertaking. I brought this along just to help me remember how big it was, how many places spread over the Soviet Union in 11 time zones. It was often treated in the press as something minor. We're talking about hundreds and hundreds of missiles on both sides. Our missiles are in Europe. We have the new cruise missiles, particularly in England. You're probably way too young to hear about the English women who used to stand outside the American cruise missile base in protest of nukes. They were called the Women of Greenham Common. So there's two big installations in England that shoot this absolutely fantastic missile. When I was there I said when the Russians see this it will change their mind. These things roll out of cave-like structures and with pinpoint accuracy could hit the Soviet Union. We also had missiles in Europe -- Belgium, Germany and Italy. They had theirs, mostly in Belorussia, Ukraine, and Central Asia. I'm not really part of the team that draws up the treaty, but I provided a lot of intelligence into the process. I'll just point out for the interns, our government works on an interagency basis, very few other governments do. Everything that's done is interagency. Except when you have those few times when inside The White House there's covert operational programs going on. Oliver North, for example, was sticking it to George Shultz and doing programs without telling the State Department nor any interagency process. The system works well when the President directs that it be done on an interagency basis.

So this treaty is being negotiated with everyone having a role in it. And without going into a lot of detail, I think it's probably the best arms control treaty ever designed. Having gone out for six months and made it work in the field, this treaty was so incredible. I mean it had all the details there. When you arrived and stood in front of one of these monster missiles, on great big tractor like movers. They shoot three to four thousand miles. They're quite impressive. The first time they opened the doors I had no idea the SS-20 was that big. Now, this is important, because as I said in my speeches around the U.S., Jesse Helms was the Senator in the Senate who was questioning the treaty, along with lots of others. They said the Soviets would cheat and they'd hide the missiles. Well, an SS-20 is the missile I'm talking about, it has five other big vehicles for support, all the communications and the radar. These great big vehicles are all mobile. One regiment is huge. And we listened to them all the time. If we don't listen to them, we find them. I mean you can find these vehicles. I mean they're very hard to hide and they're in missile bays, they're in an actual bay that you can see, a target, you'll see the roof and the bay and all the stuff that goes with it. But to make the point here, I was at a missile site and I said to my Russian counterpart, "I'm going to have to climb up that chimney." There's like this monster chimney with a ladder on it. He says, "Why?"

I say, "Well, we have this guy named Jesse Helms. He thinks you've got a missile hidden in that chimney. So I've got to go up there with you and we're going to look down it with

a flashlight, and I can go back home and say there's no missile in that chimney, OK?" And I did it, by the way. And they also thought I was crazy, but I said, you know, well we have Senator Helms and he's sure that's going to happen.

This is important because we go into this with all these skeptics saying you won't be able to verify it. So a treaty gets drafted with really tight rules. When I had my team and I walked up in front of this missile there were rules on what I could do and not do, now we made our own rules not to take notes. We had classified material memorized. This happens to be the train that carries the missiles. I'm showing it just as an example. But we had to memorize in our training all this material about all the missiles, all the trucks, all this, so that we knew it backwards and forwards, we didn't have to have any props in our notebook. When we saw it, we knew what it was. And the reason for that is that the way this treaty works, we would fly to Frankfurt as a team, and there's about 12 teams, eight to nine people? My team would have three CIA, one language expert, one sort of engineer techy guy, and one missile expert that happened to be a young lady, which threw the Soviets off to no end. They could never figure out why this very attractive Italian girl would know anything about missiles or why we would bring her along. "Just for your pleasure?", they asked. She was just getting information like you couldn't believe. She would crawl on those missiles and talk to these poor Soviet, young Soviet Officers and make them take the shroud off and show her the electronics, all things that you weren't supposed to do within the treaty. You weren't actually supposed to be able to do that. But there's a whole set of rules about what we can see, what they will allow me to see or not see. Now, they may say, "Hey, go ahead," you know, "Climb in there. We'll take it all apart for you." We're the first Westerners to see all these military bases. Most Soviets have never seen these bases. These are really secretive places. So we're on a huge collection mission. We have been trained to see everything. We had to carry heavy devices to weigh the missiles, but that never happened. We got to try our procedures out at the two English bases. We got to go in as a team and inspect them as if we were the Russians.

That was actually pretty humorous because they took us in and sat us all down at a table and then this UK general comes marching in and everybody's supposed to stand up. And I told my whole team, "Everybody, stay seated. Absolutely don't get up." I walk over, I tell this general, I'm the Russian counterpart. I am equal to the general. I'm here to visit your facility. He should be having a cup of coffee with me and then the two of us walk in the room. We found out on almost every U.S. Military base a total misunderstanding of the INF treaty. But I'll have some funny things to tell you about what happened in America on this. We did a practice, uncovered all kinds of problems on the system. They were covering up laptops and covering up bulletin boards. But they were leaving what we were looking for on the missile. We taught them they were covering the wrong material. I had Pershing missile sergeants from Europe who were my hands-on experts, a woman missile expert who really did know missiles, and an army lieutenant colonel.

Q: By the way, just to put this in context, the fact that we were drawing on our expertise at the sergeant level. In the Soviet system they get really little responsibility.

CROCKER: They don't actually have what we would call Non-Commissioned Officers. The officer does all that. They don't have Warrant Officers. Actually, much later on in this story we meet with the Soviet military and one of the things they say is they wish we had your Non-Commissioned Officers, because their system doesn't work well.

Q: I spent four years as an enlisted man as a liberal arts college graduate and I came away with a tremendous respect for the Non-Commissioned Officer Core of the Military. Because it doesn't take long to realize this is where considerable expertise and power lies.

CROCKER: Right. I was in the Army for a long time and agree. So here's what we do. We get on an airplane. This is a six-month operation. I'm going to be away from home for six months, which was not to delight my wife, to say the least. All of these people have volunteered and I'm one of the few State Department people. We fly to Frankfurt and first thing we know is all the Soviets' teams that are going to be going to Europe and America are living right next to us.

I want to tell you something right away that happens, when I get to know this one Soviet. He looked out the window and there is the Post Exchange (PX) system, and the parking lot of the PX. And he is confused because enlisted men and sergeants are driving really hot Corvettes and BMW's and Mercedes. But when they see the officers driving station wagons with their family it doesn't compute. They actually couldn't figure out most everything they were seeing. This was the first time these guys have been out of the Soviet Union. They're almost all engineers, military, or intelligence people. So they're having quite a time just seeing Germany and the efficiency of Germany. The only good buildings we saw in those six months that were built in Russia were German. The Germans had built the hotels. Our team was picked to go to the Urals to a place called Votkinsk. It's where Tchaikovsky was born. It's about 100,000 people on a beautiful lake, lots of log houses. They built us a five-story building, a very poorly built building to live in. It's the third of July, 1988. The treaty starts on the fourth of July. And we arrive and there's eventually going to be this multi-million dollar structure by the Hughes Corporation. It's going to have this big scanner. So when this train with a missile in it comes out of the missile factory, which is sitting out of town, then there's this huge scanner that looks at what's inside. Costs a fortune. Well, it wasn't there.

Now, Hughes Corporation was there, the center of communications. That was pretty incredible. We had better communications than the embassy in about three hours. The Russians are with us in the same Quonset hut. The Russians asked if they could use our computers, which turned out to be very nice for us because we knew exactly what they were saying. We had so much better equipment. At this ancient old factory you couldn't hear anything. Given that we didn't have this screening device I said to my Russian counterpart, "OK, here's what we're going to do. It's a matter of the measurement of the missile parts. And if something is a certain size, we have to look at it, OK." So we got some string and we measured the string and we had two pieces of wood and we stuck it on the railroad tracks. And this big creaky gate would open and the train would come out and it would drive up in front of us. And then they let us go on the train with cameras and

everything and take pictures of the missile and look at it. The people back home thought they'd never let us do that. They used it for 13 years.

Q: Well, why would they be producing missiles?

CROCKER: They were producing larger missiles, but we don't get to play with that. The treaty is about the intermediate nuclear forces we're looking for brand new SS-20's which have to be destroyed.

We also had, thanks to several senators and others who were sure that they were going to sneak the missiles out of the back of the facility, a daily inspection system. We were out in the boonies. I mean you could hear the crickets. You don't hear anything because the facility is underground. Twice a day we had to put on jumpsuits because the bushes are loaded with an encephalitis tick. It's 98 degrees, we have to go all the way around the perimeter so Jesse Helms knows they didn't sneak a missile out the back. Of course there's nothing out back but woods. There's no roads, there's nothing out there. And you could certainly hear if somebody was trying to do this. We got to be very friendly with our Russian counterparts. They had the spooks on the top of our building with their listening devices and just have got to tell you this because it just is too funny. And it's so Russian, it really tells a little bit about their character. We knew that all the listening devices were up -- they were listening to everything we were talking about. We would just say, "This country is so backward. I mean they don't even have screens. They've got all these mosquitoes, haven't they ever heard of screens?"

The next day, screens were installed in our rooms.

Next we tried sheets. The next thing you know, we got some good Finish sheets.

I was taking pictures of all of the log houses. They said, "Oh, you're just trying to make us look poor."

And I said, "No, to an American a big log house with nice white lace is great. These ugly apartment buildings, they're so poorly built. That's what we call poverty." They didn't catch that. Matter of fact, they didn't catch much about America. They really had no frame of reference to understand us or anything else. We got to know the people of the town of Votkinsk, but made ourselves very unpopular with the communist officials.

Q: Were these NATO teams or were these American teams?

CROCKER: This is strictly an American-Soviet treaty. The allies are involved in the sense that we have missiles in their countries. And this is actually probably one of the most humorous parts of this treaty is the allies start out doing themselves. The French broke the rules, invited the Soviets early, and had a huge banquet. Nobody can do it like the French. Italy was not going to be outdone and they flew the Soviets to Rome, for a monstrous banquet. It was just so European.

Q: Some of our significant missile bases were in Italy, for example.

CROCKER: Yes, and in Belgium and Germany. It's probably a good place to point out that as we arrived in Moscow there was a huge spread of food. And do you know who Eileen Malloy is?

Q: Yes, I've interviewed her.

CROCKER: I had met her in the Foreign Service leadership conference. She showed up from the embassy in Moscow and she said, "You have to keep coming just because they bring all this great food. We can't find this in any market in Moscow. And these radishes -- all this good stuff." So we're treated extremely well and they don't even look at our baggage. They don't tear it apart or anything. And it was kind of an agreement that the big things you're carrying for the treaty were off limits. The Soviets played it extremely well. And there's a contrast here between what the Soviets do and what the Americans do. It shows the state of the two countries. Moscow decreed that every military base, that every KGB agent, would follow the rules. They had big trucks full of all kinds of food and bad drinks like fresca from Finland. We drank no alcohol. We were not going to engage in Soviet drinking bashes. We compared notes with other teams and found out what they were doing to please us. They had a small number of these truck loads, like big cabinets with china and cool beds and bedding. Everywhere we went, they'd actually moved the food and furniture from another base. I had great quarters. Our hosts wanted us to stay longer so they could enjoy good food.

I got ahead of myself a little bit here, got you confused probably. We arrive in Frankfurt and then my team was told, "You're going to go to Votkinsk." So we're doing something different. We're going to go sit outside a missile facility for two weeks and live in this town and check the missiles when they come out. We tried to get out of the boundaries they set. We were assigned beautiful young ladies from Moscow as our escorts. They didn't get much information out of us, but we brought lots of fashion magazines and perfume. It drove the Russians crazy.

Q: I have to point out that the Russians have always used young women as intelligence sources. And I remember I interviewed one man who during World War II was in Vladivostok and he was saying that he was very obviously assigned a young woman, but it depended what rank you were, a ballerina or an acrobat or, you know, I mean this sort of thing. The Soviets called them honey traps. And this was always a concern because spy cases have been brought up with Americans caught in this procedure.

CROCKER: It's a matter of control. Before this period, the KGB's goal was if you went to visit, even as a tourist, they would keep track of you for two weeks. With 800,000 people they could pretty well track you but then after two weeks they could lose control, so we used to encourage people to stay longer and then eventually you'd be able to move around. They really couldn't compete with us in Votkinsk. I mean we were Americans and it was the fourth of July. We brought flags and candy and went right downtown and started handing them out to kids. We even took a football and went down to their stadium

and got a bunch of Russians to join us and start playing football. And a good audience came from all over town to watch. The mayor, of course he was the communist leader, comes and says that we're making all the kids sick and a bunch of other things, accusations, with an order to not do that anymore. So the kids would come around to our balcony, we'd throw candy from there. But we basically disrupted this nice little commie community. And the problem was they couldn't really do much because it's an official treaty, we had big badges and we were supposed to be treated with respect and be shown that the Soviet Union is a civilized country. We kind of exploited them. I point this out because the young lady we had said we couldn't enter a fort made of logs. It was on the other side of our boundary. So we just walked over there.

They opened this gate and it's where the food is. There are government stores that are so repugnant you wouldn't walk in. People get their food in this huge flea market. It was filled with all the babushkas (ladies) and food and meat and jam and colorful birds and household goods. The first guy at the gate is an Armenian. He's got watches for sale. The black market is the way the city operated. So that was fun. Votkinsk was where we watched the missiles. We established the treaty, basically. Then we go back to Frankfurt and do what all the other teams are doing, which is we were told you are going to go to a specific site. And let's say it's in Belorussia. So we had to learn everything about that site. So we're learning our target. So then we will call Moscow and say, "Team One is going to be there at this particular time."

When we land in Moscow they have 24 hours to get us to that base. They're obligated to do that, and we the same. So it's a quick challenge inspection. We're taken to the base and we start the inspection right away, and the first was the Scale board missiles, they're usually in big sheds. The big SS-4 is usually out somewhere where you can see it. Everybody's memorizing everything they can see at the base. They don't hide what the unit is. This is important -- no guns. There's no guards with guns, there's nobody walking around with guns, there's nobody on the buses with guns. I might point out that back in Greenham Common in England a bunch of CIA and security people jumped on our bus with guns and were in our face. We were pretending to be the Russian inspectors. And I contacted the commander and complained that this was a treaty. I had no real incidents that I can think of where I would say they wouldn't let me see something. Moscow decreed the behavior.

Once in a while the girl on my team would be up on top of a missile crawling around and the KGB official would say he was very worried she's going to get hurt. So I would holler at her -- this is all prearranged acting -- to get her butt off the missile. But she blew me off. I mean she was being really nasty to me. They could not compute that a female subordinate would talk that way to an officer.

Q: Were you getting any reports during this time or later about how the Soviet teams were working in Europe and the U.S.?

CROCKER: Yes, I'm going to make some contrasts. They were centrally controlled, got all these trucks driving around everywhere to make everything look really nice. This was

the strategic rocket command, the elite of the military. They were the worst, ugliest, dirtiest base you've ever seen, all of them. When Bob Gates was the Head of the CIA and finally got to go to the Soviet Union, he said, "It looks different from ground level." In other words, when you're looking at it from a satellite thousands of miles out or from an airplane you see one thing. But when you see the Soviet Union, this big super power, up close and personal, and we did for six months, it looks awful. I mean the conscripts were treated badly, there was mold all over the place. We handed Frisbees out, they loved Frisbees. We would throw the Frisbees so we could look in a window. And what I saw in one of them is what they call a place to wash clothes, they're huge big pots of hot water and guys stirring them with sticks. The Soviet Union had never invented an agitator, because they provided us with a plastic washing device with no agitator. In a plastic bag is a piece of wood, a stick, to do your clothes. This is the super power.

Q: Well, I have to say that I used to wash my fatigues in the shower.

CROCKER: Well, in Vietnam that's what I did too. But this is supposed to be a civilized military base or apartment. We figure out when we come back to Frankfurt that another team had the same girl and servants. They had a very small number of attractive women with nice makeup and clothes, which they were moving around as the hostesses in all these places. We were realizing this country was far worse than we thought.

I protested to Assistant Secretary Roz Ridgeway what happened in the U.S. We were being treated extremely well and it changed a little bit because the U.S. commanders were treating Russians horribly. It was disgusting. We didn't have anybody at the top issuing orders to all the military bases in America saying what should happen. The base commander is king. He decides. So on one base, the commander decided to lock all of them up in the NCO quarters on the base. He wouldn't allow them to eat in the mess halls and he wouldn't allow them to walk freely on the base, and he wouldn't allow them to go into town. He completely missed that one of the points of this treaty was to show a whole bunch of Russians what the United States looked like and give them as much access as possible. Another commander I remember down in Texas had given them cowboy hats, a huge barbecue, people in town met them. He totally opened the base and town up. It was very uneven. They also went through their personal belongings. We weren't even getting searched. Roz Ridgeway, one of our senior women in the State Department, was one of *the people* that got this treaty approved.

Q: She was Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. The Assistant Secretary is the top professional dealing with the Soviet Union.

CROCKER: She later plays a very big role in negotiating the strategic nuclear weapons treaty. I take a little credit on changing the situation because I was the diplomat on the team. Some of the other teams were straight military, no civilians. They played it by the book. No messing around kind of stuff. Well, we were kind of known by the Soviets as the fun bunch. So when we'd come back to Moscow they had tickets to the ballet and Moscow Circus. You could trade anything. You wouldn't believe the trading material like an F-16 fighter t-shirt I brought back. Our general said we couldn't trade but it became

the thing to do. It's not a light point I'm making because our team ended up gathering far more information than the other teams did, far more. We had a few, I'd call it a walk in the woods like Nitze when he took the walk in the woods and concluded a famous agreement. The commander of the Ukrainian base took me for a walk in the woods and then he took all of us for a walk in the woods. He said it was the pits, how poorly he lived, his family lived in terrible conditions in the village. He was a PhD, head of a strategic missile base. But one of the most important things that happened was they walked us to a gravesite with a big medal fence around it. And these were the Ukrainians who had been killed by Stalin. And he was telling us something Westerners didn't know, that this is the gravesite where Stalin killed thousands of Ukrainians and buried them. All of the information is going to be fed to the intelligence agencies. Because nobody had ever been to these bases. I should mention that there were intelligence analysts who believed that the Soviet Union was this huge super power. We were debriefed at CIA headquarters and some wouldn't believe us, they said we were just brainwashed. The strategic rocket troops were elite. They would not believe us. Well eventually that goes away because everything we did was done so well and people started to go there more often. I should mention, when we arrive it is the millennium and for the first time religious people from all over the world were *all over* Moscow. They've all been invited. So it's like the whole town is so different than it was before.

Q: This was the millennium of Christianity for the Soviets.

CROCKER: Right, it's the Greek orthodox millennium. As I remember. It's a Greek orthodox date. Our inspections take place for six months. We go all over Belorussia, the Ukraine, and Samarkand in Central Asia. In Samarkand we arrived in a Soviet helicopter, and went in and the base was empty. It had been a Scale Board base facing Afghanistan.

Q: Kazakhstan by any chance?

CROCKER: No, it's Uzbekistan. And the Commander opens up the warehouse and gave us Soviet uniforms, kind of desert uniforms. We took those and belts and hats and everything we could get. He said when I lock that gate, nobody's ever coming back here. It's over, this place is closed. And he said we could walk around and spend all the time messing around facilitating the treaty. By the way, we have a GPS system, we have a special system and there are satellites up there watching us to make sure they didn't move all the missiles and hide them out here until we left and put them back. He said we can all go to Samarkand and he has arranged an entire day's visit of the Great Mosque and the tomb of Tamerlane, the great ruler.

I can remember standing there at the tomb of Tamerlane, and we've already been to his great-grandfather's incredible astrological facility where he, way before all of the Europeans had figured out scientific discoveries with the stars. He was way ahead of them all. And he put his findings on tile so that eventually the British archaeological site said they were valid. We're standing at the tomb and this woman says, "And now you've seen Tamerlane's Tomb. What else is there to see in the world?" This treaty provided lots of good material for speaking trips I took afterwards, one in particular in Tucson where I

had a lot of TV and radio coverage.

Q: You were part of the verification business. You must have been interviewed with a tremendous amount of skepticism, especially by congressmen opposed to the treaty.

CROCKER: Well, there was good reason actually to be suspicious of the Soviets, because for a very long time they'd been lying to us, they had been hiding weapons. I mean they were doing a lot of scientific work that was somewhat scary. They also had treated their people very badly for a very long time. I was always badgering my Soviet counterpart, who was a good guy, about a mosque in town in Votkinsk. I would ask if we could go down and see the mosque.

First he told me it was a working mosque but it was off limits. I said, I know my history pretty well, there's not a Muslim alive in this area. You killed every Muslim up here. I mean it's well known in history you drove all the Muslims out. So I kind of doubt there's a mosque here in the middle of Votkinsk.

We finally went to see it and it was used to store junk. They also had a lot of people in the Urals with a reputation for not bowing down to Communist Moscow. And I think our being there was fairly important to the people of our community. They interacted with us on a daily basis. And I would close by saying that we knew through intelligence that hundreds and hundreds of Soviet engineers and politicians came to America and Europe. They went back and said "You aren't going to believe what we saw. They've been lying to us. It's much different there than what we were told." And I do this quite a few times later through my career. We took Soviets and then Russians around the United States and made sure they couldn't say we faked everything. We couldn't have built a Potemkin village just to fool 'em. They were pretty sure that was a real mall and we took them to chemical plants all over the United States and we took them to all our old biological facilities that we had. Over the years (this process starts with Gorbachev in the 1987 period), it's going to get even better.

Do any of the interns have any questions? I maintain this is one of the biggest arms control treaties of all time. It's why I've talked so long about it.

INTERN: What was the name of it?

CROCKER: The Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty.

Q: You might in your reading at some point, prior to this we have reached a crisis point in Soviet-Western relations in that the SS-20, which was an immediate range missile, which was designed to go from a point in the Soviet Union into Europe, not an intercontinental.

CROCKER: Yes, the intercontinental missiles were negotiated with the Soviets in the SALT and the START treaties.

Q: And the idea was that the Soviets were putting these in and telling the Europeans you see what you're doing, the Americans aren't going to fight over our destroying Europe with these missiles. I mean it was a decisive attempt. Because I remember, I mean they talk about Cold War, this was really a war in terms other than military or actual conflict. And the SS-20 caused us to have a big reaction.

CROCKER: And the cruise missiles.

Q: Cruise missiles and intermediate Pershing missiles and all. And this became a very hot thing. This was during the Jimmy Carter administration.

CROCKER: Right, 1979 to '80, when we usually see the start of putting nuclear forces into Europe. Not all the Europeans liked this very much, it was debated in Germany. I remember visiting Germany to see my former neighbor, he was the first Secretary at the German Embassy, and I went to have dinner at his house. Well, he forgot to tell me he had a guest and the women were told to go away and I'm taken into this room and it is the German Minister of Defense. They beat me up about Jimmy Carter and the nuclear deployments. I mean there was all kinds of unhappiness with Carter's policies. And right at this time, the Soviets had invaded Afghanistan. I went to NATO meetings every year – where they were trying to decide whether Afghanistan was in their interest or whether this had anything to do with NATO. I mean it's not really an attack on a NATO country. I would have bet NATO would have not ever gone to Afghanistan, but I was wrong. The Germans led the way, they commanded the forces that went to Afghanistan, and NATO bit that bullet, which in the old days, if it doesn't happen here, it doesn't belong to NATO.

I did a debate about NATO down at Stetson University in Florida. People there were writing that the expansion of NATO would raise the Russians up again and make them mad and it'd be awful. We were going to expand NATO with some countries who escaped the Soviet Union and there won't be a thing Russia can do about it. Which turned out to be the case. I mean there wasn't anything they could do about it. But back then you'd think World War III was going to happen because we expanded NATO and NATO was beginning to go out of area to Afghanistan. We're only a short ways away before NATO is going to go into the Balkans, NATO forces replace the United Nations. I've told you we're now leading up to some whole new sets of agreements. Once we finish the INF Treaty. The whole thing was agreed to in 1987, it's worked out with Foreign Minister Shevardnadze and Gorbachev, and we have new developments on chemical weapons. We've got a new deal going in MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions), which involves reducing armies so we haven't got troops massing on borders. A whole lot of things that have changed as we come to 1989. As you know, the Berlin Wall's going to fall and there's going to be a coup against Gorbachev. We have the Balkan War coming around the corner. In 1990 we have the Persian Gulf War, the Balkan crisis. We have all these things happening. I don't even know how we managed these issues in 1989, how we got it all done.

Q: Extremely, let's say, complicated period. One of the things to keep in mind about NATO is that, you know, the emphasis of course has always been this is a bulwark against

the Soviet oppression. But very much beyond that, but probably more important is the fact that NATO was a pooling of defense capabilities so the French weren't looking over their shoulder to see if the Germans had more tanks than they had. I mean basically we had considered World War I and II and other wars previously were all part of a sort of a civil war in Europe that we got dragged into. And by creating NATO it meant that there's no longer a military competition between the various sides. So all of these elaborate treaty negotiations are really just designed and are effective in stopping people within the European complex of fighting each other.

CROCKER: Right. Some people wanted to rewrite our NATO rules and the way we operated. I said, you know, you got this baby stuck together so beautifully and the U.S. is the glue. We provide most of the money, most of the forces, and almost all the intelligence. We can try to get them to spend more so we're not doing so much. You redo NATO and it would be all over. And that's what's interesting, because before they never would have thought about going in the Middle East or going to Afghanistan or doing anything outside the NATO area. The Soviet threat was also the glue. I mean it was the threat that we were united against and with the Soviet Union crumbling, we came up with radical Islamic terrorism and other new threats to keep NATO together.

Q: Because in a way it's trying to keep this glue together because Europe is not of one mind.

CROCKER: As we lead to a new administration with George Bush senior as President and James Baker as Secretary of State, the Iran and Iraq fighting ends and Secretary Shultz has worked extremely hard to stop that war. We have discussed how Saddam attacked the Kurds and used lethal gas on at least 21 villages, and in particular on Halabja. Shultz attempted to sanction Saddam, but was thwarted by the Senate. Six months after Halabja in March 1988, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld allegedly took a billion dollars to Iraq. The United Nations sent teams, which several of us helped organize, to Iraq and Iran. UN teams investigated Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan. But this time they came out and said Iraq has used lethal chemical weapons on the Iranians. Even if I would write in an intelligence report something bad about Saddam Hussein using chemical weapons, I was told I had to write a paragraph underneath talking about bad Iranians. The United States decides not to investigate in a place called Halabja and these other places where all these dead bodies were. But we had Europeans and other friends of ours were going in there and providing the pictures and information. This I throw out to you because in 2004 I'd come back as a contractor in the Verification Bureau. Secretary of State Colin Powell was going to Halabja and his staff couldn't find any information about what had happened. They called my old office, but they'd burned all my files and CIA didn't have anything. Well, I had hidden my files with a friend in ACDA who was now in my new office. So I got out all my pictures and papers and wrote the four separate stories with pictures. A lot of it was from my European scientist friends who'd provided me pictures that they had taken. So I provided this all and it was hand carried up to Colin Powell to be briefed before he goes to Halabja. But we had a hands off back in the old days about doing anything about this subject unfortunately. So that's number one. And then there's a whole issue of proliferation. We had focused in on Iran,

Syria, Libya, and Iraq building chemical weapons. And we had a huge program to shut it down. That was a big deal. And low and behold, in Europe, the Swiss made a public statement that this Egyptian company had been building a chemical weapons plant in Egypt. And they were so sorry they didn't know that and the Egyptians hadn't told them, but the money was in the bank, Well, we jumped all over that one. Because at this time, we're saying there's over 20 or more countries in the world with chemical weapons. People had thought it was only the main ones, you know, China, Soviet, France, whatever, Israel. But there were many more. And there were still new programs. So we had a huge interagency program working with people from all over the world to shut this all down. And Libya was a main target. We were even contemplating bombing that facility. So anyway, this was a big issue. I may have mentioned to you before, you know, the ambassador was adamant, our ambassador, that the Egyptians weren't doing this. And this is even after the Swiss came out and said it was, so we brought him back to Washington and educated him on the fact that the Egyptians were building chemical weapons. And this is all going to lead now to an incredible conference. It's Shultz's last hurrah, January 1989, just before the inauguration of the new president, and a number of us had gotten together and said, you know, we have to do something about this Kurd issue and all the rest of it, and we need to reinforce the Geneva Protocol of 1925, which forbid chemical weapons use. We're still working on a treaty. And we came up with Paris, the only country in the world that could throw something like this for 143 countries, the Foreign Ministers of 140 -- you know, and with a month and a half notice or something It's nothing for the French. They put on this incredible conference with great speakers and the world lambasted Iraq. I mean every speaker got up there and just laid into 'em, really laid it out there. And there was nothing they could say. I mean they did it. And the UN had condemned 'em. And so, that's an important conference because all of these countries basically vowed to get a chemical weapons treaty to eliminate chemical weapons so they will never be used again. So it was an incredible conference, Shultz was fabulous. I mean I did, I think, 60 press backgrounders for him. It was very successful. And a couple of quick things. There was a congressman there observing. Nobody was paying any attention to him. And so I used to go and have dinner with him, and his name was Dick Cheney. He listened to my views on chemical and biological weapons for several days. And he was Sec-Def within weeks.

So also, one other quick thing that happened there is we went over to visit Shevardnadze at the Soviet embassy and I had a briefing that I'd been given on Libya that had been sanitized to show Shevardnadze about why we believed Qadhafi was making chemical weapons. Shultz was sitting over there on that side and Shevardnadze was next to me and the guy with him I happened to know from arms control in Geneva. And I wasn't sure how well it was going. I had all this technical stuff and drawings and everything. And so I decided to be kind of cute. I don't know why I did this. But I decided to be kind of cute because he asked me, "Well, how are you so sure?"

And I said, "Because there are more spies in Rabta than there are workers.

At least 14 countries were there and he thought that was funny and he just started laughing. And he said to Shultz, he said, "George, of course it's a chemical weapons

plant.” He said, “But you, you think I have power over Qadhafi. The man’s crazy as a coot, I can’t control Qadhafi. But anything you want to do to stop that program, I’ll work with you on it because he’s a very dangerous man.” So you know, it worked, my little bit of humor, and they actually ended up helping us.

Q: OK. Today is the 28th of June, 2012 with Gary Crocker. And Gary, I’ll let you take over.

CROCKER: OK. We had just arrived at the end of the Ronald Reagan era and George Shultz, who I highly admired. And he had just had his last hurrah in Paris with 140 Foreign Ministers in January 1989. And I mentioned that three of us were in a room and had hatched the Paris meeting idea. A small group of us in the intelligence community believed the Soviets had a very large chemical and biological weapons program and stockpiles. We were berated by skepticism from people with other agendas or just ignorance. So suffice it to say, that through all these several decades a group of us had been battling in Washington on a bunch of issues. And we were just beginning to win as we’re heading into this period in 1989, but we’d taken quite a beating on many of these issues for a whole lot of reasons. But the final straw, which I discussed last time, was Saddam Hussein in 1988 using lethal chemical weapons on the Kurdish people in his own country. And in particular, is this town of Halabja where when the reporters and everybody went in, the people were frozen in place so they were sitting there like they were alive. Well, that is caused by a chemical that shuts down your entire nervous system and you’re still alive, believe it or not, for a period of time, but you can’t move anything and then you die. Well, that had to be either hydrogen cyanide or a new agent or a mixture of some kind. I talked to many experts about this.

Q: How did the reporters get in there?

CROCKER: Well, they finally did get in. The U.S. refused to play, the UN used some private people in Europe. Iran provided documented evidence to the UN.

Q: I’m just trying to figure out, what would be the issue?

CROCKER: The issue was there’s a whole lot of people that just didn’t want to believe that there were so many chemical weapons in the world and that they were being used. And they felt that the case that we were making about the use of biotechnology, science to make all these brand new agents was hurting science’s ability to use biotechnology to help people around the world. In other words, we were putting a war tape around the research. That’s one of the main arguments. But there’s other arguments, some of them are hard for me to even believe. They’re people I know really well who just refused to believe lethal chemical weapons were used anywhere and they tried to disprove that it was used in Afghanistan. A number of my CIA colleagues were saying this was just teargas being used in the Kurdish area. Now, this all began to fall apart a bit as the evidence mounted here. And I think I mentioned to you before, there was a period in here

where I remember saying to myself, “Good Lord, my only ally is the Secretary of State and I’m fighting all these other people in my own building.” The Paris conference came about because we’d really just reached a point where something had to be done. The conference helped with the worldwide chemical weapons treaty to prohibit chemical weapons: you can’t produce them, you can’t stockpile them, you can’t give them to anybody else and you can’t use them. So this treaty has been in the works for a long time and it’s getting some impetus.

I just want to make a couple remarks before we launch into 1989. George Shultz was well respected all over the world and you could see that he was the senior amongst all the Foreign Ministers and they listened to what he had to say. He was very popular with the French Police, we had incredible security. When you’re traveling with a Secretary, there’s these big limousines and you race through town. In this case we happened to be going to the Soviet Embassy to meet with Shevardnadze, the Foreign Minister/ But on a previous time, when the convoy’s going through Paris, a car tried to pass the convoy and this motorcycle policeman zoomed up and moved this car out of the way and he ended up crashing and getting hurt. Mr. and Mrs. Shultz went to the hospital, took him flowers, visited him twice, met with the parents, afterwards kept in touch. That ingratiated him with the French Police. There are people I have briefed I would call giants in Foreign Affairs: George Vest, Tom Pickering, Ellsworth Bunker, Averill Harriman. Like Shultz. I would highlight that they could listen. The really good ones listen, and that would include Presidents, some of whom had a good reputation for listening to briefers and asking questions, and others didn’t. And I’ve met people in very high positions who just didn’t have time for me or were too busy talking and trying to look smart. But George Shultz was one of the really great people and he was really, really smart.

Q: Yes. I might add that I’ve talked to people who have briefed Richard Nixon and he took notes and listened.

CROCKER: I’ve heard he was a great listener. I actually knew one of his secretaries. She said he was a real gentleman. He would come in and remember it was her birthday. I mean he was a real politician.

Q: I want to interject here for the transcriber to say that we have three of our interns over here and so we’re talking not just between the two of us, but also to the interns.

CROCKER: We’re about to go into 1989 and a new administration. And I have a view, I’m not sure shared by everyone, based on all my previous time under Henry Kissinger, Cyrus Vance, Muskie, Al Haig and Shultz. Up to Baker I’d briefed every Secretary and Shultz probably the most, but we certainly briefed Kissinger back in the day and certainly spent a good bit of time briefing Vance. And in this whole period, from the time I started State in 1974 on, I worked in the interagency system. But I want to take this a little further because it’s very important to what’s going to happen under Baker. In the intelligence community, we had interagency committees on every subject you can imagine. I sat on one for chemical/biological weapons for decades. Also on warning time for global crisis. We would meet to discuss any new warning issues. It’s a whole process

within our government. You'd have Middle East interagency committees that would have the political analysts from the Bureau of Intelligence. These committees produce prediction papers. They become close friends, little lobby groups. And our group was a big lobby group for the chemical/biological weapons issues going on all over the world. There are also committees that I sat on that would have intelligence and policy people mixed together. We had that for many crisis situations, on Poland for example, and the one we're going to talk about today was a very highly classified, secretive group of policy and intelligence people because what happens beginning in 1989 was not public. The Berlin Wall has fallen, Gorbachev's loosened things up, we've all been over there inspecting military sites. People defect. Now, there weren't many defectors in my career, that is good defectors. We had some spies inside sending us reports, some of them famous like the Warsaw Pact Polish General. He provided cabinets full of information over the years. In 1989 we got a very high level scientist who was making biological weapons, bad agents like plague and smallpox. We had spent years trying to build this case piece by piece with what we could on the Soviet biological weapons program. But none of us, I mean *none of us* knew that it was this big, that plague was the main agent. We had no idea plague was their main biologic weapons agent.

INTERN: Bubonic plague?

CROCKER: Yes. What he was doing was genetically engineering bubonic plague and making it resistant to all kinds of things, including maybe even nuclear attacks so it could be used in a nuclear war. We are talking about an ICD (International Classification of Diseases) on warheads. We worked with the British on this. A committee was formed, a very high level committee of Defense, State and CIA. I was the Bureau of Intelligence person on it. And very few people could see these documents. Then another one comes in and we're getting a good flavor of the programs in Central Asia, the Urals, and other places. More than we ever knew. And we had been in the process of writing a national estimate on this and we had to stop and redraft because of all this new information. So that's a good example of an intel policy group. And we're going to be meeting until September 1992.

There are different kinds of interagency groups and we are discussing them now because we've got the Balkan War, the Soviet coup, and our first Gulf War in January 1991. These groups are bringing their agencies intelligence and policy views to these meetings. It's a very important part of our government. And my experience with quite a few governments like the British, Germans, the French, Japanese, Singapore, Indonesia is it's very rare to have a meeting where the Ministry of Defense and their Ministry of Foreign Affairs are in the same room. And we do it every day. The British have interagency meetings, but they don't do anything as elaborate as we do. Or as one very senior British Intelligence person told me when I asked him why they didn't have a 24-hour alert watch center, he said, "Why should we? The Defense Intelligence Agency has one here in London and they keep us totally informed. And if something goes wrong, then they'll call us."

Q: Yes, why should they spend money?

CROCKER: For every treaty that's being negotiated, there is a committee or subcommittees. The people who go to a treaty negotiation will represent defense, intelligence, State Department, and sometimes expert contractors. I started the chemical treaty in 1977 and this treaty is finished in the late '90s. Strategic nuclear forces are still being negotiated. So I found that all of a sudden in 1989 that I wasn't going to interagency meetings. I was having a hard time finding out what was going on. The Bush/Baker team with Dick Cheney as Defense Secretary don't communicate a lot. A lot of things are done in secret. There's not a lot of interaction, so I can't really find out what the heck's going on. That was never a problem before, I mean at a very high level. We argued in these meetings about all kinds of things. But it was open. And I particularly credit the Reagan administration for a very open interagency system, even though there were great interagency battles fought. My neighbor Arnold Kanter kept me informed, I don't know if you know who Arnold was. Actually for a day or two he was Secretary of State. Arnold Kanter came out of I believe Rand, and he's one of the think tank people that were brought in under Les Gelb when he became Head of PM along with Richard Clarke and Sandy Vershbow, Ambassador to Moscow. A whole bunch of young wiz kids out of the McNamara systems analysis time came into State and most of them became successful. Arnie Kanter was one of them. Brilliant young man and he lived behind me and I rode to work with him for a long time. He worked his way up pretty high in the administration and ended up in the National Security Council. And then he was an assistant to Larry Eagleburger, who was really his mentor. And I'll end up dealing with him on the Balkans shortly, and a number of other issues. And in 1989, to get to what's going on, we have had bitter arguments within intelligence and policy about the Soviet chemical weapons program and how big it is, whether they would cheat if we got a treaty with them. I'm on the side with the British that it's much bigger than they say it is or that we know it is. Now, for those who weren't here, in 1987 the Soviets admitted they had chemical weapons and took people to their big testing grounds to see them. Secretary Baker met with Shevardnadze, the Soviet Foreign Minister (remember, it was still Soviet, not Russia). The Berlin Wall falls this year. They meet in Wyoming and agree to a memorandum of understanding about the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile, and a program to destroy chemical weapons. So we don't have an international treaty here, this is a bilateral agreement that's been reached. That leads the way to a next step in 1990. A group of us from here go to see all of their chemical weapons storage facilities, which none of us ever believed would actually happen. I never believed they'd tell us the truth on how much they had, but Gorbachev was changing things, which was the discussion of our last meeting. He wants to get investment, wants to change the image of the Soviet Union. He wants to keep control, keep communist power, but he wants to ease things up. I didn't think he could do that. Once you open a totalitarian country with 800,000 KGB agents you're not going to keep control. Well, it obviously didn't work. People find out the truth, start talking to Westerners and they can start traveling and the next thing you know he's lost control. The argument before we leave is at The White House with Arnie Kanter in the chair. I'm sitting on one side of the table with the British analysts and on the other side is this very senior CIA guy that I argued with my entire career. He doesn't know that Arnie and I are friends. He's telling Arnie that I am totally wrong and think the Soviets have all these chemical weapons. I side with the British point of view. He's got his CIA minions saying the Soviets have agent in mostly bulk containers, not

ammunitions. A month and a half after that meeting we are standing in big tents looking at every kind of chemical weapon you could think of: missiles, rockets, bombs, spray devices. I mean we walked into big storage facilities in the Ukraine with missiles just lined up in rows full of nerve gas. They probably never showed us everything, actually. Part of the argument was they had stopped producing them. They went to tactical nuclear weapons and hadn't produced any for a long time according to this line of argument. The first thing we could see is the stamp on the munition with the date. They had charts which had all the information in English and Russian. The dates were pretty late in the game. And so I had to be obnoxious and ask my CIA counterpart I'd known for years, who sat on this committee with me, to come over with his camera and start taking some pictures of these dates. We kind of rubbed their nose in it. One of the important things that happened there was the Afghans particularly had always described to us this weapon that came down with a parachute and then killed people, the gas from it killed people. Some in CIA said that didn't exist. Well, here it was as big as life, as the Afghan described it.

Q: Said something about four feet.

CROCKER: That's right! It's a canister with a parachute. The Soviet chart said it's full of nerve gas. And we went all over the Soviet Union to look at all these storage facilities. They were very candid about it. We also got to watch how they were going to destroy them, which was odd.

Q: Were any of the people you were talking to when they were showing you this stuff talking about problems? Because you know, nerve gas or something is not like a nuclear explosion. That stuff can leak! And you know, the thought of this is horrendous.

CROCKER: Yes. Again, I told you when I did the missile inspections all over the Soviet Union what a third rate country it was and it's turning backwards. So you know, you think of this big super power, but it's not. Well, the chemical side was no exception. First problem, we needed to get an inventory. I guarantee you I can go to the Pentagon and get right down to the last pound of where the chemicals are and which place it was and how much.

We're very good on statistics and that kind of data. They're not. Their system is almost rudimentary. First, the computers they used were so crummy. I mean it was really hard to even believe but I think they were telling the truth, they really actually don't know at a given time what they have. The reporting system to Moscow on chemical and biological weapons was so secret within the country that there's some real problems. We were doing inventory on our own. Second thing was we're pretty sophisticated on security, protecting alarms systems. Our agent is stored in these very heavy-duty bunkers, like in Colorado Springs and Aberdeen and Dugway. All kinds of procedures every day determine if there's a leak. For the Soviet Union, in front of this big building full of nerve gas and other weapons is a white picket fence with an anthill. The general explains to me that the ants die if they leak. I'm not kidding. In some cases they were using old Ukrainian cavalry warehouses open to the air. We brought all our experts to explain how we're going to destroy our chemical weapons. It's a very expensive and costly drawn out

process. But the agreement was we were going to get all this done, it would be all finished by 2006. Well, it's still going on. We're still destroying ours and they are a long way from getting theirs done. Somewhat scary, they've still got a lot of this agent sitting around. They basically drained the chemical out, burned the chemical, then burned the munitions. We use a very big incinerator that just burns everything to ash and then sitting out in Colorado Springs are cardboard cartons with ash in it. That ash has still got all kinds of dangerous metals and toxic chemicals. We spent two days discussing destruction and looking at their destruction facilities.

Q: The Soviets were visiting the U.S.?

CROCKER: Yes, we took them to our storage facilities, test ranges and civilian chemical plants. We took them to malls and cities so they will all go home like the INF inspectors, the engineers we brought here to see missiles. We know through intelligence they were telling everybody you wouldn't believe what it's like in the US. We took the Russians to Rocky Mountain Arsenal in Colorado, right out of Denver. I took them fishing.

The work on the Soviet Biological Weapon program expands. Actually, one of these Russian scientists works near here. I visit him at a lab. He was the head of one of the big programs. And most recently, one of these big defectors was at my home. We did a TV documentary on the Soviet biologic weapons program and he was the head of one of the large programs in Central Asia. This secret interagency group decided this was the time to confront Gorbachev. So we set up an agreement and started meeting with them. And we secretly meet through 1990, 1991, until September 1992, when an agreement is signed in Moscow that said we've satisfied each other that we no longer have biological weapons programs. So the idea was we brought Russians to all our former facilities. We built a lot of biological weapons, if you didn't know that. It's almost unbelievable how much we did. But in 1969 President Nixon abolished it all. And he pretty much eliminated the chemical program as well.

Q: What were the types of biological weapons that we were manufacturing?

CROCKER: Anthrax was a big one, quite a few different fevers, equine fever and E. coli and other fever agents. We worked on botulinum toxins. Then there's toxins, which are poisons basically. I shouldn't forget ricin, which is made from castor beans. Very lethal material. A lot of the toxins are really not disease producing, so if you spread toxins you're not going to cause an epidemic whereas obviously plague and smallpox cause epidemics. You can put a clock on them, believe it or not, you can actually put something around the agent for so long and then it will disintegrate. I mean biotechnology can do incredible things. If you're ever driving to Fort Detrick in Frederick, if you're going up that way into 70 then you're kind of on a high spot. And if you look over at the old base you'll see a big black tower, which looks like a water tower, it's a big round sphere, and it has a historic marker on it. It's still a very secure facility where they handle lots of lethal pathogens. I took a whole team posing as Russians before the Russians got to come to Detrick, to go in like we were inspecting the place. And we come to the sphere. And I, the Russian leader, said, "Well, what did you do with this?"

And the general, who's a two-star, says, "I don't have any idea."

I say time out. There's no way any Russian's going to believe -- the Russians know *exactly* what this is -- that the base commander, the head of all the research, doesn't know what this is. He was some new scientist who'd been brought in and never had anything to do with the biological weapons program and hadn't had the intellectual curiosity to find out what they used to do at Detrick, which is make biological weapons.

And I said, "Go get Bill."

All right, Bill is a tan, hawk nosed guy with a bunch of keys, wears jeans and a plaid shirt. You can see the guy that I'm talking about. He's a GS-11 probably. Anyway, Bill comes and I said, "Bill, I'm the Russian again. I want you to tell me what this is."

Bill says, "Well, I would climb up there every day and take anthrax or whatever and put it in there and then we blow it and then we go in and have sensors to tell what the spray pattern is." I'm thinking he should be the general. Bill knew everything about the history of the program, everything that had been there. He'd been there since the beginning.

We bring the Russians here. We secretly are going there with British scientists and our scientists. Our people are amazed because the Russians who finally tell the truth said they used to make smallpox at this facility or another agent at a different place. Some things we didn't get right away and there was some lying going on. But we showed them everything. They had 45,000 people and a *huge* civilian organization, outside the military, that was doing work on biological weapons. There are eight huge military facilities, some we had followed since the '50s. We never got to go to one of those. And it's kind of a bad story. I mean I was adamant that we should and Gorbachev had said we could and Yeltsin later said we could go anywhere, this to two U.S. Presidents.

What happened is that the Gulf War in 1991 focussed the military on our CW/BW defenses. We actually knew an awful lot about Iraq's chemical weapons, because we had spies. People told us everything. We knew where everything was, how much, what they were making, how much they used on the Iranians. We knew all of this in considerable detail and where all the places were and we knew which companies, like German companies and other companies, were helping them build all these facilities. All of a sudden our military, maybe rightfully so, became concerned with giving so much information to the Russians about our program. I mean our Defense Department produced volumes of information, which we provided to the UN and the Russians. The Russian contribution to the United Nations was disappointing. If you signed the 1972 Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention you were supposed to supply all of this information, where you produced, how much, what you did. And they never had. When they did it was very disappointing. And of course these eight military facilities were not included. So even though we have all these sources, we have a 1992 memorandum of understanding, we have new things going on between our President and theirs and they're still lying and not telling us everything. But when I walked into the final meeting of this

secret group, I said, "Hey look, it's great. Yeltsin said we could go anywhere. I got the cable and he said we can go anywhere. Let's get our teams organized and hit these eight facilities. We've always wanted to get in there and see them." The committee was over. Our military was in a new mode. Our troops could possibly be exposed. And remember, our troops had to get all these vaccinations.

Q: And there's quite a bit of controversy because of the side effects or the concern about side effects.

CROCKER: I wouldn't have done it. If I had been in the military knowing what I knew and having been to Detrick where vaccines were made, I wouldn't have taken them. There had been no vaccine for anthrax. Chemical/biological weapons had been really on a back burner for a long time in the U.S. Military. They spent a minimum amount of money, minimum amount on masks and protective suits. Nowhere near what the Soviets did in terms of defense, I mean not even close. And we hadn't been in the business of making agents for a long time. Our chemical weapons were from a previous time. And then there was a moratorium, we couldn't produce anymore. You could make something to test, or to test against your suits. So what I believe happened is our military sort of got serious about chemical/biological weapons because our troops were actually facing it. And there was no doubt Saddam Hussein had the weapons. Now, once we beat him back we start destroying his weapons. And there's discussion about Persian Gulf syndrome, the sickness of our troops was explained as chemical weapons exposure. Persian Gulf syndrome had nothing to do with chemical weapons in my opinion. But our military said that they didn't want Russians or anybody else tromping around Dugway Proving Ground or any of our places because they were now getting serious about fighting chemical warfare and they were beginning to get serious about missiles aimed at Israel with chemical weapons. There's a whole new interest in this field and spending some money doing research.

The Under Secretary of State goes to Moscow in September 1992 to sign the final BW agreement and says you showed us everything and we've shown you everything and we're all agreed that both of our countries have gotten rid of biological weapons.

Q: And there are still eight major facilities that were never looked at.

CROCKER: Right. And then there's a post script. The head of Koltsovo, that's one civilian place that was making the smallpox, doesn't admit that until much later. Yeltsin becomes President and the communists just declare themselves CEO's and stockholders of this formally government owned biologic weapons facility. And he's got all these workers and he's got all these agent stocks and lots of experience. So they want investment. In that period, all these American companies roll over there without any clearance with the embassy or anything. And I link up with a lady from Merck who is looking to see if any of these facilities could be bought or leased to make pharmaceuticals, because Russia has none. I mean they could make enough biological weapons to destroy the world 10 times over, but they have no antibiotics in this country. Ellie Fagen from Merck goes to all the commercial facilities and brings back tons of

information, more than our inspectors. She had a video of her walk through Kosovo and she handed me a tape that was sealed like it was a new tape. She hands it to me and says, "Dr. Sandakhchief," who was the Head of the Biological Weapons program at Koltsovo and now is the CEO trying to get investment "gave you this." I had met him in the U.S. I go home and stick it on my system and they have the original meeting and then he's playing French pop music as they go through the facility. They have big submarine-like doors, like a ship. When they go into certain rooms, say room 106, he'd switch to "You're in the army now, you're in the army now." He was telling me that these are the rooms where we made the smallpox, these are the rooms where the pathogens were being handled. Even in this new Russian world, there are still people watching what he said. And so we immediately made copies and we got this around to everybody who needed to know. Eventually this is in the press, it comes out in the press that there were two repositories for smallpox, CDC in Atlanta and Moscow. The Russians had taken their out to Koltsovo and were reusing it to develop smallpox, to put in ICBM warheads. That story makes me so angry, I can't tell you. We jump ahead here to the Clinton administration.

Strobe Talbott was the Deputy Secretary of State. I had brought the best experts I could get to be in the room with Talbott for his briefing. He got up and said, "Well brief Toby Gati, the new INR Assistant Secretary and have her fill me in." And when I went up with a very high classified report he said show it to his assistant.

And I said you have to sign to see this. She can't see it. There was a very limited number of people who could see the report. He didn't want to read it.

The administration was supporting Yeltsin. They're trying to make Yeltsin look good and they don't want to hear anything that might show that bad things are going on. That's the end of that story. Even the UN did not react as they should have to this terrible situation.

Q: By the way, I think I should note here. When you say smallpox, smallpox at this point in time has essentially been eradicated from the world and people no longer get inoculated against smallpox. So if smallpox were reintroduced it would have a devastating effect.

CROCKER: Right. And then if you take plague, which is the main weapon they're working on, it's just unbelievable. And what actually happens is that you had a brief period under Gorbachev and Yeltsin of an opening of Russia and we should have been all over that country taking opportunities we never had before. In my case, I kept asking to go there and see if I could find Soviet military who'd served in Laos and Afghanistan and debrief them about the use of chemical weapons. The KGB had become a new FSB (Federal Security Service) and they just didn't have that control they'd had for so long. It was a great opportunity. A lot of businessmen went there and we met with a lot of Russians here. The one in particular that I remember, a very important meeting, was we brought all these generals and people like Rumsfeld were present amongst other big name people. It was to discuss how they could change their military. And one of the things they said was we wish we had a Non-Commission Officer program. They also said they don't

want the old system where the government could say bring your regiment and help farm. There's that intermix between the military and the economy, railroad troops, construction troops, farming groups, the military was used, you know, for a lot of these things. This was not disaster relief, this was like doing regular work, every communist was supposed to donate so much time and go out and help the farmers. When I was there in '88 we went to the post office and they said all the people in the post office were working in the fields. What happened is that window of opportunity snapped shut. It wasn't long before Russians were arrested for meeting Germans or Americans.

I should mention the Berlin Wall real quick. I had actually worked for a Foreign Service Officer who had spent a lot of time in East Germany. And when the Wall came down, shortly after, I had a meeting at NATO for the annual intelligence gathering. When I went to the Wall all I had was a B4 bag full of my clothes. And the first thing I did was walk to Checkpoint Charlie, the famous building that sits on the border and you have the Americans and the East Germans here and you had to go through this checkpoint. And way back in another life I'd had to go through that checkpoint in a very scary clandestine circumstance. I remember thinking I'm walking, go past the American and the East German and they don't look at me. So I just walked into East Germany.

Q: Well, now they have a gift shop there where you can buy souvenirs.

CROCKER: Later I saw it on television, they lifted Checkpoint Charlie and moved it.

INTERN: Did you get your photo taken?

CROCKER: This was the first day. I walk all the way into East Berlin and there's nothing. There's no place to get a drink, nothing. And finally I find this one coffee shop open and it's just loaded with tourists. But East Germany has closed. I mean thousands of people are walking in there with lots of money and want to buy something. And the place is closed. And they were resentful too, they were very snippy and snotty that you were there. I mean it was really kind of a strange atmosphere. Then I go out and I look at the big field that we'd all seen so many times with the Germans and the dogs and minefields and barbed wire.

And there's all these people walking across that field. I just walked across, through the holes where people were tearing the Wall down. And I just walked through one of the holes. I look up at this East German on a ladder and I ask him for his hammer for ten dollars. And the reason I did this was because there were Arab groups around the wall selling pieces of concrete they spray painted and were sold as Berlin Wall pieces. I climbed up the ladder, beat off these monstrous pieces, threw my clothes out of the bag and just filled this B4 bag with big hunks of the Berlin Wall. And I brought this bag to the train station and if you come to my house today you'll see big pieces of the Berlin Wall.

Q: So life and intelligence has changed.

CROCKER: One other thing we should mention is this is the origins of the Balkan

conflict. So as the Berlin Wall goes down in 1989, the Soviet Union's beginning to fall and there's problems within Yugoslavia. Slovenia and Croatia seceded from the Yugoslav Federation in 1991. Then Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992. I mention that because I go from heavy involvement in chemical/biological weapons issues to the Balkan War. I was chosen to set up the intelligence task force on the Balkan War. And of course at State we had some incredible people who had served in Croatia and Serbia. John Zerolis was one of the best who was in my office. We had great people that really knew the country and then I had a brilliant academic I hired out of Stanford. We started her working -- because she spoke Russian-- on the meeting with Yeltsin and all the new republics. Paula Pickering was a brilliant writer and cut her teeth on the fall of the Soviet Union and then I put her in charge of the analysis on the Balkan War. Ironically, she now teaches about the Balkans at William and Mary University. I had wonderful people. I remember toward the beginning Bob Gallucci, Assistant Secretary of PM asked me for a brief on the Balkans. I told him a little about the Balkans and he said, "I don't think you understand. I don't know *anything* about the Balkans, zero. And it's clear that's going to be the main subject every morning in the Secretary's Staff Meeting.

Q: He is at Georgetown University now.

CROCKER: Yes. We have a little Balkans 101 brief. I must have used it hundreds of times. And I got a couple of sharp ladies that really knew their stuff, one was in Serbia for years. When we started the task force, as we always did, by bringing experts in, I started reading books at home. And some of them I had read, like Conversations with Stalin by Djilas, a book where Djilas is a Yugoslav communist explaining to Stalin why he doesn't want to send his military into the Balkans, because it's a mess. It was important to know why Kosovo was important, and why the Serbs are so uptight about a certain date, when some Austrian guy decided to come to Sarajevo on that date, and that started World War I after a group of Serbs were in a tavern and decided to kill the Austrian Archduke. The Serbs were cannon fodder for all of Europe to fight the Turks, the Ottoman Turks. So basically they got clobbered when the Ottoman Turks came in 800 years ago, conquered this whole area. And then they were on the frontline in Kosovo when they kicked the Turks out in 1912. Serbs had thought they would get to have their greater Serbia, but Europe divided up the Balkans and everybody took what they wanted. Serbia had a chip on its shoulder. If you don't understand what I just said then you shouldn't be negotiating in the Balkans. One person that made that mistake was Jimmy Carter when we had a meeting there and we had all the major players. He didn't appear to know who the Croatian, Serbian, and Bosnian leaders were. He had never been primed to understand the basics. All of these people are Slavs, with the same DNA, they're all southern Slavs from Russia. They came about 800 years ago. The Croats become Catholic and identify with that part of Europe. The Serbs stay tied to the Russian orthodox church.

Q: And the Bosnians are a mixture of Serb, Croat, and Muslims from the Ottoman Empire.

CROCKER: We talked to many people about Bosnia. We had to understand the history of

Bosnia and it was a geographer, mind you, from Portland State who explained it the best. The people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which were all mixed, became Muslims in order to work in the Ottoman Empire.

Q: The Ottomans allowed you to keep your religion, but you had to pay a special tax. So many of the Muslims, who were really Serbs of Slavic origin, became secular Muslims.

CROCKER: Kosovo was so important. The Albanians were the original people there. Tudjman, the Head of the Croats, had been a Nazi. Milošević, the head of Serbia, was a nationalist who wanted to form Greater Serbia. The Balkans was the main focus of the Secretary's morning briefing. In the Bush-Baker time, we're not really getting that involved in the Balkans. But it is during their time that these successions take place and then Milošević in Serbia decides to attack Croatia. General Mladic was the Bosnian Serb doing Milošević's dirty work.

My group becomes very sympathetic to the Muslims and the Bosnians. We're watching ethnic cleansing of Muslims that's like revisiting World War II.

Q: It really had parallels to the Jews in Europe.

CROCKER: The boxcars looked the same as the ones we saw in WWII with Jews in them. I remember this picture of them in a movie, it shows all of these people, these Muslims, taking off their jewelry and leaving all their possessions there for the guard to go through and then they just load them into these boxcars and take them away. I remember writing really passionate reports and sometimes we got extremely upset, for example when the Dutch UN soldiers back off and let the Serbs slaughter 8,000 males at Srebrenica. There's quite a few of these. And I was kind of appalled at the attitude. I remember our European Command writing about these Muslims who had been under siege for months. Finally the siege was lifted and they came up out of their holes and tunnels and went down the road to the Serb houses and burned the houses and killed any Serb they could find. Our U.S. command in Europe condemned the Muslims. So I got into a very bad relationship with our U.S.-European Command who loved General Mladic. The same was true of some of the UN military. The Canadian and a couple of others I couldn't quite understand it because it was clear to me the Muslims were the underdogs and they were getting clobbered.

Q: What was your position?

CROCKER: I'm in INR. I had this office, Political Military Office. We had people from other agencies, we had military people, and were there if a crisis occurred. We could immediately go into a task force. And we had all the library material and support to immediately help us do that. Any of my people could do any subject. They were all really good writers. Not necessarily militarily trained, actually my best people had never been in the military. And we had reached the point where I couldn't figure the situation with our allies. I don't know if you remember the time when the French stood back and let the Serbs open up these armored personnel carriers and brought out all the Muslim leadership

and killed them.

Q: Yes. They were going to a meeting with the negotiators.

CROCKER: I was getting clobbered with cables from our own people in Europe. Later I actually debated this U.S. general at a big audience at the Defense Intelligence Agency. I went to NATO for over 25 years for intelligence meetings. I went to Europe to talk to my old colleagues from all the different countries and ask what the hell's going on here. The answer was *really* simple. They all told me, "You Americans don't even really know that much about European history. You don't know the Ottoman Turks were here for 800 years and we only kicked them out in 1912." And they said, "What you don't know is Europeans don't want the camel getting his nose under the tent again, and we see the Muslims in Bosnia as a threat. We don't like *Muslims*. And we don't want them to have their own leader and we don't want you giving them arms." It was something deeply ingrained in the Europeans about the Ottoman Turks. Then the next thing I find out talking to military people is the contrast between trained Serbs in nice uniforms who can talk like military people, and they do training like military people. The Muslim guys were wearing sandals and they had long hair and they're Muslims. European officers liked the Serbs better. The Croats did terrible things to Muslims. The answer was we were supporting the Muslims against the wishes of our NATO allies. And at the very beginning, I remember they sent the first UN convoys with supplies and they were stopped by either Croats or Serbs, and they took everything. I had some very heated meetings on the seventh floor of the State Department. My view was you can't do this sort of idealistic United Nations blue helmet rules, namely do no harm and don't carry guns. This was a civil war. If you're going to play in this game, you have to be tough.

I suggested and others suggested in meetings that we should have helicopters protecting the convoys and the first time the Serbs put up a roadblock you tell them to leave or be killed. And you only have to do that once. We found that out in Vietnam. The Blue Helmet should command respect, it's an affront against the United Nations to kill them.

In 1991 besides the Balkan case we have the first Gulf War. I'm sitting in our office all night waiting for the U.S. to attack the Iraqi forces and push them out of Kuwait. I'm not going to repeat the whole Ambassador Glaspie and Saddam Hussein story.

Q: Well, what was your reading? I mean it's been very controversial. Our Ambassador, April Glaspie, had an unplanned meeting with Saddam Hussein. As I recall it, she was given no instructions whatsoever.

CROCKER: Right. Here's the actual quote. I went back and ran this through Google the other night because I wanted to go through the timeline and make sure I remembered everything in sequence, because I'm really the skunk at the picnic in the department because there's all these people working on coddling Saddam Hussein. I would have to say that her quotes and her talking papers are pretty mealy-mouth stuff and Saddam Hussein was not perceptive about Western thinking. Cables between Qadhafi and Saddam Hussein exposed their ignorance about the West.

Q: Well, they both are supported by yes men who make them feel that they're gods.

CROCKER: Let me read what she said, it's really amazing. "We can only see that you've deployed massive troops in the South. Normally that would not be any of our business," she says. "But when this happens in this context of what you said on your national day, that when we read the details we see the Iraqi point of view that the measures taken by the UAE in Kuwait are in the final analysis parallel to military aggression against Iraq. Then it would be reasonable for me to be concerned and for this reason I received an instruction to ask you, in the spirit of friendship, not in the spirit of confrontation, regarding your intentions." That's what she said.

Q: Well, of course it's mealy-mouthed. The high command in the State Department thought Saddam Hussein was their guy and he thought he could invade Kuwait without penalty. In context we saw him as a tool against our major enemy, Iran.

CROCKER: But look at the date, 1990. What have I just told you about, in 1988, Saddam unleashed 60,000 troops and used gas to kill off the Kurds. This is after he's been killing Iranians for years. If they had done their homework -- I had books before this period about Saddam Hussein -- he basically was trained at the age of 12 to be an assassin. And he worked for the Sunni operation in Syria and Egypt and was in Iraq to overthrow Russia's communist leader. His job was to kill that leader. So oddly enough, the way he comes to power eventually is ironic, the President got killed and Saddam Hussein rises to power eventually. George Shultz thought Saddam was an evil leader. I remember him saying to me one time, this is the guy who uncovered a CIA agent working in Iraq and hung him outside the U.S. embassy. The Secretary didn't have the power to even sanction Saddam Hussein. He tried to push it through and these two Senators pigeonholed it in a post office bill and got rid of it. I was there. I went to the Hill, that really happened. Later, when Saddam becomes the bad guy in policy circles, the two senators apologize.

Q: I didn't know that.

CROCKER: We both know who Richard Holbrooke was. Holbrooke was brought into the department under Clinton to work on the Balkans and negotiate the Dayton Accords, and I'll be talking about that later. But there's pros and cons. Most people don't like him and a few people like him. There are plenty of people that respect him though. This has all been in The Post in the last few days about how at the NSC General Lute, who I met with several times recently, wanted Holbrooke out. They didn't invite him to certain high level meetings with Afghan President Karzai. Some say that Dick is his own worst enemy, but in this context of diplomacy, this goes back to my college professor who taught me what an American diplomat ought to be. One thing is he should represent America's point of view and he shouldn't get all wrapped up in the country he's dealing with and become pro that country. I remember that lecture from my teacher. Dick Holbrooke had no question when he closed the door with somebody what the hell the message was. I've been there. I did a lot with Dick Holbrooke. He sent me on a lot of missions briefing heads of state. He is a real ego guy and all the things they say about him are somewhat

true. There are several people, Deputy Secretary Armitage would be one that comes to my mind, that are straight talking diplomats, who are aggressive diplomats.

Q: Larry Eagleburger was like that.

CROCKER: Yes. That would really be a good example. Holbrooke was in the room, according to somebody who was there, with the Bosnian leader Itzetbegović, Tudjman the Croat leader, and Milošević the Serb leader with their Foreign Ministers. Holbrooke forcefully laid down the law on the negotiations.

Q: This was the Dayton Accords.

CROCKER: Yes. There was no doubt in those three leaders' minds who was in charge and what was going to happen. They were going to Dayton whether they liked it or not. They were going to sign a peace treaty. You have to have been with Holbrooke at one of these meetings to understand how he gets away with it. But I've been with a foreign leader who asks Dick, "What do you want me to do?" He usually spoke the language of the country he dealt with.

I remember an ambassador who was in Africa. She's the one that walked out in the street in this country about to go to a civil war, and she walked out on the street between the forces, puts her hand up and invites the leaders to coffee.

The administration began to change its mind in 1990. Cheney goes to Saudi Arabia and Egypt and they start talking about coalition once Saddam's moved into Kuwait. Operation Shield is formed. They bring up the report about Saddam Hussein trying to have Bush senior assassinated and all kinds of other things. We began to build our forces. And I've said, on January 16 (my birthday), we attack. There is a debate whether Bush should have kept going into Iraq. I would be on the side that said the President was right, that he formed a coalition on the basis we're going to push him out of Kuwait and there was no other mandate in that coalition to go all the way to Baghdad. I mean I think he did the right thing.

Q: There was the midway point, which I subscribe to. They had to cut off a significant portion of the Iraqi Army. There wasn't an end game from what I have heard. The oral history I've done with Chas Freeman, who was Ambassador to Saudi Arabia at the time, he kept sending telegrams saying, "What's the end game? I mean what do we want?" There was no answer. One of the things I think that we're getting here is, that comes up in the other things, sometimes at the top there's conflict and lack of decision. You know, they don't really think things through.

CROCKER: Well, you could take the entire Vietnam War. I kept trying to figure out while I was there what the hell is the plan? It didn't make any sense to me. It later on makes perfect sense because then I find out there was a plan. It's just they didn't tell anybody about the plan, which wasn't about fighting Vietcong and it wasn't about all these other things going on. It was to build Cam Ranh Bay, (I used to meet my wife

there and sit on the beach). My first week I went to Phu cat, a monstrous big facility with big runways. It later becomes much clearer to me that there were strategic planners and tactical people. The tactical people were about fighting the Vietcong and body counts. Strategic people were looking at the big picture, this was a great country to have bases against China and Russia. The large bases had little to do with the Vietcong. With Vietnam and Thailand we could project power in the region and control the seas. McNamara led the strategic policy. And this is what Daniel Ellsberg was leaking in the Pentagon Papers. I used to do a briefing comparing the Soviets in Afghanistan to Vietnam. And I've talked to a Soviet General since about this whole thing because it was kind of a disaster on the ground in terms of fighting the Afghans. But to the Soviet High Command and the generals and the politicians, Afghan's a huge prize. I mean it's right there vis-à-vis Pakistan and India, the Straits of Hormuz and Iran. It's got tons of minerals and all kinds of potential economically. They decide to come in when the two Afghan leaders attack each other. I tried to brief Secretary Vance and his advisor, Marshall Shulman, that they were going to invade Afghanistan. And he was absolutely sure the Soviets would never invade Afghanistan for a whole lot of reasons. The generals saw this as a big strategic target. And they could put up with Soviet troops getting killed and all the disease problems they had and everything else. And they were willing to use some pretty harsh methods on the Afghans themselves, close to genocide in some tribes. There was sort of a similar contrast, except the United States could put 500,000 troops in and they couldn't. They didn't have the ability to project power like we could. It's really what makes us the number one power in the world. We've got the lift capability. As much as they were a super power, the Soviets didn't have the lift capability and they really didn't have that planning capability that our army staff had.

Q: The U.S. army planned a massive intervention to push Saddam out of Kuwait.

CROCKER: Yes. But General Bernard Trainor wrote the book Cobra II about the Second Gulf War. It says right in the first chapter that Rumsfeld says to the army people he does not want all this army planning junk and he doesn't want all the logistics. He said the U.S. would be out of Iraq by September and he didn't want all the material the Army would want.

Q: Today is the day after the 5th of July, 2012 with Gary Crocker. And we have six interns here, our audience might participate at some point. Gary, I'll turn you loose.

CROCKER: OK. This is a very complicated period. We're talking about 1989 to '91.

Q: And for somebody who's not following American politics too closely, George H. W. Bush was President. Jim Baker was Secretary of State. Things changed and within the bureaucracy everybody close felt that things could be different. I mean this is going to be a real change of administration.

CROCKER: There were high hopes because the world had changed. The Berlin Wall is

down. Dick Cheney is Secretary of Defense. Colin Powell is Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. They're in a whole new relationship with the Soviets and a reduced threat. A lot of Soviet analysts have to go find another line of work, most of them went into terrorism and proliferation.

There were other reasons for NATO than just the Soviet threat. To many of us, the Soviets were never that super anyway and most of us predicted that if they went into Afghanistan, which they did, they would get clobbered, which they did. Their forces did not perform well against the Afghan freedom fighters. A lot of us considered the Soviet Union a third world country with a very big military and produced poor consumer goods and sold weapons all over the world. It was their only real source of income. They were still messing with Iraq when we're getting ready to go in January 1991 and we're going to go into Iraq and kick them out of Kuwait. The Soviets were still there with estimates of 500 to a thousand advisors. All their equipment, Iraqi equipment, was mostly Soviet, with some French weapons and with a lot of help from various companies, particularly in Europe. And there's also an oil connection which becomes more apparent later on in the Second Persian Gulf War, becomes a real issue because China and Russia and others are so involved with Iraqi oil. Oil is not a major issue as it will be in the Second Gulf War.

Q: I might point out here that all of us, including myself, when you listen to what's being said don't accept this as absolute gospel. We're talking about work that we did and subjects we know. But everybody's got their own take on the issues. And so keep that in mind. And this is true of any other studies that you may have seen. Remember this. I mean here we try, I think we probably get down a little closer to taking the personal opinion out. There's a certain challenge to oral history that you don't over posture.

CROCKER: I think it's important to know if you're listening to somebody what is their personal history, where were they? I won't say I was on the bottom looking up, but in the middle some place where I was briefing Secretaries and a lot of senior people at State. And I was involved in an interagency process. My colleagues were from all the agencies. We view issues from where we are. I'm not a policy maker. Remember, most of the people I briefed would be policy makers.

Sometimes a midlevel person is the one that's involved in the policy that gets accepted. They're writing policy papers, they're writing position papers, they're saying I think we should take this position in arms control and they're running it up to the Secretary and the NSC. I was in intelligence. So my bureau, the Bureau of Intelligence, was not a policy bureau. Also, we didn't clear with other bureaus. A lot of people in the other bureaus (policy, economic, and functional) didn't like the fact that on a daily basis we wrote -- based on intelligence -- reports that impacted policy. We're writing based on some really sensitive intelligence. We are not saying to the Secretary to ignore the African Bureau. We're saying, "Here are the facts. Take it or leave it. This is what we have about this subject." Now, we're very close to policy formulation in some ways. A policy bureau officer will get up in the morning and read what we've given to the Secretary and be furious because it interferes with their policy. I've given quite a few examples through this talk, as I did a lot of work on chemical and biological weapons developments. And

there's an executive order and maybe even beyond that a law that if a country is making chemical/biological weapons and particularly using them, then you can't do trade with them. And so you run into this problem that intelligence is saying we are certain that Vietnam and Laos are using lethal chemical weapons on the Hmong people. In the VLC (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia Desk) they're about to give 100 million dollars to Laos for humanitarian aid. They didn't like my view and my analysis and there are hundreds of stories like this. I mean every single day INR writes for the Secretary. Now, a lot of clearing goes on with the CIA and DIA, Defense Intelligence Agency. They don't do the Secretary's morning briefing anymore, considered by many in The White House over 30 years to be the best thing to read in Washington every morning. Very bright people writing in a language very senior people could understand. We had 15 lines for what we call a short piece and one page for the long piece. That's all we got. That's a challenge to cover a subject like that. It was hand carried to the senior people, doesn't go to Congress, but it does go to the Secretary of Defense, President, and CIA. Of all the other things produced in Washington on a daily basis, this was the only one written, "Dear Mr. Secretary, today you will meet with the Russian Foreign Minister. We'd like to point out that we have intercepted communication that may affect your talking points."

Q: I might point out that the clearance procedure in most of the bureaus involved sending your report to someone more senior and they each edit it. And there's a tendency to take the sting out of it because it might offend someone or be misunderstood or be against a policy view. Whereas INR says 'they're using chemical weapons,' others want to add alleged or other qualifiers.

CROCKER: Right.

Q: It doesn't mean that INR or the intelligence people were always right or that you had to pay attention to it. But it does mean that the people on top are getting what you call raw intelligence with analysis.

CROCKER: This is really important because I could recite over my career time and again a crisis occurred because senior people came in too early and read raw traffic without analysis. By raw I mean unanalyzed information. In the morning I used to read several hundred of these reports before we'd brief the Secretary.

Q: Including, by the way, it isn't talked about much, but we're often monitoring other people's communication.

CROCKER: There were great differences between Secretaries. Let's take Warren Christopher, I mean a great guy in my opinion. I've had a lot of dealing with him -- but he was a corporate lawyer, never been in the military, does not even understand military terminology he told me. He called me once and said, "Could you explain this to me," I'd go up there and explain to him how we collected intelligence. One of the really worst things was when the Pentagon came over to brief him with a big stack of view graphs. We don't use view graphs at State. PowerPoint maybe. The Pentagon uses view graphs every day.

I told the three-star general this was a huge mistake. Within minutes, Christopher asks about all the abbreviations, military abbreviations. I said to the Director of DIA who I happened to know to come over, kick the briefer out, sit down and explain this in English. He's on his way to NATO and he needs to know this. The difference is that if you take what I call a professional intelligence analyst, any one of the 26 people working for me, they can sit down in a morning and go through hundreds of these reports. We know over a period of 20 years or more what's good and what's bad or what to pay attention to or ignore. I'd say the most egregious was the Head of the Central Intelligence Agency and his Deputy came in very early. Al Haig was Secretary of State and they told him the Soviet Union was going to invade Poland. Well, they read this raw traffic and decided they were coming and Haig believed it. I was called in about seven in the morning, I walked up there, and he said, "When does the main force hit the border?" And I said what are you talking about. And he said, "Well, they're invading Poland." I said no they aren't. By the end of the day we knew what had happened, how they had misread this traffic. They were starting a crisis in Washington and there wasn't one. Gates was a longtime intelligence analyst and he thought he knew what he was reading, but he didn't. It was something totally different it turns out. I briefed Haig on the facts.

We're going to move to the important discussion today about 1991. We have the First Gulf War, a coup in the Soviet Union, and the Balkan War. The world will be changed forever. It's the beginning of the end of the Soviet Union. Yeltsin is going to be President of Russia.

Q: What about chemical/biological weapon proliferation?

CROCKER: Proliferation was a big subject in 1990-1991. The word proliferation was not something that was around before 1984. There were no proliferation centers. There were a few of us working on it in the mid-'80s, then it gets bigger and bigger. Pretty soon there's great revelations about all these companies helping Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria and Egypt. We confront the Germans, French, Swiss and others who had companies involved. I also want to mention about leaks. They are a daily occurrence. We have committees deciding what to leak to support policy or support a weapons system or whatever it is. I got involved because we had permission to brief two incredible journalists from The New York Times: Michael Gordon and Steven Engelberg. These two journalists got background information, which we do all the time to reporters. That happens every day. They got real interested in this subject and got into something that we in intelligence really never messed with because it's about business practices. They got into commercial cables. Steve Engelberg dug up all this information about the German company Imhausen-Chemie. And of course they made the case in The New York Times that the Germans were helping these countries, including plans. It turned out they were also in Syria. We blew the whistle and the German government became very cooperative and we met with German intelligence and ran some very nice operations that helped us a lot. The German government's very supportive of its economic side so they were a little reluctant. And most of these countries in Europe are into arms sales and contracts on military weapons. We'd already embarrassed the Swiss for building a chemical plant in Egypt,

which even the U.S. Ambassador denied.

When there was a crisis of any kind, like the three in 1991, we drop everything. I pulled pertinent people into a task force mode, and that's all they worked on. And we support the Secretary. And usually there's a State Department task force in a big room up in the Operations Center. That task force is going to provide regular situation reports (sit-reps) to the Secretary. Downstairs, I had my team writing the intelligence input to the task force. Within the Bureau of Intelligence we had the lead. Other offices would provide my people information for the sit-reps.

Q: Explain a sit-rep.

CROCKER: Situation report. During the first Gulf War my task force was charged with writing three situation reports a day to the US commander General Schwarzkopf. Each report would tell him all the pertinent information we had at the time we submit the report. The other intelligence agencies sent me their information to be incorporated. I might point out that the CIA was not pleased with INR taking the lead.

It's January 16th (my birthday), 1991, I'm pulling a long one at State (48 hours) because we're going to invade Kuwait from Saudi Arabia. We've got an international coalition that George Bush put together. We have UN backing to push Saddam out of Kuwait.

Q: OK, talk about having the forces ready to accept biological/chemical weapons attacks.

CROCKER: There used to be about 50 of us pushing global chemical/biological weapons issues. I was basically the only one in the Bureau of Intelligence working this. We're about to go to a complete change on the whole chemical weapons story because all of a sudden Mama's little boy or girl may be hit by either chemical or biological weapons from Saddam Hussein. And all of a sudden, my friends and I were stars and being asked to go to congressional briefings, etc. It's going to be important because it causes our military, who have been very forthcoming in providing information to the UN about our programs as well as to the Russians, to go all secretive. All of a sudden we're getting into an important conflict. A bill goes through Congress that our military can now fool around with making some agent in order to test it and find out what might be used against us. Saddam Hussein's going to fire scud missiles and he could put a nuke or chemical or biological agent on it. And those missiles do land in Israel. So all of a sudden, our military's given permission to do some work that international agreements had said they couldn't. We're not providing that much information and we aren't inviting people to our facilities anymore. There's a great emphasis on the chemical-biological weapons threat. Now, what does that mean in Washington DC? That means billions of dollars in contract money.

Q: Today is the 13th of July, 2012 with Gary Crocker. And Gary, you're going to put us in the picture where we left off. The interns are present today.

CROCKER: I thought it'd be important at this point, particularly for the interns to understand what this office was because it's very unique. We started it in 1974 and the idea was that within the Bureau of Intelligence there would be a political- military office that would look at everything military, political, economic, arms control, arms trade, everything in one place with a lot of cross-training going on with the people. And we started small and what's important as we get to 1990-1991 is we're racing around on all these different subjects with 26 analysts covering the globe.

Q: Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but part of this is -- in the intelligence business you would usually go to the Pentagon for military analysis. But the thing is, everyone has their own military perspective. And so the information you may be getting may be tainted or biased toward their perspective. Military wants more money, so they tend to overestimate the threat. The State Department obviously wants to keep people from going to war.

CROCKER: You're right on the money. A general, an old friend of mine, wrote a paper called "Estimating the Threat: A Soldier's Job." I countered with a paper "Estimating the Threat: Too Important to Leave to the Military," I would maintain this office we established was fairly pure in that we weren't linked in any way to policy or procurement. Policy had no say in what we wrote. We weren't obviously trying to get money for the Defense budget, or even the State Department budget for that matter. We were all intelligence analysts trying to figure out what the truth was from thousands of bits of intelligence information and non-intelligence information. I think we all believed we wanted to impart to the Secretary of State the best assessment. We were part of the interagency system to make national assessments. This was important as we moved into the Iraq War and continue the Afghan War. We also had to allocate limited intelligence resources to the top priorities. The world was categorized into priorities with Russia, China, Iraq and Afghanistan as number one with the rest in tiers three and four. And I'm very much against this. I think it was bad because basically they stopped collecting intelligence on a lot of places in the Third World that over these decades we're going to be involved in -- Panama, Grenada, Liberia -- for example. Personally, I think you've got to keep coverage on the whole world because you never know where the next problem's going to come from.

In the office I not only have regional people, but I have Air Force, Navy, Army (who's a chemical weapons expert) Officers. I'm also doing chemical weapons, but I've got him going to the meetings and covering for me. I have a national security agency (NSA) person, which is extremely helpful for their connection to their home agency.

Q: NSA is National Security Agency. These are basically the eavesdroppers. People who can break codes or listen to telephones.

CROCKER: Probably the most important and trusted intelligence is intercepted communications. We've surveyed the world about this many times and they're going to trust something from somebody who doesn't know you're listening. Photography can be

altered, human sources are questionable. The most reliable information is that piece of NSA traffic. I would say in the course of a day, 60% of what I read and wrote about was NSA material. Extremely important. And there is nobody in the world even close to them. They've got these genius mathematicians, code breakers, it's the most impressive place you've ever seen. I did my reserve duty in the Army at NSA so I became very familiar with the inner-workings of it as well. I had an NSA person and a CIA person in the office. We were constantly fighting for survival because the political offices, regional offices of INR, say the big office on Russia, resented us fooling around in their area. They thought the military analysts should be in their shop. My argument over 30 some years was that if the military person is in a big shop full of political people he's going to be down there in the bottom somewhere and he's not going to have other people doing military analysis around him to feed on. And we actually used the bull pin concept for that reason. When I ran a task force out of my office I put people on different assignments. For example, "you're going to be on the Balkan task force and you're going to be on the Gulf War." In 1991, they're all so tired and exhausted everybody goes on leave and the coup in the Soviet Union happens and I'm told that I'm going to be the head of that task force. These people all had to pull a lot of duty and I'd have to shift them around for the next crisis. We were cross-trained globally. We have President Bush Senior, Jim Baker as Secretary of State, Powell is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Dick Cheney is Secretary of Defense. I'm saying this for a good reason, because about 10 years later some of them will come back. Wolfowitz is Defense, he becomes very important of course when we get to the Second Gulf War.

Q: I want to reiterate we have a group of five interns here who have come here from various colleges to understand Washington. This is what you're doing and what an awful lot of people in the government should do, and that is to understand the complexity of government.

CROCKER: Actually, I've thought many times that every Congressman and maybe others in the executive branch should have to do what Michelle Obama did. She visited every single government agency. I don't know if any human ever did that before quite frankly. But it'd be a good idea. I told a good friend of mine who's a Congressman that he ought to come over to State. I mean very few Congressmen have ever been to the State Department. And they and many military have a funny view about State, even a sort of impatience as a military man because State appears indecisive to them. They want action people, not negotiators.

There is a book called It Doesn't Take a Hero and if you don't know who General Schwarzkopf was, he was the Commander of Gulf One, of the first war. And he is very tight with General Colin Powell and he's working with Dick Cheney and Wolfowitz and others in preparing the UN forces after Saddam Hussein invades Kuwait. Schwarzkopf became extremely popular, he probably could have run for President. He's a great big John Wayne kind of guy, but extremely bright, well read, reporters were so impressed when they'd come in and he'd be reading the Peloponnesian Wars. And probably a tough officer to work with I would think from what I saw. What I have found at every military command was they think out on the front lines and know better than Washington

(especially State) what is going on. There's a lot of that in his book, that they are out there and created their own intelligence and knew what the Iraqis were doing. Sometimes they're wrong because they don't have the overall big picture of what the President's up to. Washington tries to work with all the allies and Congress. They don't always appreciate the position in Washington. Plus, you had competing intelligence. President Bush does this incredible job, in my opinion, of getting this alliance together.

Q: Especially Egyptian, Syrian and Saudi troops. I mean it was incredible

CROCKER: He gets Jordan on board as well, but most important he gets the King of Saudi Arabia to agree to have American troops in the Kingdom.

Terrorist Osama bin Laden's main gripe was that American troops were in Saudi Arabia. He doesn't appear on the scene until later.

For the benefit of the interns, I want to mention something real quick before we discuss the war. One of the activities I did from 1977 on is I did a lot of public affairs speaking, particularly to high school groups who came to Washington. And I still do that today, and as a matter of fact, tonight. And the reason I'm mentioning this is because for almost 20 years I've been saying the same thing to these high school kids. Most want to go into the Foreign Service or international affairs. I say three things. And I'm bringing this up because I'm going to mention them as we go through the issues. First thing is English. You have to know English very well. I've told hundreds of interns I can't teach you English, I'm kind of busy. And I've got my choice of all these great students from all over America. We do a lot of briefing, and writing. Careers are made in the State Department on good writing. The person who can take a big subject and put it into a short paper is invaluable. Dick Holbrooke, who you may have heard of, was a genius at this. I mean I've been with him with the Secretary of State. He hands him a one-sheet paper before we go down to Congress. Most of the leaders of our country are very busy and they don't read great big studies. We produce national intelligence estimates that take months to get every word and view perfect for the President. Well, he's never going to see this document. He'll see an executive summary, one page probably, written by the DCI, the Director of Central Intelligence Agency. The second part of the English point is reading comprehension. All of the people I hired -- people you're going to hear about that were on these various task forces all had high reading comprehension skills. Once you're a pro you don't even see the clutter. All I see is it's from NSA and the date and the title and then I read quickly through the guts. I'm telling you this because it's a whole new world because we have decided to release all this intelligence to people in the field. Schwarzkopf wants his own intelligence command. We did this in Vietnam too. It's a disaster because you have all these people reading traffic the wrong way. They had a problem I'm going to address later with trying to handle our national intelligence material. Second is language fluency. I want to see something special on the language side of the resume. The last is history. You can't do foreign policy without a knowledge of history. And that's going to become very apparent. We're dealing with Jordan, Yemen, Arabs, non-Arabs in the Middle East, people who have hated each other, fought each other for centuries. If you don't have some comprehension of Sunnis and Shias you're

going to make mistakes.

Q: I spent nine years in the Balkans, and God knows, the Balkans is all history. I mean who did what to whom and when and that sort of thing. And this is not, you know, interesting history. This is life and death today.

CROCKER: I used to have a book that I would use for speeches. It was called Russia, which is odd. Big thick history book. It dealt with the Balkans from 1777 on and I used to just read it like I was giving a briefing. Something from 1777 is the same as what I would be reporting from intelligence in the 1990s.

The ideal analyst would be a political science major and a good historian. If I had my choice between somebody who went to Harvard and did behavioral analysis or systems analysis to predict outcomes or somebody that really knows a region's politics and history and has maybe been there, I'm going to choose actual experience and knowledge every time. One of the things that happens after a crisis is there's always somebody who is going to say, "I predicted that." And they're going to go tell the President and everybody that they were the smartest one in town. There is one particular person I'm thinking of who did this from 1968 until I left. We would always say, "Well, that's fine. Where's the paper?" Because in our business, and in the warning business, intelligence business, it doesn't count unless you take the stand and write it down and put it out there. Just because you told your buddies and went out for beer and told them, "I'm pretty sure the Soviet Union's going to invade Afghanistan," doesn't count. You have to take the stand and write it down. Before Iraq attacks Kuwait certain senior officials want to bring Saddam into the "Family of Nations." In 1991 those same people want to attack Iraq.

As a research tool I highly recommend The Dispatch from State Department. I'm sure you can get these. This is what the President said, what the Secretary said. I mean you go back and find out what people were saying and what our policy was.

Iraq had a lot of money from oil. Iraq's armed forces were helped particularly by Russia. What I'm saying is there was information out there for the public that Saddam Hussein was dangerous, building up his forces, threatening Israel, fighting Iran, making all kinds of threats, and he's got weapons of mass destruction. On my side of the house my intelligence colleagues around town we're all adamant that we should pay attention to Iraq's proliferation and what he's developing. And it's sometimes falling on deaf ears because it's getting in the way of this policy that they're trying to work on. My briefing at this time would include Italian shell casings, French weapons and other international aid. This is before Saddam attacks. Even Canadians were helping Iraq. General Mick Trainor comes back saying he's just visited, went all over Iraq and said, "It's a pretty good military, terrible operations and bad decisions, and terrible command and control," which we saw during the entire Iran-Iraq War, but he has a large force and he has lots of weapons and missiles and he's got chemical and biological weapons.

Saddam attacks Kuwait. Schwarzkopf and Powell are already getting forces moved into Saudi Arabia, the 82nd Airborne's going in and our ships are deploying. It's called Desert

Shield and then it'll be called Desert Storm. You all know of the Institute for Peace which now has that big new building next to State. We meet at the Institute for Peace. Sam Lewis was there; one of our outstanding Middle East experts.

Q: I interviewed Sam.

CROCKER: He was ambassador to Israel.

Q: For many years.

CROCKER: He's the Head of the Institute for Peace at this time. Sam says we can't go to war. We have to find a diplomatic solution. We've got to find a way to get Saddam to pull back and become responsible. And then you had Hal Saunders, who's Assistant Secretary for Near East Affairs. He had been the Head of the Bureau of Intelligence at one time. And he's arguing the same line.

Q: Saunders has been interviewed too.

CROCKER: You have this very well known bunch of experienced people when it comes to the Middle East and Persian Gulf. Congress is pretty divided here on this subject on whether we should go to war. We have some big treaties going on and discussions with Russia at this time. And I think I mentioned last time, things are kind of not going so well anymore because Gorbachev's in trouble. He's in trouble with his own people, his hard liners. They think he's given the store away to the United States. We have Middle East peace talks that Secretary Baker's very involved in.

Q: In Madrid.

CROCKER: He's continuing in the Kissinger style of shuttle diplomacy and working himself as Secretary of State. General Mick Trainor was always reading and listening to all this and he's worried that the solution to solve the problem may create a worse outcome. But he is in favor that we've got to do something to kick him out of Kuwait. And we're beginning to also have a problem now with the Soviets because they're heavily embedded in Iraq. They've got advisors there. Almost all the equipment is Russian. And then the Russians would be training them on it. But the real issue is oil for the Russians. Lots of countries are getting their oil and they're getting worried that America is going to charge in. This then becomes the beauty of Bush's foreign policy. He gets a lot of countries involved, countries that you wouldn't think would work together. So it was a real diplomatic peace of work. And we were extremely busy during this period. Our task force has started. He's invaded Kuwait and I'm now told I was in charge of the task force. And this is kind of important, if not ironic in some ways, because the White House came to INR to form this team of people.

Q: You say they came to INR?

CROCKER: The National Security Council and people supporting this effort wanted a

new interagency system to support Schwarzkopf and his military. They said, we want you to write Sit-Reps three times a day for Schwarzkopf. And CIA and Defense would provide their inputs. Well, the CIA went right through the overhead thinking that's what they do. And Defense wasn't really happy about it. But I knew the people involved over there had good contacts and they understood that I have Army/Navy/Air Force on the team. We did it incredibly well. Later I'm going to mention Schwarzkopf's reaction after the war was over. That really occupied a tremendous amount of my time, putting that together every day, editing it with very short suspense times. It was read and it covered anything. We were in a good position to do the troop movements. The big issue was what's Saddam up to and where are the forces going.

Q: What was the general analysis or prognostication about would Saddam stop at Kuwait or would he move to the oil fields of Eastern Saudi Arabia?

CROCKER: In Powell's book My American Journey, he explains in detail that they deployed forces on the assumption Saddam would go for the oil fields in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. He goes into considerable detail about the planning.

The reason I had trouble is it had a lot more to it than oil. Saddam thought that this part of Kuwait belonged to Iraq anyway. Kuwait, along with the others, was messing around with the price of oil and it was hurting him. And he was demanding before he attacked that they get in line. But the other petroleum producers weren't cooperating. A long list led me to believe this was about more than oil. He was going to grab the whole place. He didn't like the Kuwaitis. He had a lot of reasons. I love logistics when I'm looking at a problem, because the political indicators are confusing. And this happened with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Political signals were just not there. But logistics, when troops are going to do something for real they strap on extra gas cans on the tanks and they put more ammunition on, because they know it is real rather than an exercise. For the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, a number of us were convinced that it was real because of the logistics preparations. And this was very true in the Afghan case. I should add the negative case when we were worrying about the invasion of Poland, about the Soviets going to invade Poland, a number of us in the community said, "I don't think so." There's really just two divisions kind of hanging out. They're just kind of pressuring Jaruzelski, the Head of Poland, but they don't have the logistics or the framework. And fighting Poland would be a major endeavor. Remember, we've been watching the Iraqi Army for over 10 years. I mean we really knew a lot about this military. We've been watching them and their tactics and what they did against Iran. Colin Powell, who was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, said the military always looks at logistics buildups and moving artillery forward. My analysts and I also have considered logistics a key indicator of an invasion. What we didn't have a good idea about was where all the scuds were, that this is a missile that shoots about 300 miles. It can have chemical, nuclear, or biological warheads on it. With the help of some of our allies they made it go further. And they were developing one missile that went about 1200 miles. And then he had the big gun. I forgot which country helped them make the big gun, but this *huge* gun would shoot a very long ways. And then he had some other crazy things, a big sled where the missile would come down and accelerate its range to hit Israel.

He invaded August 2nd. President Bush is still trying to prevent this war, and he's working to get the UN to apply pressure. They're trying to get him to leave Kuwait. There's a *lot* of refugees. One of the ones that surprised me was India sent all these airplanes. There were thousands of Indians in Kuwait that had to evacuate. It really did become a global effort against Saddam. A lot of the troublemakers stayed low, like Qadhafi in Libya who was communicating with Saddam. Before we start the air attack, a thing that I found curious is we were getting good briefings, doesn't always happen in intelligence, on operational information about our forces. It's kind of humorous, if you've ever watched CNN, they have some general or colonel and he always explains what's going to happen. In one case the analysis was meant for Saddam Hussein to hear. We built a naval force and an amphibious force over to the East, and this Colonel was talking about a big amphibious landing with Marines. And Saddam bit on that story. The real intention was armored and air attacks and then armored and artillery coming straight up from Saudi Arabia.

Suddenly the skeptics buy the CW/BW threat to our troops. The Army decided they're going to give shots to all of our troops. These are unapproved shots, not approved by the FDA. And I've been up there at Fort Detrick where they made the shots and I was very familiar with the agents that Iraq had and what you could have an anecdote for or not. And most of these things didn't have any really good anecdotes. Even the Soviets were a little iffy on their anecdotes. But we shot 'em up anyway. They got all these shots. Made them pretty sick. A federal judge ruled the troops couldn't resist the shots. Contracts swelled to work on chemical/biological weapons protection. And I often had them in my office trying to get information out of me. I don't always have the best view of contractors because usually what they do is come to hardworking government employees, get all their files, and then make it real pretty, and sell it back to the government in a fancy binder. Some of them do original work and have people out doing their own analysis.

On January 16th, 1991, I worked 48 hours. We start the air war. In the end it's like 40,000 sorties flown against Iraqi forces. It's a huge air campaign. They hit all of the chemical sites we knew about. That caused some fear that we released nerve gas into the air and it blew on our troops. I believe Gulf Syndrome had nothing to do with nerve gas. We did destroy a lot of those chemical weapons. We hit prime targets, including a couple of targets in Baghdad. General Mick Trainor says this is a real strong Iraqi Army and this is going to cause all kinds of trouble. My task force is writing that we don't think so. We think the morale of the Iraqi Army after fighting Iran all these years and then going and fighting the Kurds, that these guys are going to be surrendering quickly. So that was a big fight in the intelligence community about that subject, what was going to happen, and then as you know, very quickly, 30,000 Iraqis raised their hands en masse and we started capturing Iraqis quickly. The Iraqi Army fell apart once the big ground offensive starts. And I want to say, again, having sat through various crisis situations in my career, this was a pretty well coordinated U.S. government operation. Compared to what we're going to face in Gulf War Two, I thought it was a really well coordinated international coalition.

Q: Well, I've interviewed Chas Freeman. He was our Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, and was probably one of the smartest guys on the block.

CROCKER: Yes. That's true. He is very smart.

Q: And he said that he was sending reports to Washington saying, "What is the end game?" You know, when you have a war you've got to figure out all right, we've stopped fighting, what do we want after stopping the fighting? And we really didn't have a plan, I mean really didn't have a plan. And part of the problem was that we allowed Saddam Hussein to essentially recover and to -- instead of being kicked out for having gotten into a stupid war with somebody much bigger than he was, he was able to subdue his people because we had not grounded his helicopters and other things. And I mean, was your group working on the end of the war plan?

CROCKER: No. Colin Powell should just have it branded right on his forehead, I mean he always asked what is the end game? What are we trying to accomplish? We should have an exit strategy. That's Colin Powell. And so the exit strategy -- it's fairly clear to me (as it gets muddy in Gulf Two), but it's clear to me that they have a UN mandate for this coalition and their job is to push the forces out of Kuwait and push Saddam back and make him agree to stop. I saw no indication that we were really going all the way to Baghdad. I never had any feeling that they planned on going and starting a big war.

Q: There was a possibility that you could trap forces in the Kuwait area and take away a lot of Saddam Hussein's clout.

CROCKER: Remember there were people who said there's going to be 25,000 American casualties and we're just going to be clobbered by Iraq. They also predicted Saddam would use CW/BW on our troops.

Q: You all recall the Gulf War? Was this before your time? (Talking to the interns)

CROCKER: Were any of you born? That's what I thought. This is ancient history now.

Q: But we're not going to make you go back to the Peloponnesian War.

CROCKER: Right. So anyway, there was a sense that we'll be out of there some time in that year. We weren't planning on fighting a long war. But we put a lot of material over there, good army planning, which I've been involved in many times, where we need logistic lines and massive force. The Army will not send in some light forces to a major crisis, in some ways, the army was burned from using just special forces at first in Vietnam and of course we lost a lot of special forces. Abrams becomes commander and brings tank commands and thousands into Vietnam which will swell to 500,000 troops. Remember this comment when we get to Gulf War II (2003). I should point out the reason I'm talking about Mick Trainor all the time is because he wrote Cobra II with Michael Gordon of The New York Times. It's the best piece on Gulf War II. There's no book as good. And Mick Trainor by that time was Central Command, three star, and he

sat in on the meetings with Rumsfeld when planning the Gulf War. And he violently disagreed. He says in this book he was in the meeting about Gulf War I and was so mad because he was a Junior Officer that couldn't speak up. He says that when he gets to Gulf War II he does speak up. My team was involved in some of the work with the allies and meeting with allies and I'd consider it a foreign policy success in our sharing of intelligence, getting base rights to run operations out of Europe, getting the French and the British and everybody to participate in this, and that will last quite a few years actually. And Congress came around with a pretty good vote on this war. And one of the good things is we did not take many casualties. The Iraqis surrender like crazy. And they did attack Saudi Arabia. They did fire scud missiles at Israel and Saudi Arabia. Because of the CW/BW threat we had people coming to America from other countries saying we'd like to see Gary Crocker and all his people, hear their briefings on proliferation and what the Soviets have got and the new agents. That will also affect something else that we're going to talk about. Saudi Arabia and Jordan were doing this somewhat because they had to, but they weren't really happy about having American troops. And part of the exit strategy policy was that as soon as you kick Saddam out U.S. forces are out. No permanent bases in Saudi Arabia or Jordan. The other thing that Mick Trainor points out is good in some sense is that Saddam Hussein was playing to the Arab audience. He was standing up to the damn Americans and can fire missiles at Israel. So he's playing to sort of the anti-Israeli Arab, the people who hate the United States. He's got some popular support. I think George Bush Senior handles this just right. The last thing I want to mention is that this is the beginning of terrorism. You'd never heard of bin Laden before, even al-Qaeda. You began to hear about al-Qaeda in the Balkans shortly after when they get hooked up with the Bosnian Muslims. The main issue that bin Laden says got him going was that we had American troops in the sacred land of Mecca.

One of the problems when you start a task force like this in a crisis is everybody wants a briefing. Every Assistant Secretary, every reporter wants to be informed. And I always tried, and never got it to happen in all the task forces I ran, was give me a professional briefer, because the analysts have got to stay at the desk and keep reading, and writing and meeting deadlines. I can't tell you how intense the task force is. I mean all the pressures you've got coming on you in your own office and, and silly editors messing with you and all kinds of unimportant interruptions, for example, "This is your day to do the computer training." I guess the best example I can tell you about this is I was at the Pentagon in the middle of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. I just got back from The White House. I was going to brief the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and my boss says, "Oh, by the way, this is your day to take out the burn bags." I'm a major, believe it or not, I have to go ride on a truck out to a burn facility near the Pentagon and I've got to throw burn bags into an incinerator. We would have sets of maps ready to go and I'd have people updating them so I could run and brief. Hopefully, my people are reading traffic and when I get back will brief me on what the latest development is.

I worked on the Czech invasion in 1968 and just the other day I met a Czech lady later at a party at my swimming pool. And her husband's a Foreign Service Officer. And she says, "I can't believe you know all these towns." You don't forget details when you work on a task force.

Q: This is one of the things that in our oral history we rely on is that people remember major events they were involved in.

INTERN: Did you get a sense that there was any concern among our Gulf allies, especially Saudi Arabia, that maybe a decisive U.S. victory in Kuwait would run the risk of destabilizing the Sunni control in Iraq and maybe even lead to the Shia taking over. Obviously, that was a concern.

CROCKER: Schwarzkopf got plenty of expressions of concern about that subject. He's a very smart officer and he knew the difference between the Sunni and the Shia. And he talks about that in his book It Doesn't Take a Hero.

INTERN: Did that feature a lot in domestic discussions in the U.S.?

CROCKER: Yes. There was confusion because of the past favoritism shown Saddam. Many did not want war. Most of the discussion I remember from going down to Congress and discussions at the Peace Institute was, let's figure out a way to negotiate or offer Saddam something rather than war. The President, by the way, it's very clear in Schwarzkopf's book, that George Bush was very decisive. He did not mess around. I mean sometimes he's been accused of waffling by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

He was in the mode that Saddam invaded Kuwait, he's really bad, we misjudged him, we made a huge mistake, and we have got to push him out.

Q: I've talked to people who were around at the time. When the crisis was building and their concern was that Saddam Hussein might move into the Kuwait oil fields but not into Kuwait itself. I mean oil fields are to the north. And then just do that and that wouldn't have created as much of a crisis. But when you take over a whole country you're setting off all sorts of things. And Saddam might have gotten away with something. There were all sorts of historical claims to the oil fields.

CROCKER: Right. A map at the time shows the idea that he would only go in and take the oil fields. He lit all the oil fields on fire and he also caused a huge oil spill off of Saudi Arabia. Saddam became very unpopular. So to wrap this up the debate that still exists today is why didn't our forces keep going and destroy Saddam.

Q: I might add that in one of my interviews a gentleman who was the Arab Peninsula Desk Officer, sat in on a conference where they said OK, Saddam Hussein, the war has ended and they say now what, and somebody says, "Well, what if he survives?" And he was greeted with mass laughter. In other words, the feeling was that how could a leader survive having done such a stupid thing? Well, he did survive, and 10 years later we had to fight him again. Including we had the Revolutionary Guard tied up, the main regiment and could have defeated them.

CROCKER: Now, this is reminiscent of another history piece with General MacArthur and MacArthur saying we got the North Koreans on the run, let's go all the way into North Korea, let's go into China. And President Truman said not only no, but hell no, not going to do that. MacArthur gets fired. President Bush did the right thing because he had a coalition with a promise that the end game was we stop once we kick him out. And we bomb the hell out of targets in Iraq. He said, we're not going all the way to Baghdad. That was his decision and even to this day there would be people who would criticize and say he made a mistake, that if he had gone ahead it would have been very much a unilateral U.S. operation with maybe the British and French helping us. I'm not too sure how that would have ended up either, I mean it might have been a long drawn out affair. I actually like the result. What happens is we come up with these security zones and we come up with Provide Comfort, which is a whole effort to help the Kurds and secure the Kurds from Saddam Hussein. We also have U.S.-British-French no-fly zones which I monitor for several years. We went in and took out radars and missiles. He tried to fly a helicopter, we shot it down. So what I felt was we have Saddam boxed in. He's hiding, running all the time, he moves every so many hours. He's really not effectively running his country very well. We've got the Kurds protected. And we rebuilt Kuwait. And by the way, I should mention that one of the people on my team was an Army Reservist, Lieutenant Colonel. He was picked to go and run the civil affairs project in Kuwait and rebuild Kuwait. He had been on my task force this whole time and he was picked to go do that. And it was a marvelous piece of work. Our Army civil affairs is incredible. They draw on professionals who go in and can rebuild the country as Reservists. And it was a marvelous piece of work. Of course paid for by the Kuwaitis, you know, not us, which was a good thing. Saddam did not ignite the Arab world to support him. And a lot of the things he did, like firing scuds at Israel and attacking Saudi Arabia and everything really ticked a lot of people off in the region. My team reports on Iraq for a long time when you think about it. The next war is 2003. There are arguments about whether he has chemical and biological weapons that gains importance in 2003.

We have a postmortem study I want to mention because it also helps reinforce my points about learning English and reading comprehension. We have a big meeting in Washington of all of the military and political leaders. Ambassador Chas Freeman was there. I should mention that Schwarzkopf had written to the Bureau of Intelligence and to the Secretary of State and said that the SIT-REP that we produced was the best thing to read every day and gave us high, high marks for what we did. The President also went over to State and did a big congratulations for all the work State Department did for the war. He thanked everybody and thanked us and talked about our SIT-REP. You think that happens all the time? It doesn't happen, almost never. We're more used to criticism. And in the postmortem, I remember it well, because it was Charlie Allen from CIA that chaired the meeting. Some of the generals asked me, "How did you do that SIT-REP, you must have had top military officers?"

And I said, "Well, you're probably going to be kind of surprised," I said, "Because a number of my people have never been in the military. But I did have some military people as well." And I said, "But I want to tell you that the reason it was good is because of the reading comprehension skills and the writing skills of this team, including the

military people they sent me.”

One general said you can't have somebody analyzing the military if they weren't in the military. I have argued my whole career that I need really smart people, in this case a woman from Stanford, Paula Pickering, an undergraduate, who spoke Russian fluently, was an incredible writer and had never even held a gun in her life. She was the strongest member of the team in writing that SIT-REP. She could read volumes of reports and boil it down to a perfect short report. And then I should mention while I'm talking about her, she had fluent Russian and shortly after the war the Soviet Union fell apart, there are 16 new republics and Yeltsin's going to be the new president. She got to go to that meeting with Yeltsin and all the new republic leaders because of her fluency in Russia. I would die to go to that meeting, but my Russian wasn't that good. I also sometimes talk about my daughter who was *very* fluent in French and studied at the Sorbonne in Paris. She lived with a French family and we lived in Geneva. And she got offered a job in The White House and one of the things on her resume they spotted was she was fluent in French. And the Clinton administration for some reason didn't have that many people in The White House who could speak fluent French. And she ended up meeting leaders like the President of France. She got to meet Havel, the Czech President. So my point is you can't emphasize enough if you're going to do international affairs or the Foreign Service that fluency in language and taking opportunities like working in an embassy in the summer.

Q: This -- I'm addressing the interns -- but one of the things that sometimes gets overlooked, the people who are hiring, how important it is to really write well and to write in condensed form. And what I suggest you do is when you start out in anything ask people who are supervising you, "Would you look at how I can condense this?"

CROCKER: Right. I like it if somebody brings me something they wrote to read. I'm unimpressed when somebody says I was in this master's program where we didn't have to write a thesis and I don't have any papers. I would make them write a short paper to see if they can write. I would just mention one young lady, an intern from West Point. A quiet kind of person, I mean I couldn't believe she went to West Point. I gave her this big pile of papers. I went to a conference, there was a Russian there, and he was telling us information that was really interesting, new information. I told her to write me up something and we'll send it around the department and to other agencies. Two hours max, I get this paper. I'm editing all day as the head of this office. I couldn't find anything wrong, this was so beautifully written. And it captured exactly what I wanted to impart, that I knew people would be very excited when they read this about what this Russian said. I got her back and got her a very high security clearance. She went on to do great things in the Army and ended up briefing the Secretary of Defense. One of the good things about going to the Bureau of Intelligence as an intern is you can get a high security clearance, this girl had a higher security clearance than almost all generals do. Because of that I did the same exact thing with a good friend of mine from church who came from the Naval academy in Annapolis. And she had a very successful career and one of the reasons was she had high security clearances when she went to her first active duty job.

In wrapping up the first Gulf War, let me mention two analysts. Charlie Jefferson who managed our overall office for several years was an outstanding Middle East analyst and briefed Secretary Baker on Iraq. Wayne White for the regional office of INR was a major player from an office that worked very closely with us. In Gulf War II he will send a memo to Secretary Colin Powell pointing out the pitfalls of invading Iraq. I was told on good authority Powell kept that memo handy.

Q: I am familiar with Wayne White's excellent reputation in the Department.

The UN takes the lead in the Balkans. Some people believe that what Milošević, the Head of Serbia, was doing here was finally realizing the Great Serbia. Serbia had been cannon fodder for Europe when the Ottoman Turks first came and they were cannon fodder again when they left, but they beat the Turks and tossed them out in 1912. They thought at that time that now we've proved to Europe what we can do. We're going to get to have the Greater Serbia that we've always wanted. And it doesn't happen obviously. And they were very upset about it, the Europeans divided up the Balkans into separate entities. Now after World War II that changes obviously with Tito and he brings it all into one country, Yugoslavia, and he deemphasizes the Croats, Serbs, Macedonia, and Muslims. He makes it one country and then of course that's going to end. If you read through the writing by academics and everybody, they're all saying that Milošević wants to get Greater Serbia. The better experts say that no, that's not what he's up to at all, he wants to get rid of Slovenia and Macedonia and he wants to concentrate on taking over Croatia and Bosnia and making that his new Serbian Empire. He starts to go after Croatia and getting Serbs living in Croatia stirred up, stirring the pot basically. And that's where the war starts, Croatia. Now, you have a very divided Europe. We're not even in this discussion, Europe remembers the Ottoman Turks. They don't want Muslims back and an idea is starting to percolate in the American mind of having a Muslim state in the middle of Europe is not popular. We don't understand that in my opinion for a while. I actually went to NATO and talked to people and they said that they don't want the camel's nose under the tent. It became more clear to me that we were working at odds with our allies and a lot of strange things were happening. The French stopped a big armored personnel carrier full of the leadership of Bosnia. And they just stood aside and let the Serbs kill them. We formed a task force although I wasn't working full time on the task force. But later, that's about all I'm doing seven days a week is working on the Balkan task force as this crisis gets more and more messy. When NATO went in I got extremely involved. But at this time, we're just messing around and nobody's too sure what we should be doing about this crisis. There's lots of negotiating, attempts at negotiations. Eventually the United Nations is going to start bringing supplies in. And I remember being up with the Secretary and arguing that what we were doing is wrong. Arnie Cantor, my neighbor, is sitting up there with Eagleburger. I'm going in to see Arnie, saying, "What the heck are you doing here?" I was very adamant about the blue helmet business, the fact that these blue helmets were being stopped, shot at, and we weren't doing anything about it. Monitors there were in danger. I fully believe that when the UN creates peacemakers, peace groups, peace keeping groups, etc., the blue helmets represent the whole world. We can't let them get shot at or killed.

Q: (To the interns) Do you understand what the blue helmets are? These are the troops drawn from various countries who are put under the command of the United Nations to do various things, and they wear blue helmets, which signify they're under the United Nations.

CROCKER: Right. In those days they were all around the world. One of the things my office did on the side was we published a peacekeeping report about what all the peacekeeping units were doing and problems they were having. When we get to 1994, I'll tell you about when we went to the Soviet Union to talk about their request for blue helmets. From our standpoint, we want to keep Yugoslavia together. It was a big trading partner of ours, they bought a lot of American goods and we had come to have a relationship with Tito and the ruling group afterwards. Slovenia of course is the first to go and Croatia eventually goes independent and the Macedonia problem lingers. If you would like to understand this even better, and I used it over and over in briefings during my time doing the Balkans, read Conversations with Stalin by Milovan Djilas.

Djilas was a Yugoslav communist leader and he's sitting with Stalin and he's explaining to Stalin why he does not want to bring Soviet troops into the Balkans. And he's telling him you just aren't going to believe what you'll unleash if you do that. And he explains the whole region and the different groups and who they are and he provides probably the best explanation of the Kosovo issue. There's an original people that lived there, and then it became almost 80% Albanians. But the Serbs consider that a very sacred place. Kosovo is a very sacred place and they're willing to die and fight for it, as they did when the Ottoman Turks came in and when they pushed them out in 1912.

Q: But not live there.

CROCKER: Right. Actually later on the Serbs start moving people in there to try to establish a population. I would say that Secretary Baker and Defense Secretary Cheney were not excited about getting involved in this at all. And the American people, if you look at the polls in this period, were not really into the Persian Gulf War either. Particularly once the chemical/biologic weapons threat came out; my boy's going to go there and get gassed. Congress was not real excited about it, but they come around. Finally they turn their attention to what's going on in the Balkans and bless the idea of sending some American troops out of Germany and the U.S.

Q: Europe had declared this is a European problem, which you can't imagine how delighted we were. But here it sounded like OK, the Europeans say they're going to step up to the plate, it is a European problem, and they can take care of it. But they did a miserable job and finally they had to call in the U.S.

CROCKER: I was looking at what I wrote. I was favoring an arms control approach. CDE, confidence building measures were negotiated in Stockholm. I really liked the confidence building measures approach. I was pushing for working with the Europeans and the CSCE, Conference on Security in Europe. That this was the time to prove all our work on notifying exercises and more transparency. At this point we were working with

the Russians and hoped to get them on board to help us in the Balkans. Well, the Russians are pro-Serb and were not going to help us much. Their UN forces were real troublemakers. Right in the middle of the crisis the Soviets send a unit into Serbia without permission.

Q: They pulled a unit out of Bosnia and sent it down to Kosovo. It was a so-called peacekeeping unit. It looked like they were grabbing the airfield.

CROCKER: We had a lot of intelligence on the Russian peacekeepers employed in the Balkans. Years later I take this report up the line and say these guys are corrupt, they're stealing, they're just bad news and they're really giving peacekeeping a bad name.

Q: The situation heats up in Sarajevo where there's shelling by the Serbs. There's one incident that everybody talks about. A shell went off in the middle of the marketplace and killed about 80 people. You'd see TV of old women trying to go shopping and getting shot in sniper's alley in the middle of Sarajevo. It was horrible. And the Serbs were particularly bad. The Croats if they could have been would have been. But in this case, the Serbs had the initiative. I loved Yugoslavia, I spent five years there. When you push that ethnic button bad things happen. Of course, the U.S. was blamed for the bombing.

CROCKER: My team worked on the evidence from the market bombing and proved it was Serbia. EUCOM is the European Command and the EUCOM Commander (U.S.) and the intelligence officer in EUCOM and I were at odds right here from the beginning. We were sending what we wrote for INR and it was being read and criticized. Our officers didn't like the Muslims. They argued with me about that marketplace claiming the Muslims did it. They were always criticizing INR and what we wrote about the Balkans. I later found out the U.S. general had a picture of Mladic in his office. Do you know who Mladic is? They're just now trying him at the Hague. He's probably the worst butcher of the whole war. He was in command at Srebrenica where they killed 8,000 young Muslim men and boys. A terrible man. And our officers liked him. Now, here's what I was able to figure out. I briefed it to a number of people. I said, "We've got a problem with our own generals and commanders over there." And what it turned out to be is they liked the Serbs and in their meeting with Croat-Serbs and Bosnian, the Serbs were real sharp, wore their uniforms well, taught military discipline and they were just good army people. Croats pretty much too. But the Muslims were wearing sandals and had beards and weren't sharp soldiers. The Bosnian Army was thrown together. The old Yugoslav Army was basically Serb. They didn't like working with these people. And some of the Muslims are very fundamental Islamists. I began to put together that the reason I was fighting our military officers was because of their like for Mladic and the Serbs. Obviously after Srebrenica, they all crawled in a hole and stopped criticizing my office for favoring the Muslims.

Q: Srebrenica was the massacre?

CROCKER: Yes. Eventually they're going to have safe areas. Srebrenica's was one of six, I believe. The UN was supposed to be there protecting these people. In Srebrenica the Dutch were there and Mladic came with an overwhelming force and they backed away

and Mladic killed all these people. I never could sell chemical weapons for some reason in Yugoslavia. There was just an aversion against saying the Serbs were using gas. But I'm positive they were because I had mentioned in previous interviews I had met with Yugoslav Military people back in '84 at a chemical weapons conference and they had first-hand recent knowledge. I should say here too that right in this period is when we're beginning to really push that there's a lot more countries in the world with chemical/biological weapons. I had a list that I briefed, and CIA had a different list. My list had Yugoslavia and nobody else was buying it. But I was sure Yugoslavia had chemical weapons.

It was in Mostar we found a big chemical weapons factory, because we began operating eventually in Bosnia and helping Bosnians and there it was, a big old chemical weapons factory sitting right there. And then it turned out Serbs had moved a lot of chemicals back to Serbia out of Bosnia and had their own production and storage.

And I think they used an agent called BZ, which is a hallucinating drug but it can kill people. I think they used it on the people in Srebrenica. I could never prove that.

Q: But another factor in this very confused situation, I belong to the Yugoslav club. I spent a year taking Serbian and I spent five years in Serbia. And I love the place. Acting Secretary of State Larry Eagleburger and I studied Serbian together. But many of the people who got involved in this at the time had served with me and all and were still enamored with the Serbs. And there was a very strong Serb bias. I didn't suffer from that. I wasn't in the business, I was here giving oral history. But I found many of my colleagues were far too enthusiastic about the Serbs.

You run across this -- this is something to remember as you look at foreign affairs. There are people who serve in a country who have been there maybe too long or understand the pressures or the reasons why countries feel the way they do about other countries. And sometimes you might say American interests get lost and you start thinking in terms of that country. It's called localitis. But it takes different manifestations. And I think in this that you had people who tended to be pro-Serb when it was not a good time to be pro-Serb.

CROCKER: That's right. Alex Dragnich was a professor at Vanderbilt and one of our country's foremost authorities on the Balkans and had written volumes. His son is one of my oldest friends and a Career Foreign Service Officer. Alex kept coming to the State Department saying Serbs are the good guys. And of course nobody wanted to hear it. And there was a Foreign Service Officer in the Bureau of Intelligence who was writing and pushing this line, and he was very unpopular. And I must say, I remember it well. And I saw exactly what you're talking about within the department. But most people started shutting up once it got kind of obvious what was going on. And also there's the anti-Nazi thing, that Croats were Nazis. And historically Croats had done bad things to Serbs. One of the analysts on my team and a dear old friend had served a long time in Croatia and crossed swords with the ambassador. Eagleburger maintained his desire to keep Yugoslavia intact with a little pro-Serb bias there. I remember having a talk with him

where he said he couldn't do it anymore, obviously Yugoslavia had come apart.

Q: Larry and I go way back and we were both bemoaning, we were hoping that things would work out.

CROCKER: Actually Montenegro fits in here. Alex Dragnich was Montenegrin and a stubborn Montenegrin, just like his son, George. The Nazis couldn't even get control of Montenegro. I mean this is the smuggling capital of the world, protected by mountains. My friend George Dragnich visits his grandmother in Montenegro. His grandmother says, "So George, what do you do?" He's trying to tell his grandmother without success, about being an Intelligence Officer and in the Foreign Service. Finally he says, "OK Grandma, I work with papers, you know, I write papers." "Oh George! You be clerk."

The defectors are starting to roll out of the Soviet Union. We have a funny relationship going with Gorbachev when there is a coup against him. All of a sudden in 1991 my people are on leave because they worked long seven-day weeks on Gulf One. They've all taken off. I mean they were really like gone. And I get the call, "You need to head up the task force on the coup in Russia." I remember I took no leave that whole year. I got all this intelligence and we're trying to track where Gorbachev is and where have they got him stashed and who are the players, the military and the political players here that have decided to go back to the hard line view. Gorbachev has opened the country up too much and doing trade with the West. It's a group of no-names basically who start the coup. And it's interesting because some of the senior military people have been invited by Colin Powell to meetings in Washington. I remember Rumsfeld there asking questions of these generals. And they were looking to how they can change their military and not participate in the harvest. They said they had to spend a week harvesting potatoes. They come to see our military and learn all about it. And all of a sudden, where's Gorby? There's military forces in Moscow and tanks all over the place. Jane's Defense Weekly laid this whole scenario out, who was who, who were the people doing it, how does this all happen, and how did Gorbachev finally get away. We were working the intelligence part of this. I am fairly confident we didn't have good warning on this. We knew something about the troops in Moscow and we heard some things and Gorbachev himself saying "I don't know why they're here." And that bothered people. "I didn't order it." And that made people very nervous. The previous Soviet Defense Minister also was puzzled -- he left and retired. He didn't know what was going on. And when we talked to him later he said he did not know about all these biologic weapons facilities. He's the Minister of Defense. Unusual in Russia because usually the guys at the top know everything. And he had been cut out on all these secret biological weapons programs. I go on a seven-day task force, grab whoever I can find, and then called some of my people and told them, "Sorry, you got to come back," and we started doing a situation report that had all the military movements, the Soviet alerts, what the units were doing, where was Gorbachev, who the heck was behind this, is there something more sinister going on here that we don't know. Eventually Moscow resolves itself and Yeltsin gets up on the ramparts and becomes the new leader. But from my standpoint and what I was doing, we were concerned because we were watching the Soviet alert mechanism. We'd already said something about supporting the Baltics, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and that's really upsetting the

Soviets because they're going to lose their ports in the Baltic Sea. They end up not ever losing them, by the way. They end up making a contract to keep that military base, much as they did with the Ukraine. The Soviet Union was crumbling and these guys decided they weren't going to let it happen. And when it's over, of course, then Yeltsin comes to the fore and it does happen. 16 new countries were formed and we start dealing with a whole new Russia, with many unanswered questions.

We've got a bunch of new countries from the breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. And terrorism's on the rise. All of a sudden we've got another issue to worry about. So the meeting at NATO that year was fascinating because the glue that held us all together when we produced the threat estimate for NATO was the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact attacking Europe, and that's gone. And so we had to think up new threats and one of them was terrorism. They were trying to create new scenarios. Eventually NATO will be in Afghanistan and we've got the Iraq War and NATO is involved in the Balkans. I mean a meeting in NATO was like totally different when I went in these years than it was the previous years. Before it's really cut and dry: the Soviet threat and how long will it take them to attack Europe. Thousands of analysts didn't have anything to do anymore. They had to go work on something else.

Q: Next time I'd like to talk about INR responding to the change. Because you're an expert in one field and all of a sudden that field no longer is there.

CROCKER: I knew analysts who worked on one Soviet division in one area. Their whole career is to know everything about the general -- his division. I mean that would drive me crazy. But there was one analyst I met whose whole life was looking at photographs and talking about the little Soviet contingent on the Kuril Islands, the Japanese claimed islands. I went there to talk about the army units on the Kuriles. When I asked about those air force units, he said "Oh, I only do the army."

We're only talking about a couple of dinky little islands here and these two small forces -- I mean it's the kind of thing I can do after lunch in an hour. There's a whole lot of people in intelligence that do specialized analysis. They were helpful if I had a problem in a specific place. When the Soviet Union fell their military fell apart, I mean they were not a threat anymore. Their submarines were rusting. And we're all over their country inspecting nukes and other weapons. It's no secret anymore. I mean I'd already been on probably 20 bases.

In the midst of all this, and I don't know exactly why, but I think it's because of the Iraq War, my subject of the Soviet and Vietnamese-Laos use of chemical weapons in Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan that I had spent so much time on, raises its head. There was a whole New Yorker article based on an interview I did. Matthew Meselson of Harvard is sending me tons of reports about all his new work, proving that the government is wrong. One of the reasons there was a lot of interest in chemical/biological weapons including Meselson from Harvard is that we found the whole big chemical and biological program in Russia that he always said didn't exist. It did exist. So we did enter a new world in the chemical/biological arena. And it's grown to hundreds of people working on chemical

and biological weapons issues. Whole committees now where there were about 50 of us before. I just got a call that Matthew Meselson of Harvard wants to see me, wants me to come talk to him. It never goes away.

Q: All right, today is the 18th of July, 2012 with Gary Crocker. And Gary, I'll let you pick up where we left off.

CROCKER: I'm going to start with the Soviet biological weapons program, and I would mention that this history, what we have talked about before on chemical and biological weapons globally and what we're going to talk about for the next few years is very well documented in a book called Germs. It's written by Judith Miller, Stephen Engelberg, and William Broad. These authors are important. Judith Miller will become famous later.

Q: Was she writing for The New York Times?

CROCKER: Yes, the New York Times. Judith Miller is a real expert on this whole subject. Later she will be embedded with American troops in Iraq and she actually knows more about where Saddam's chemicals and biologics are than most of the troops she traveled with. But as we know, later on she will be put in jail for not revealing sources. Stephen Engelberg is the fellow that I worked with back when we were exposing the German company Imhausen-Chemie and it was Steven Engelberg that got all this information about how all these allied firms were helping the Iraqi-Syrian and Libyan programs. I knew him well. And William Broad is the science guy for The New York Times. I bring this book up for a couple reasons. It has good history of all these various subjects, what I call "yellow rain," the negotiation with the Soviets, and the negotiations in Geneva. Also, it includes some of the more exotic things happening around the world like the Japanese group that was building chemical and biological weapons in recent times.

The British have actually written more detail on some of these, including the one in Japan, where they point out they had a base in Australia. These are the funny folks who wear these hats with big lights on them. It's a cult. They were in fact making a nerve gas, which they put in the subway tunnels. A lot of people didn't know they were making biological weapons, but they screwed it up and it didn't kill anybody. But they also had a program in Australia. It was bigger and probably more dangerous.

Q: How were the people that were writing this interrelate with your Harvard professor, I mean did they dismiss him?

CROCKER: I would say Judith Miller and Stephen Engelberg, the two that I knew, and I worked with Steve on this book along with quite a few others in the government and in backgrounding them, they would be a little suspicious of Meselson because they tended to believe chemical weapons were used in Laos, Cambodia, and Afghanistan. They'd be more skeptical of him today. They do mention him and he did talk to them. But I would

say they were very good journalists in checking lots of sources and not just listening to some of the junk that Meselson spews out. And I think they saw what his agenda was. Another reason I point this book out is that it has a lot of detail about President Clinton's involvement, which was kept very quiet. At the time you would never have known that, he never made any speeches about it or anything. But he was very involved in meeting with scientists and finding out about biological weapons, particularly the Soviet program. But also, he wanted to know about new developments coming on through bio-technology, very scary agents that were being developed or could be developed. They talk a lot about my group, our small group of people in the interagency who were working together. Steve Engelberg told me that he put in the book that we can't do the whole "yellow rain" issue, it's too big, too complicated, and that Gary Crocker should write that book. Which I haven't done yet.

One of the interesting developments is that our lead scientist in the "yellow rain subject," Sharon Watson, was working out at Fort Detrick. She's the one that really figured out these samples from Laos were toxins, trichothecene toxins, along with a professor at Minnesota. I took her on my trip around the world in 1982. The reason I'm pointing this out is that Sharon moved up to be the Assistant National Intelligence Officer and was in charge of drafting this national estimate on the Soviets. We have a much more sympathetic group of people, compared to the years when the Soviet Union had a big program. Even Bob Gates and others, particularly in the CIA, were saying that we were exaggerating it. Afterwards, Bob Gates himself writes a big op-ed piece about the threat of Soviet biological weapons. So there's quite a change in this timeframe between the doubters, particularly out at CIA, and now because the defectors come out of BW facilities. But we still never saw the eight military facilities. Matthew Meselson did go to Sverdlovsk where the 1979 anthrax accident happened. And of course he was still pushing that this was not a biological weapons facility until he switches gears in this timeframe and talks about arms control and how we can verify biological weapons.

What we're going to lead to here is when the new Undersecretary of State comes in, there's an agreement with The White House that we need to have these good relations with this new Russian government; therefore, let's just go sign an agreement. So in September, 1992, against many of our wishes, he goes off and signs an agreement in Russia that says we've satisfied each other, we've visited everything, and we're both not in the biological weapons business. That leaves many of us very unsettled because we thought we never got to see the actual military facilities; we got to see the big civilian complex, the research complex. We had the Nunn-Lugar, the Senators Nunn and Lugar agreement with money in a program to help in the destruction of nuclear weapons. There was an attempt to siphon off about a billion as I remember for BW destruction, to go in and make sure they're not doing biological weapons work and put their scientists to work in some other endeavor. That didn't go over very well, both the Russian side and our side is spending that money. In the same timeframe, the U.S.-UK teams are coming back saying, "We don't think Yeltsin is complying here with all these agreements." So the ink's not hardly dry on this agreement before there's lots of problems. But on one side there is a group of people saying it's all over and we don't want to embarrass Yeltsin and we don't want to cause problems here. And I'm sitting in the meeting saying, "Why

aren't we stopping this program?"

During this time I write a very highly classified five-year summary of our negotiations with Moscow. And to give you some flavor, Tom Pickering at one point is Ambassador to Moscow. And I remember talking to him about this. He goes into the Foreign Ministry and he says, "We're waiting for you to provide that form to the United Nations that declares the details of your BW program." It's in the Ministry of Defense, they say. It'll be here, we should have it in a week. And then as you go through my report, two years later the Ambassador is still trying to get this UN form. So they keep stalling over a fairly long period of time. And I wrote this very highly classified chronology of dealing with Moscow both on chemical and biological weapons. Lots of talk, lots of signing of papers, no chemical weapons are getting destroyed. The U.S. is on its way -- we're destroying chemicals. On the biological weapons, at least the Russian civilian facilities seem to be closed. We have a lady from the Merck Company, Ellie Fagen, who becomes a close friend and provides me drawers and drawers full of information from all of her trips, because Merck was looking at investing in these facilities to make pharmaceuticals.

They were discovering they had made pathogens in these places; therefore they would not want to invest because once pathogens have been used you can not even consider using it as a pharmaceutical facility. Those CEO's of course are nothing more than former communist heads of the company or the institute, they now are Russians and they are not nationalized anymore and they just declare themselves CEO's of all these places. And now they're looking for investors. That will be short lived actually. It goes on for a while, but then the sort of new Russian system tightens up on that kind of thing. At State, as you may know, there's a Non-Proliferation Bureau. And one of the things I get involved in is working with some Soviets who are coming to look for investment, but are passing on information to me that a number of Soviet biological weapon scientists have already gone to Iran. And I was documenting that and we were trying to watch that carefully.

I'd mention here Doug Feith is a lawyer over at the Defense Department and he opposes a lot of our projects. He did not like our Australian effort, which was to stop proliferation by getting a group of Western allies together to stop proliferation. Feith said we're only going to do Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Libya. Now, I mentioned him because his name's going to come up again when he's one of the main players in the second Gulf War on the issue of whether there's chemical weapons in Iraq. He and I were at odds almost all the time in the interagency meetings. Now, we have moved into this new era where the Soviets, now Russians, have a thing called the commonwealth. And they're trying to hold all these nations that have left in this commonwealth, offering trade incentives and cross-border stuff trade. A lot of them aren't buying it obviously, the Baltics are not interested. A few of the others, I think Tajikistan and maybe Uzbekistan and a few were in. Georgia of course wants nothing to do with it. We had meetings here and in Moscow. One of them was the First Deputy Prime Minister who stated it best, that Russia was very weak. He said they had real problems around the country and needed Western goods. He pointed out there were no dishwashers in Moscow, for example. You couldn't find one. They just hadn't produced for their people. And so there was this cry from their side for us to get involved, provide aid, and there were some very senior people in Congress talking about

money to aid the development of the new Russia. And even help the commonwealth itself. This wasn't going over well with some people in Congress. There is a lot of criticism about our aid to Afghans. Because we're beginning to see Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who was the main leader getting CIA aid, and others as the beginning of the Taliban is starting to form. And there's criticism about the aid to the Afghans under Ronald Reagan and others. Stinger missiles were given to them. There's a lot of attempts going on to better U.S.-Soviet relations or Russian relations, but it's not going that well.

In Iraq, Saddam is considered still dangerous. I should note when I'm talking about these issues, I'm only talking about issues I got involved in. It means I was on an interagency committee dealing with the issues. My office was extremely busy writing classified reports. We get very busy because we're trying to track Saddam and there's a big controversy whether the Air Force had knocked out a lot of the scud missiles. Scuds started popping up all over the place, and he really fooled us and had hidden the scuds extremely well. So there was a big worry about the scud threat, in particular if they had chemical-biological or nuclear warheads. And the no-fly zone was successful; any airplanes go up, we shoot them down, any radars go on, we destroy them. And that's U.S., French, and British aircraft. We are doing a good job defending the Kurds. We wrote a lot about the Kurds. Then there's Provide Comfort to protect them, but the Shia and the Sunni are still fighting. In other words, Saddam on the ground is moving his ground forces down to fight in the southern part of Iraq against Shias. And Saddam, as he states a number of times as we get toward President Bill Clinton, said that Clinton was just going to be too busy as President to deal with him. Another issue begins to surface which I got involved in personally, that was the Gulf Syndrome of our troops. And I spent some time out with the Army medical experts and spent time on this subject because there were views that our troops were affected because we blew up these chemical weapon stocks.

The experts that I leaned on were in Texas. They called this multi-agent exposure. Which means Saddam had set 400 or some more fires in the oil fields and the refineries. Our troops were there in Gulf One getting sulfur in the air. The army bug repellent was very strong and probably bad for humans. They were also spraying all the time for sand fleas. And then it's a very toxic environment with all of the tanks and diesel fuel. They concluded this Gulf Syndrome was a result of, let's call it, "bad air." They really didn't buy the chemical weapons story. And it's interesting because the fellow in my office who was a Reserve Officer in the civil affairs, he went to Kuwait and was in charge of rebuilding Kuwait. He came back with that cough. I'd listen to him over there when he got back coughing all the time. And he certainly was nowhere near combat or the release of nerve gas.

There is an uprising in Iraq we were following very closely. Eventually in 2003 there are three main groups who are forming an opposition to Saddam Hussein -- the Shia obviously, the Kurds, and then some Sunnis. Saddam being really an outsider, he's in the Baath group, from Egypt and Syria. He's not mainstream Sunni. And that's when the name Chalabi comes up.

Q: Oh yes. I remember the press stories

CROCKER: He will become Vice President Cheney's choice to be President of the new Iraq after we leave. Chalabi throughout this whole thing is wanted in Lebanon for huge fraud that he committed. But he's supposedly getting all this money from the U.S. and getting all kinds of support for an opposition to Saddam Hussein. UN Security Council Resolution 688 would grant authority to conduct military operations under UN authority if there's significant repression. I mean this is of course kicked around not only in Iraq, but many right now in Syria. The question is whether the UN has a right if a leader is killing off his people to go in with military forces. I have a collection at home of people writing pro and con on whether we should have taken military action.

In 1992, Milošević sent forces across the northern part of Bosnia to go in and push the Croats out of Kriena, which is the northern part of Croatia. There are Serbs living there to establish the area. I remember writing every day in detail about the air fields there and who the actors were and the different groups who were fighting. And of course the Croats push back and they're trying to make plans to take it back. So we've got the start of a real good civil war going over here. And the ethnic cleansing is particularly horrendous up in Northern Bosnia, up in Banja Luka I particularly remember. I may have talked before about where they were putting them in these boxcars and taking all their jewelry and other possessions. It was just like we're back to World War II and the treatment of the Jews. Many people were killed. One of the things I remember was a great number of rapes reported. It seemed to be the Serbs, especially General Mladic, really got their jollies raping Muslim women.

Q: This is to dishonor the Muslims.

CROCKER: Yes, the Soviets did that in Afghanistan too. Disfiguring the Afghan Muslims. Some people questioning the data on how many were killed and raped. We had some pretty sensitive intelligence on this and could make our case in a briefing. And the one I happen to remember is how bad Mladic himself was bragging about how many women he raped. I can't believe they just finally caught him and they haven't even convicted him yet at the Hague. He was hiding in Serbia and they finally found him. We must have filled five or six cabinets full of traffic and reports. This was a big effort by my four person team. In my office we tended to integrate the political, the economic, and the military in our analysis. It's what made us kind of different in that we looked at everything we could and we also looked internationally. I had people doing nothing but arms trade to see who was selling weapons. So we were extremely involved in this period in doing lots of writing, lots of briefings, going to all kinds of meetings. Not so much travel as I remember. I did go to the NATO intelligence meeting, but that's about it. We were pretty much writing and analyzing all of this material and keeping the Secretary informed. And you've been to Serbia. You understand the complexities of this place. The United Nations put about 14,000 troops in after all this problem with Croatia. They put a large force in. There was a force in Macedonia also. The UN wanted to create a buffer to keep the Serbs out. Croatia was a long country. In terms of Macedonia, it was just to provide Macedonia security. In Bosnia, of course, it's basically a peacemaking mission;

but there's no peace, so they call it peacemaking and trying to keep the forces apart, unsuccessfully, of course. Serbia's forces are in Croatia and Bosnia. But Serbs lived all over Bosnia, especially the north, northwest part, and then another part down below Sarajevo. And there's a big area toward the center of Bosnia that's more Muslim. But it's really not just Muslim. I found writers that wrote pieces pointing out that in most families it would be like the wife is a Serb and the husband was a Croat or Muslim, it was all mixed up. A geographer from Portland, a professor, is the one who made it clear. I can't tell you how many people we talked to trying to learn about the Balkans and it was a geography guy that got us straight. He basically laid out the trade routes of the Ottoman Empire and how if you wanted a job with the Ottomans you became a Muslim, a secular Muslim. That's how you got a job. And a lot of these people really are not devout Muslims. There are some devout Muslims, but for the most part, no. This great fear in Europe that this Islamic state was going to rise was a little far-fetched. We had a brief period that I do remember later on where al-Qaeda and some bad people started coming in and Izetbegovic, the leader of Bosnia, had some bad people around him. And we got rid of them through pressure and negotiations. We did have a ceasefire in '92, but it doesn't last. And then the Muslims and the Croats within Bosnia say they want independence -- they don't want to have anything to do with the Serbs. 1992 is when the European Union said we recognize Bosnia-Herzegovina as an independent place. Then also, lastly in 1992, the press finally got into Bosnia. They hadn't been before and they were getting these pictures of these terrible atrocities in Banja Luka. That began to flood the airways and sort of lead into 1993.

Q: What happened to Montenegro?

CROCKER: They stayed independent until they aligned with the new Serbia after the war. I learned a lot from Alex Dragnich, particularly about Kosovo and the Albanians, which later in my life I'm going to get very involved in what we call the Albanian Question, which was Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania. The experts wanted to lump that together and other people went "oh, it's just about Kosovo." It was not about just one, it was about Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania according to experts from the embassy and others. I was carrying their message to a warning group out at CIA and arguing about Kosovo. We were trying to warn about Kosovo before it finally explodes and we got nowhere. I would have to say that generally up and down the line, so from the Secretary and the Assistant Secretaries we dealt with and PM and the political bureaus, I would say were pretty much all in line with the U.S. policy that it was the Muslims that were getting screwed. Everybody's pretty much on board because the Serbs were shelling Sarajevo and using snipers.

Q: And also Dubrovnik.

CROCKER: I should mention Dubrovnik here because I often use this as an example of what you can trust and not trust. On TV the flames could be seen at the old city of Dubrovnik. The Serbs, we knew, were shelling near Dubrovnik. Well, it turned out that this was a Croat hoax. They were burning tires then shooting pictures through the flames. It was a total fake that the Serbs had blasted the old city. But they certainly did threaten to

shell, the Serbs loved artillery. They were using artillery all over and particularly in six major UN safe areas, they just shelled the hell out of them. And I remember in my debate with our European Command people, they always seem to be favoring the Serbs, didn't like the Muslims. And we talked about that before. But I remember one safe area southeast of Sarajevo -- these people had been pinned down for months. They were down in these holes and the UN was trying to get them food and water, the Serbs were up on this hill. I remember writing about this in detail. And finally, there's a ceasefire and the Muslims are allowed to come out of their homes. And they all get together and went down the street and burned the Serbs homes which had been untouched. The Europeans and some of our American military criticized the Muslims. They had been bombarded for months.

Q: Well, there was a little bit of the hillbilly versus the flatlanders too.

CROCKER: Right, that's true. I want to get into the plans, we have all these maps to hand out. I looked at the original Cyrus Vance-Lord Owen map and it divided Bosnia into 10 parts. Mainly it gave 43% to Bosnia and the Croats get their area (that area taken by the Serbs). I remember looking at this map very carefully. Warren Christopher is Secretary of State and Bill Clinton is President. I'd had a long association with Christopher when he was Deputy back when Holbrooke was Assistant Secretary and I saw him a lot. He was a corporate lawyer, but often called as a compromiser and a negotiator. He would just call me when he was Deputy Secretary, just call me up and say, "Would you come up here and explain this to me?" Sometimes there'd be a CIA person there feeding him a bunch of garbage. And he'd say, "Gary, what's your take on this?" He would call me up there to counter what they were telling him. I remember this discussion with my boss pointing out Vance was a good friend of Christopher. We had to be careful how we go up there and tell him that Vance is wrong. Terrible idea. So I worked up a paper, which we then went up and presented. The problem was Vance hadn't looked at the ethnic maps. But the problem was I'm just going to use one example, the Serbs would have controlled all the water. Because the hydroelectric plants, water and everything were in Serbia, this meant these people were totally at the mercy of the Serbs with this plan. It didn't make sense from an actual living standpoint. Thinking you could just move everybody around and then you've got it all solved because you put all the Muslims in one place. And it neglected this whole issue of intermarriage. There was an assumption that these were all Muslims. The Bosnian Serbs had created their own area in Krajec that didn't exist before. But actually, when you really think about it, none of it existed before because Tito played these nationalities down. He played down Serb nationalism. He said you are Yugoslavs, all of you are Yugoslavs, I don't want to hear about Slovenia, Serbia, etc. We worked out a plan which we presented and eventually they did get rid of the Vance-Owen plan. I think we made the point to Christopher.

Q: Well, to give an example about the religious affiliation, I went to Bosnia in I think '94, '95 after the Dayton Accords to be an election server. And I was given a young man as an interpreter. We were all given this. I spoke some Serbo-Croatian, but I needed an interpreter. He was a Bosnian Muslim. And I can recall sitting around discussing his religion as we were eating sausages and drinking beer. And he said well, he'd never

really been in a mosque.

CROCKER: I had a really good team. I've got John Zerolis, a foreign service officer, who served in Croatia. He clashed with the ambassador.

Q: Peter Galbraith?

CROCKER: Yes.

Q: I've interviewed him.

CROCKER: He really was my expert on Croatia. And then I had a woman who served in Serbia. And I had this fabulous young lady from Stanford who had studied languages and eventually went to William and Mary and taught Balkan history. And plenty of others who were extremely knowledgeable within State. We had good people. And I would talk to academics and find people who really knew a lot. So by the time the Vance plan is laid out, I've already met with experts like the geographer I mentioned.

It seemed to me there was a lot of European input to the Vance Plan. They kind of didn't want an Islamic state. Owen had that European view: we have to make this come out so that there's not a strong Muslim state. They seemed focused on getting a political solution and stopping the fighting. It smacked of a European idea, which is divide it all up, make them all weak. You had Larry Eagleburger and others who were really clinging to try to keep Yugoslavia as an entity. But I think they realized by '93 that that was not going to happen.

We did start a no-fly effort over Bosnia. There was a movie where the U.S. pilot went down and the Serbs were after him. But we did offer the United Nations, who were in peril half the time, air protection. The UN can't just be driving convoys into Bosnia with all kinds of supplies and have either the Croats or the Serbs steal it all. They've got to have some kind of protection. They have to respect the blue helmet, which I said before. I'm very strong about that, that if we're going to send in international peacekeepers we should provide them with the backup and the backbone to do it.

Q: When we finally did send troops in, we set up some very effective artillery bases.

CROCKER: We started to provide intelligence to combat troops from the national level that we had never done before, ever. So this guy is right out there on a bridge and he's talking about Serbs and it's real time. We're not talking about any delays here. It's not like Vietnam. I mean we were totally connected to the hourly activities because of this whole new intelligence system that's going to go along with us being there in NATO. We have some pretty good weapons we had developed as well as incredible new communications and intelligence collection. But we don't have agents on the ground. I was very shocked at how long it took to get human resources. We were often flying in the dark and with Serbs showing up where they shouldn't be. Mladic was plonking around and meeting with our people, like General McKenzie and the UN commander, lying like

hell about “these damn Muslims”. The UN really takes a black eye here.

Q: When you say bad things?

CROCKER: 250,000 people have been killed, one thousand mosques destroyed, and 400,000 people moved to camps.

There’s UN corruption and black market and poor treatment of Muslims. The Russians play for the Serbs and let the Serbs get away with murder, literally. We also get a new Secretary of State and head of the Bureau of Intelligence. Mr. Mulholland, Baker’s old CIA briefer, was head of INR for a while and I think Phil Stoddard, took over, an old INR hand.

Tom Fingar is an academic who came to INR and worked his way up to be the Deputy Assistant Secretary. And he will later go on to be Negroponte’s second as the new national intelligence director. INR changes dramatically. The White House National Security Council sends us a person named Toby Gati. Toby Gati used to be the Deputy Head of the UN Association, a lobby group for the United Nations. Never been in the government, never been in intelligence, and never had a security clearance. And she’s a Russian and Hungarian expert. Her husband’s Hungarian and involved with people in Hungary. She does speak fluent Russian and right away becomes buddy-buddy with Kozyrev, the Foreign Minister in Moscow. What happens now at the Bureau of Intelligence is that we meet in the morning early and for years I was the first one to speak on what crisis is going on and of course the Balkans was one of my lead pieces every day. I’d come in very early and prepare because she was going up to the Secretary and brief him based on events based on what people around the room tell her. This was always taken very seriously and every head of INR used this system. Daniel Kurtzer, later Ambassador to Israel, was the deputy. Toby Gati was usually late. She hated military anything. She just took an instant dislike to me and anything I had to say. She would say, “Well, for a change this morning, why don’t we start with economics?” Or “For a change today, why don’t we start with Africa.” Well, this lasted not very long because Secretary Christopher wanted to know every morning what was going on in the Balkans. That was the number one issue. I remember she comes in one morning and says, “Gary, I guess we’re going to have to start with you.” You know, sort of the reality was setting in that military “stuff” was important. Bill Clinton was learning this lesson in the White House.

The administration came in with this idea: they were going to work on world poverty and other global issues.

Q: There was this whole incident where one of the staffers at The White House sort of showed disrespect, you might say to one of the top officers in the Army. This is a top officer in the Army.

CROCKER: It was sort of a throwback to the ‘60s. These people want to bring peace to the world with no weapons, no wars, and they want to solve global issues and poverty. She was real big on UN peacekeeping. That’s where we started our regular peacekeeping

journal that we put out every week on what every peacekeeper was doing all over the world. And it was very well read and received because nobody else did that. We actually sent it to all the allies and UN peacekeeping headquarters. Her deputy, Tom Fingar, wasn't all that enamored with military issues. He was shooting to get rid of my office. He said let's let DIA do the military analysis. I said the reason we've always had military analysis within INR and PM is it's too damn important and those people have budget issues and weapons development driving their analysis. We want good independent analysis. We had set up a crisis library. If something happened I can go in and pull a folder that's got classified material and every attaché that came out would bring maps for us of the cities. They were really good crisis folders. I'm obviously saying that because she's going to get rid of it. So we're kind of in a whole new world in that we have to basically sell our new boss and teach her as we go along. And she starts getting in trouble fairly soon because she was meeting with Kozyrev without notes. She was meeting with the Russian Foreign Minister at her house with no notes of the meeting. Bob Gallucci's wife was her head of the Special Operations Office that did liaison with other countries and some spooky work. I remember coming in quite a few times saying something and Gati would say, "oh, well I've got to get back to Kozyrev right away on this." And I said, "This is highly classified information. You can't tell Kozyrev about this. It's about his country and what they're doing. You can't go do that, you know?" "Well, I'll figure out some way," she said, you know. There were a number of times that she met with reporters. Once was Jeffrey Smith, for God's sake. I mean we are all very careful with Jeffrey Smith and what we tell him.

There was a big article in The Washington Post about Gati. Do you know who Frank Foldvary is? Frank was the Polish expert. During the whole Polish crisis he and I worked together. He was also having trouble with her activities with Hungary. Mark Palmer in EUR was *furious* about her and what she was doing with her husband in Hungary. She and I had a number of times where I or one of our Russian analysts had written something on Russia. She says, "Well, Christopher will believe that anything on Russia will be my point of view and written by me."

And I replied, "This is not the way it's done. Christopher should expect that your analysts are the ones that write these reports." But anyway, she made The Washington Post. Frank Foldvary had something to do with this and there's this big investigation. Because it turned out, number one, she had no security clearance. She'd come over from the NSC and our young new security officer just assumed she had clearances because she came from the NSC. And she was the Head of INR and sat with all of the other heads of intelligence, I mean access to everything. And she had no security clearance for almost a year actually. It was disgraceful. There was an investigation and eventually she slides back off to wherever she came from and Phyllis Oakley becomes the Assistant Secretary eventually. I don't remember exactly which year that is. But I do know I was doing Balkan analysis when Phyllis was there. And Phyllis is an old friend from back in the Afghan days and I worked with her husband who you know. To make it even worse, Strobe Talbott was the Deputy Secretary and he did not want to hear about the old Soviets biological weapons program. In this period I bring over the National Intelligence Officer for chemical/biological weapons. There's a National Intelligence Officer for just about

every major subject. Some of them are military, some of them are civilians, some of them are from State. I bring over the National Intelligence Officer and Sharon Watson who I mentioned had drafted the national intelligence estimate. We brought some very highly classified new intelligence since Frank Wisner signed that agreement in September 1992. We had a pretty scary story to tell him, but the worst thing we want to tell him is that we were absolutely sure that the Soviets had taken the smallpox from the depository in Moscow to Koltsovo and were making smallpox as a weapon. That should have been big news. And I remember Talbott stayed a couple minutes and says, "Well, I just don't want to embarrass Yeltsin. But you have anything on this, just send it up through Toby to me," and he walked out. And I had two more encounters with him on this subject where I was bringing him something and he said, "Well, I'm not interested. Show it to my assistant."

I said, "Well, she's not cleared and won't be." I said, "You're going to see this and the Secretary's going to see it and a couple other people in the building. But that's it. This is very sensitive." And then I remember saying, "Besides, in about an hour you're going to be at The White House and they'll be discussing this, so you might want to read it." But that was kind of the relationship I had with the Deputy who came out of the media and was famous because of the Khrushchev Remembers book and did speak Russian and had good relations with Russians. But he was on the policy kick that we've got to support Yeltsin, we don't want to bring up anything bad about Russia. Well, Yeltsin wanted to know what we knew, in my opinion. We suffered through, in my opinion, Toby Gati. I think Clinton becomes much more savvy on national security issues. He had a quick learning curve. Germs talks about how he really gets deeply involved and talked to lots of scientists and people in other countries.

Q: Today is the 6th of August, 2012 with Gary Crocker. And Gary, we've going to repeat ourselves, but would you talk again about the UN funding of chemical warfare?

CROCKER: OK. As we're getting ready now to go into 1994 and we'll summarize 1993, and one of the interesting factors we've noticed about the chemical/biological weapons business is that it keeps coming up year after year. You think you have it solved and then it pops up again or people lose interest. Well, this is the case again in 2012. There's a lot of interest in Syrian chemical/biological weapons and they're moving them around and people are beginning to worry about them using them against the people fighting the Syrian government or NATO/U.S./UN troops should they get involved. And then beyond that there's articles today talking about maybe they'll give them to other people or al-Qaeda or somebody could get a hold of them. So that's a big issue today in 2012. Well, starting back in the mid-'80s.

Q: To put it in context, we're going through a major revolt in Syria. Which started out rather slowly, but is getting bigger and bigger and bigger. There's been more and more defections and it looks like the Assad regime is coming to its end. But in the last couple of weeks, chemical weapons have become front page news because there were threats from the Assad regime and by commentators that the son has a major chemical weapon

arsenal and could turn it loose on his own people.

CROCKER: First the Soviets helped Syria and then they were working themselves and making nerve agents, VX in particular, to put on top of scud missiles. And they were also in the biological weapons business. And a lot of this, at least some people feel, was made possible because originally UNESCO went into Syria and helped build this huge research facility, providing what they felt were learning tools for Syrians to get educated, particularly in computers. And of course I asked a UN official about it. He said, "Well, we can't get in there anymore because it's a highly classified military facility." And of course we knew through various sources that they were doing chemical weapons, biological weapons, and some nuclear work and missiles work of pretty high caliber, very impressive actually. With some help from the outside. But they just got better and better, the Syrian scientists and engineers. But as time went along -- particularly after Persian Gulf II, 2003, 2004 time frame, a lot of the attention went off of this, the young Assad takes over from his father, some people thought maybe he'll be a reformer. Chemical and biological weapons in Syria was not a major discussion point until later. But all of a sudden there it is and it comes back. To me, having worked on global chemical/biological weapons issue since 1974, I'm not surprised it comes back because these issues do.

Later from 2004 to 2006, I'm going to go to Libya and inspect the chemical/biological/nuclear sites. We neutralized the Libyan threat. Iraq isn't finished. There were four pieces to our puzzle starting in the mid-'80s, and that was Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya. We've destroyed Iraq's chemical and biological weapons. Libya is over, not an issue anymore. Iran is still a big issue.

I can tell you that my colleagues and I were very busy doing a lot of briefing. To be cynical about it, even our own army and others in the U.S. didn't want to pay attention to what a group of us in the inter-agency community had talked about as a problem and a threat in the early days focusing on the Soviets and Eastern Europe, and later on these other countries. It was in 1984 that we wrote a paper to the Secretary saying there's a lot more countries with chemical weapons. And we've discussed that through time here. Now we're coming into a very interesting period in 1993-1994. We don't get a chemical weapons treaty until 1997. We had this 1992 meeting with the Soviets to say we've got BW under control, although many of us didn't believe that. And we've even gone and spent time in the Soviet Union looking at their destruction capability to destroy chemical weapons, very expensive. We were going to spend somewhere in the neighborhood of 10 billion dollars I think to destroy our chemical stocks. When Clinton comes in, he's very disappointed that everything's moving so slow on implementing both the biological and the chemical destruction programs. In 1990 we had gone there and inspected the chemical weapons sites and tried to do an inventory, but they still haven't destroyed a large part of the inventory. We didn't get to see the eight BW military facilities in the Soviet Union we wanted to see. Some in the U.S. are saying we shouldn't believe those Russians. Meanwhile, the Balkan war gets nastier.

Q: I've had people who served there talking about interviewing victims of Serb atrocities.

CROCKER: Milošević was so clever and so cunning. We would have border violations or the United Nations was monitoring what was going on at border crossings, monitored trucks coming in and out. And you could never pin Milošević down. He was very clever in sort of directing everything but his hand wouldn't show. I mean you had some experience there. We were working so hard to get evidence, any kind of intelligence evidence that we could pass up the line that says Milošević directly ordered atrocities.

Q: How did you work it?

CROCKER: He was just very clever. He didn't use the phone. He was telling people what to do, but there was no way we could hear about it. His security was extremely good. I remember reviewing this after the conflict's over and, and how little we could get. He was obviously telling Mladic what to do and there was no doubt Mladic was there openly commanding the forces that killed the 8,000 Muslims in Srebrenica at the safe area. Eventually Mladic is going to go to the Hague and be charged.

I wanted to note here as we started, I went back and I found some very profound statements at the very beginning of the Clinton administration that were so true and showed why my group of people were going to have such a hard time. The first was by Woolsey, the new CIA Director. This has become an extremely well known quote: "We have slain a large dragon," meaning the Soviet Union, "Now we live in a jungle filled with poisonous snakes and the dragon was easier to keep track of." Which is so true. We monitored everything in the Soviet Union: units and missiles, tanks, and we followed this threat and we had all kinds of think tanks doing projections on what would happen if his forces attacked NATO. We don't even know yet about al-Qaeda. They begin to show up in Bosnia. But we do know we have a terrorism problem. We know we have some really bad dictators. We have leaders like Qadhafi backing all kinds of terrorism in North Africa and he's supporting insurgencies. The Iranians have Hezbollah and Hamas. Everything is kind of messy and not easy to pin down and very difficult for defense to try and project what kind of force they're going to need to fight. One good example, which is pertinent today, is that Iran was building all of these small boats, and so was China. All kinds of small boats, thousands, that could come swarming out after your destroyers and your carriers. Well, the Navy did make adjustments to have guns that shoot down at small boats. Of course in the State Department we have a very similar problem, and in intelligence, particularly over these next years. I'm going to be involved in interagency meetings about how we'd redirect our resources, our satellites, how we collect information. And it's going to be a big issue for me in these years. And there's considerable debate within the intelligence community, particularly later on, about how you prioritize these threats and prioritize collection, and huge debates about that subject.

Q: Gary, just a quick question. At one point Soviet weapons were your thing. But what was your job now?

CROCKER: Yes, I wanted to talk about that. My office was just about 26 people now and we started it in '74 and we have people from other agencies and Foreign Service and Civil Service Officers, we have this mix. We are riding extremely high as we move into

1993-94. We had received all kinds of awards for the Gulf War, for the coup in the Soviet Union, and for the Balkans. We'd been the center of all kinds of analysis and briefings. Every time somebody left, I did a cartoon for them. This one happened to be of course Bosnia. I used mostly Doonesbury characters and then these would be put up in the office. I don't know if you knew who Martha Mautner was.

Q: We've interviewed Martha.

CROCKER: Well, when Martha retired the Assistant Secretary asked me to do a cartoon for Martha, this is it.

Q: Oh, these are wonderful cartoons.

CROCKER: And that's my favorite one actually. My very favorite cartoon I ever did was for Martha who was a real character. These are some other examples. This is my guy who did all kinds of arms trade. And this, my girl who did the Balkans.

I'm getting to your question now. So this (cartoon) was the entire office. I had not only some Foreign Service and Civil Service people, but I had a Naval Captain and Air Force Lt. Colonel, I had a National Security Agency analyst on the team and I had a Middle East expert from DIA who you hear of these days. Jeff White is still quoted in The Post.

Q: I've interviewed him.

CROCKER: This analyst here in the camouflage was named Randal Elliot, who as a reservist was in charge of reconstituting Kuwait, which was pretty interesting. I had a CIA analyst do Chechnya. Well, I'm talking about him in '94, '95. If you looked at this big cartoon and all the people, we're not doing a lot of Soviet weapons analysis. We're getting out of that whole business.

As we move into 1994 I'm going to be taking an important trip to Russia, which I'll talk a little bit about. In '94 we're very occupied with the new republics and what Russia's up to. I just talked about my office because we're heading downhill unfortunately. 1993 is a bit of a disaster for President Clinton in many ways because there are people hollering, we have to get our base with NATO solidified, we have to be doing something in Europe with the Balkans. Tony Lake was at the National Security Council. He was dubious that Christopher had Holbrooke become the Assistant Secretary for Europe and Russia. And that Holbrooke was moving along with some pretty provocative views. He wanted to put 20,000 NATO troops into the Balkans. He really didn't go along with the Vance-Owen plan. And Holbrooke had his own ideas. But Holbrooke, as I remember, he wanted to be Secretary of State so he's probably very disappointed that Christopher is now the Secretary. I did go with Holbrooke a number of times to brief Christopher. But I didn't get involved with Holbrooke on the Balkans like I had in previous years. But he's very much the center of the debate about what to do in this period about the Balkans. I mean there's quite a debate going on here whether we should or shouldn't get involved. Is it our business, there's the, you know, Europeans that are complaining that there's going to be a

Muslim state right in the middle of Europe and they're unhappy.

But within the Soviet Office of INR, the Political Office, there were a couple of pretty hard lined people who were writing very hard things about Yeltsin and that the Russians were still acting like Soviets.

Q: You mentioned a trip to Russia in 1994.

CROCKER: As you know, we have Abkhazia, we have Ossetia, we have Chechnya, we have Ingushetia, and we have Tajikistan. All of these places are unsolved problems. They declared independence. Chechnya declared independence in 1991, for example. Belorussia and a few others are still in what they call the Commonwealth, which I'm about to go see firsthand. There's a lot of problems on just how this new arrangement is all going to work out and what the Russians are up to in these republics along their border. And you have tension in the Baltics, with Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania questioning whether the Russians can still keep their big naval bases there or their troops. In the Ukraine, we have the naval base in the Crimea. I actually don't remember how I even got on the big international delegation with Europeans and Japanese. Most of them were parliamentarians. Two of us went from the Bureau of Intelligence, the other being John Parker. There may have been some other Americans, including military. But surprisingly thin on the American side. We were sent to Moscow to hear their pitch that they wanted to have blue helmets, UN sanctioned blue helmets to go into these former Soviet states to be peacekeepers where there was conflict. First we go out to the UN observers military training bases near Moscow. This was the training facility with a Russian general in charge. We went through all the classrooms to see how they trained them on the treaties and the rules. It was a very impressive academic facility with a good purpose. There were people who had been on peacekeeping and observer missions. They had actually been with Russians in places like Cambodia, for example. The United States even provided this school with trucks. So we had a connection to this school. And out of that little session comes my favorite story, which I've told hundreds and hundreds of times. The general sat at the end of the table and he's a very typical Russian general with big jowls. And I actually knew him from Geneva and I knew he spoke English. So it's getting kind of, I would say maudlin or sappy, everyone's going around the table toasting to their Russian comrades. I had no idea why I did this, but I got up and at this point mentioned this person running for president who wants to take back Alaska and other wild views. He's really way out there. And so I stood up and said, "General, I'm very tired of this person and I just want to put you on notice that if you ever touch Alaska we'll wipe your damn country off the face of the map." You have to consider, these are a lot of humorless diplomats. There's dead silence. And I'm watching the general and I said, "However, we might make a deal on Texas." And he's smoking a cigarette and he's pretending he has to have the translator tell him what I said.

And then he looks down at the table and he says (*in a very deep voice*), "Mr. Crocker, would that include the Dallas cheerleaders?"

Q: I can imagine that general.

CROCKER: I don't know if you remember the famous walk in the woods by Nitze during the nuclear missile talks?

Q: Ah yes.

CROCKER: I actually went with the general on a long walk around a lake and here's what he said. "I'm having a hard time funding this right now." He said, "You are going to go next down to see the 24th Division and you're going to go see the military training for peacekeeping." And he said, "Please don't confuse what you're going to see with what I do here," he said, "because it won't look anything like peacekeeping. Be aware of what you're going to see and realize I'm having a real problem even keeping this school going." This is 1994. Yeltsin is in charge and all these new things are going on. But it's obvious there is still a hard line military out there that Yeltsin hasn't got control of. We go down to see all this training in the Caucasus. It was the North Caucasus. The general in charge is a well-known general to all of us. I mean we've all known him, read about him. He was a very famous officer. And he personally gave all the briefings on the North Caucasus, which included Chechnya, which hasn't really boiled yet, but it's getting there.

Q: Chechnya was legally part of Russia.

CROCKER: It's actually part of the Russian Federation. They decided though when everybody else got out they declared independence. It's a totally Muslim country and Yeltsin refused to negotiate. There was no negotiation and some pretty hard line military action is already getting underway to tamp them down. In 1994 they start some pretty hard line military action mostly after we leave. The general gives us this big pitch that these are all bandits and terrorists and bad people and Russia has to deal with this problem in the Caucasus which is part of Russia. He ignores the fact Stalin moved all those people there a long time ago and so many people have died there during the repression in the North Caucasus. The general gives us a pretty detailed briefing with maps. Then we go see the training. It was impressive. It was like a SWAT team/delta force unit, including brutal hand-to-hand combat type training. We went to a big field exercise where they had border crossing points. We watched border guard people, checking refugees, and we watched this pretty long exercise. Their idea of peacekeeping was mainly shoot everybody and then sort out who were the bad guys. It was beyond anything that the U.S. would do. We did some traveling as a delegation to see their planning. We got to sit in the old Warsaw Pact headquarters when we returned to Moscow.

Q: Where the Warsaw Pact leaders met?

CROCKER: Yes. There were big chairs and this huge table. I could have been sitting in the chair of one of those leaders. And it's now called the Commonwealth, which is pretty loose, I mean because not too many countries have joined. It was their idea to keep all these countries under their control.

We get a whole series of briefings. A couple of briefings were by the Russian puppets, if you will, from Abkhazia and Ossetia talking about how Georgia should belong to Russia and Russian peacekeepers are needed there because those Georgians can't be trusted. You get the flavor of the kind of thing we had to hear. And then they went right down the line. There's a briefing on Tajikistan, I happen to remember the National Security fellow. He was a very senior National Security person who said "do you Americans want to send troops to Tajikistan? I didn't think so, we need to have Russian troops go in there with blue helmets to keep the peace in Tajikistan." These briefings state how the Russians still had to be involved and provide for the peace. Finally it comes down to the finale: the National Security Council fellow said, "Well, you all know that these (16 countries that escaped) countries are all our brothers and sisters and they will one day return to the Soviet Union." He didn't say Russia. He is saying that they will all return to Moscow where all truth comes from. Then the question is put to us and our speaker was a woman parliamentarian from England. Quite outspoken. She stood up and said, "I want to make it very clear on behalf of our delegation, that we are not going to condone Russian imperialism by giving you blue helmets." And it was a very short statement. She didn't go on and on. Then she went on to cite the UN charter on peacekeeping. The rule for peacekeeping is very clear that a country bordering a state cannot be in the peacekeeping force. I mean that's always been the rule, that's hard and fast. Well, in this case they are asking for blue helmets to police states right on their border. It was a fascinating trip and we learned a lot about the attitudes in Moscow.

Q: Were you getting any feedback from the border state leaders about how they felt about this?

CROCKER: No, none of them were present. We didn't see any of the new leaders. Only those fellows from Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Q: I think Abkhazia was actually part of Georgia, weren't they at that time?

CROCKER: Yes. If you look at the map up here in the northwest corner it's Abkhazia and then over here is South Ossetia. As you know, several years ago the Russian troops came in and ended the discussion pretty quickly. Georgia was complaining back then to us and others about the Russians invasion. The Ukrainian government worked it out so the Russians kept their fleet down there in the Black Sea.

Q: There was an international agreement that the Ukrainians give up their nukes and the Russians would stay home.

CROCKER: Yes. They worked that out. And the Russians were able to keep their base in the Baltic. I would say there was just no doubt that Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and others who had separated had no intention of going back and they didn't want any Russian troops. It's actually just before this that the young lady, Paula Pickering, who I'd hired from Stanford. (she actually lived right around the corner from me), got picked to go to the big meeting of Yeltsin with all these new leaders. They had a big meeting somewhere in Central Asia. She came back with lots of information and her impression of the whole

process. She is a full professor teaching Balkan affairs at William and Mary. We switch from monitoring the Soviet Union militarily to my people refocused on what's happening in each of these new republics and what the Russian troops were up to. We're spending a lot of time analyzing the breakup of the Soviet Union and how it's playing out. And we're trying to predict in many ways how this is all going to work out. The Baltics were solid because the west immediately grabbed onto the Baltics and made sure they were going to stay with Europe and Russia was not going to mess around with them. Then we moved to Chechnya and the fighting there. I got a senior analyst from the CIA, somewhat of a controversial analyst, very outspoken. I had known him for years. The CIA sent him over on a rotation and he did nothing but Chechnya. We had significant intelligence on the fighting and what the Russians were up to there. It occupied a lot of his time.

Q: OK, what was our attitude towards this? I mean obviously we were concerned about Russian borders. But Chechnya was not a bunch of freedom fighting people, these were Islamic fundamentalists to a certain extent, weren't they?

CROCKER: I have to back the train up a little bit here because it's later that they go to Moscow and occupy the movie theater and they killed a bunch of people and they blew things up. That's later. They're not Islamic fundamentalists. Actually, they're Sunnis and somewhat secular in many ways. I remember it was the President of the United States (or maybe Strobe Talbott) compared Yeltsin to Lincoln. And there was all of this nonsense that this was a civil war not something the U.S. should be messing around in. This was Yeltsin's trying to solve a problem. He's got terrorists and bandits in Chechnya. Brzezinski, in an op-ed, called this in 1995 the "Moscow's Accomplice".

Q: What's the date of the op-ed?

CROCKER: Sunday, June 8th, 1995. And it's called "Moscow's Accomplice" by Brzezinski. Basically, what he is saying is you got to be kidding me. The Chechnyans are the victims here. Russia is just stomping all over them with troops. To call Yeltsin a Lincoln and comparing this to our civil war is absurd. The Civil War was fought on American soil between two American groups fighting over issues. In this case, it's a country that declared its independence and is not made up of Russians. (it has some Russian population obviously) Communist leaders have been put in there to run it. If you go back to the history of Chechnya, as Brzezinski does, and I did also, this is where those thousands and thousands of people were sent by Stalin. Chechnya has been treated horribly all the way back to the tsars. To compare it to the Civil War is just an absurdity. So I'm with Brzezinski here and I actually had trouble because actually the cartoon about that particular analyst shows the White House complaining about my analyst in INR who keeps writing all this hard line material about the Russians. The White House is defending Yeltsin. My analyst is writing about what terrible things the Russians are doing to the Chechnyans and it's not being appreciated at some levels.

Q: Well, did you have the feeling that Strobe Talbott, being a Moscow oriented guy, had taken the Moscow point of view and was passing this on to the President?

CROCKER: Yes, you probably hit it right to say the Moscow point of view, but also the view that the old Cold War warriors need to stop bringing up the bad stuff because we need to support Yeltsin and make sure that he survives. His point of view would be that he's not secure yet, has 11 time zones, still a lot of communists, and the others who are going to try to throw Yeltsin out and get back to the good ol' days, being really unhappy that all these republics have left and the great Soviet Union is a shell of its former self.

Q: How did INR relate to the Russian Desk and all? I mean were you singing the same hymns? I mean was there a problem there or were they seeing the same world?

CROCKER: I can answer it this way. Within the Soviet Desk and in Moscow, there was great frustration in this period and I was asked to chronicle this in a highly classified document for the Assistant Secretary for PM. Pickering was ambassador and very frustrated. The Foreign Minister promised that the paper which was supposed to go to the UN with the details on chemical/biological weapons programs. It's a form called UN Form-F. We'd already submitted ours to the UN. And he'd keep going in there and they would say we'll get it over to you tomorrow. This went on for years. We've had some good cooperation internationally on weapons proliferation. But no chemical weapons were destroyed. We wondered are they for real? Are they ever really going to do all the things they signed up for in the treaties? They're also not being helpful in the Balkans.

Q: They were over there running their brigades and cozying up to Iran.

CROCKER: Right, that wasn't helpful. I do remember that for sure. We're now going to move to 1995 with Holbrooke and the Dayton Accord.

Q: Today is 13th of August, 2012 with Gary Crocker. And I'll turn it over to you.

CROCKER: 1995 is a very interesting year in the Balkans. And I'm going to say a few words first about my office. Because at this point my situation in the Bureau of Intelligence has changed dramatically. Whereas back for quite a few years now that we've been talking about, I would have been balancing Soviet Union affairs, chemical biological weapons, the Balkans, even some Middle East issues. And I had an office where I had people working the whole globe, plus arms trade and other things. So it's quite a change at this point in time as we go into the next few years. As I have mentioned the new Assistant Secretary, Toby Gati, was not really keen on doing a lot of military analysis. There's a move afoot that's been going on now as we come up to 1995 to break my office up, take those people that I have working for me and move them over into the regional offices and the strategic office, which I've been in competition with since 1974. They pretty much take all the chemical/biological weapons issues, which I had handled almost single-handed for years in INR. Those people got moved over to the strategic shop and that decision was made as early as when Dick Clarke was Deputy Assistant Secretary under Ambassador Mort Abramowitz. I've lost any mandate to be working on all of those things like Syria and Iran and Iraq and Libya. I was not happy this happened, but it did. I

still spent time on Russia. But Russia from a military analysis point of view is not quite so interesting anymore as we move into the mid 1990s. Their military's deteriorating. The big subjects are economics, investment, political, and who's going to come out on top, how to deal with Yeltsin, all of that sort of thing. I still have four people working for me on nothing but the Balkans and we're very wrapped up in more than just doing our analysis and following the fighting. It was a lot of work in 1995 on the balance of forces. At this time we're talking about the Serbs using heavy artillery around Sarajevo. They're still UN forces in 1995. But they are starting to fire back at the Serbs and there's a whole series of agreements trying to get a ceasefire. And in one of those I found the original document that I mentioned to you. It's so confusing and there's so many different views whether we should be involved or not, whether we should send forces in, we should just let the UN do it or we should pull the UN out. I have a number of documents on the different views at this period, but the one that struck me was the one signed by Karadzic, who was the Bosnian-Serb leader and Mladić, the well-known general who was supposedly Bosnian-Serb, but all the evidence later shows that he was working for Milošević. Former President Jimmy Carter had gone there in December 1994 to sign this agreement, which is a cessation of hostilities and a comprehensive peace plan. I don't know whether you remember this or not, but this was going to be the great agreement, Vance-Owens having failed. I'm pretty connected by this time with people in the political office, people who were going on these various meetings in Yugoslavia. And whenever they got back we debriefed them. I was a part of an interagency policy committee on Bosnia and they said this is information from people who were there. Carter kind of charged over there not all that prepared to negotiate you may remember. What this Foreign Service Officer told me was it was kind of embarrassing because it was clear he didn't know who these leaders were -- the Croats, the Serbs and the Bosnians. It was a little embarrassing that he didn't actually really understand the history of the Balkans.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: I could say this thing wasn't worth the paper it was written on, because the fighting continues and it gets worse and '95 is going to be a very bloody year. My office is tracking in detail the fighting. We were writing reports every day trying to assess who did what to whom. There's charges about atrocities on all sides. I mean certainly the Croats were very brutal when they kicked the Serbs out of Krajina, up in the northern part of Croatia. And the Muslims on occasion were pretty cruel too, particularly when they finally were able to crawl out of their holes and go after the Serbs who'd been shooting at them for a long time. It was the opinion in our office that the Croats and Muslims don't even come close to the cruelty of the Serbs, especially the siege of Sarajevo, all of the snipers and the artillery, all the constant barrages of UN safe areas -- Tuzla, Goražde, Srebrenica, Bihac and Sarajevo. And they kept the pressure on. These safe areas were UN protected, yet, they kept bombarding them.

Q: And not secretly, the whole world watched.

CROCKER: I remember every day just being angry that we're not doing something about this, especially the real bad one at Srebrenica. Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz, voices

from the past, called their paper “Before We Send in Peacemakers.” This is talking about the United States getting involved in NATO. They wrote in several venues we shouldn’t be getting involved, we don’t have an end game nor plan. How long will our forces be there? Why are we supporting a Muslim state? All this kind of thing. This was just one of many that I found. The AEI, American Enterprise Institute, wrote papers. But probably one of the best was the U.S. Institute for Peace got a whole bunch of important people together, and I was there for this. Another thing I should mention. In 1995, I attended a lot of conferences -- they were held all over Washington -- on conflict resolution, how to solve the problem of the Balkans. This was one of the ones I went to, which talked about the military balance in Bosnia and fairly well known people gave their views on how we can solve the Bosnian problem. This will become important. They cite the need to establish cooperation amongst the parties and set up a security system. Some said we need robust combat forces and police forces. And all kinds of economic cooperation to make it prosperous again. Everyone was talking about a future role for NATO. But I think the real zinger that I found was from our GAO, Government Accounting Office. It sent a big report to Congress in May of 1995. In general, it’s an update on the situation. It basically said the UN had failed. I went through it in some detail. \$ 3.3 billion that had been spent so far, with a number of resolutions, many ceasefires. It summarizes everything, shows how the Serbs had broken the ceasefire time and again and they didn’t seem serious. Toward the end it says we’re going to have to look to different solutions, different ways of getting this done. NATO did some air attacks, artillery attacks, and some blockades. They cite a huge number of human rights violations. They talk about Bosnia, Croat, and Serb atrocities. They say we’re going to have to have a war tribunal for all the people who suffered.

Q: Is this after Srebrenica?

CROCKER: No. Actually, that might have put a little more meat on the anti-Serb bone.

Q: Well, we were trying so hard to tar both sides. I mean, I’ve talked to people who were Serbian and Croatian and they said there were more atrocities by Croatians.

CROCKER: My office was hard over about how the Muslims were getting the raw end of the deal. We’re about to encounter this new problem facing the president and Europe that the Mujahideen (not really al-Qaeda yet), or radical Islamic factions were seeping into the Muslim leadership and taking over from Izetbegović. We told Izetbegović not to let these Islamic radicals gain power while we’re giving him weapons. At least the administration was favoring helping the Muslims. Some of the Europeans were dead set against it.

Now, this is one of the things that I found interesting. Some Congressmen were saying we have to get the UN out of there. Srebrenica happens in July, actually. I was reading some reports years later, people trying to describe who was the guilty party there. I have a cable where the Dutch were themselves saying this was our fault, but should we have stood and fought to the last Dutchman?

The UN as a whole had established these safe areas, in my view, but didn’t protect them.

I found that there was a debate a year or more later with the French saying amongst themselves that it had been a French general and the Brits saying they should protect Srebrenica as a safe area. A French general who was in charge of the UN force was arguing that the UN should stay neutral and not get involved fighting Mladić. There was a lot of confusion about who was doing what. They set them up and they let them get shelled. What I remember, detailed accounts, there is a person present from the Christian Science Monitor who was there and wrote a book about this. He said Mladić told the Dutch commander, who they took hostage by the way along with the Dutch unit, was that they were going to protect the 8,000 men and boys that they took away.

Q: It was a while before the facts were clear.

CROCKER: He said he was going to protect them. And of course, he killed them all. Then I read a cable that had been sent to me, which was saying there were plenty of early signs that Mladić was up to this back in February, and they were ignored. The people that were starving in Srebrenica, had been trying to get the Dutch to do something for them. Just looking at this cable that I had at the time saying there were plenty of people saying, "We need to protect Srebrenica." It goes on to say all this is ignored. There was absolutely no NATO intention of making any kind of air strikes to protect the people or attack Mladić's forces. I would say, looking at the history of what happens, the Serbs probably made a huge mistake here in that Srebrenica galvanized opinion and it certainly gets Clinton on a footing to try to come up with a plan to send forces in. It's going to be the end of '95 before that's going to happen. There's a lot of criticism of the administration. You remember Mort Abramowitz who was my boss.

Q: Yes. The Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Intelligence.

CROCKER: Yes. He comes up with a scathing criticism of the administration. He says we're too slow and he has some problems with the plans. And the main problem is the end game is bothering everybody and they're bringing Vietnam into the discussion. Some are saying there's no way to end this conflict with military forces. They say we have to negotiate a settlement and make compromises and give the Serbs what they want in some cases. But there wasn't a reluctance to use air power, which we're already starting to do, even in late '94. But they don't want any U.S. troops in there. And most of these critics are also saying we can't pull the UN out, it'll be a disaster. And then there's the issue of the arms embargo, a number of congressmen are pushing Clinton to drop the arms embargo on the Bosnians. I remember we were writing reports at this time about what weapons the Bosnians had and what the Serbs and the Croats have. They were a little rudimentary because we didn't have that much good information quite frankly. But the upshot of this was that the President absolutely refused to lift that arms embargo. Oddly enough, there's a sort of a red herring that comes along from Senators Bob Dole and Jesse Helms. They sent letters to the President saying we're going to call for investigations of the administration because they're secretly allowing arms to go from Iran to Izetbegović and to the Bosnian Muslims. They threatened hearings. I bring this up because we obviously got the question in our office.

Q: Was it true?-

CROCKER: That CIA was secretly getting Iran to provide weapons? Absolutely not. Bob Dole was the main instigator, but the problem wasn't Iran. What I remember is that we did have pretty good information that we were reporting that these Mujahideen had slipped in and were helping Izetbegović. And the question was how complicit was Izetbegović, the Head of Bosnian-Muslims. Confusion here between that happening and then the Los Angeles Times reporting that the U.S. is covertly getting Iran involved. I mean given that we're in Middle East peace negotiations at the time and one of the problems is Hezbollah and Hamas supported by Iran. There were U.S. naval bombardments. They were firing tomahawks on the Serbs. We were bombing, we were doing no-fly operations without any declaration of no-fly, as far as I could find anyway. I mean in May we were bombing the Serbs. And then the Serbs pull another bad one. They took 400 UN peacekeepers hostage. Eventually, they negotiated them back. But some of their actions here I think lead to a somewhat surprising President Clinton letter. I have the actual first letter from Izetbegović. I got the actual letter he sent saying we need help, we're really in a desperate situation. In May of 1995, he sends a letter to the President before Srebrenica. He's saying there's another crisis where the Serbs kill a lot of people up in the northeast near Tuzla. And he says, "It's time for your country to step in. We expect that you're not going to yield to all of this blackmail from Milošević and the violence." First the President is preparing this letter to Congress saying I'm going to send the troops. Before that happens we have what I consider one of the greatest foreign policy coups of all time. Holbrooke, who has been Assistant Secretary for Europe, in essence sort of the main person dealing with this whole issue is in the Balkans, he's been very active and there's been a lot of meetings to bring the parties together. I've relied on a Foreign Service Officer who was in the room at the time to tell me what happened. He got them to come together. He had Tudjman, Milošević, and Izetbegović. He told them that we just aren't going to take this anymore. He said you will be going to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio and we're going to get a peace agreement and we're going to stop this. I was trying to think who do I know in our history who could have pulled that off? Because he basically took three leaders and gave them instructions on what they were going to do. And someone who was there told me it was a real tough meeting. He was not pulling any punches. It was a direction from Dick Holbrooke that said this is what's going to happen. They actually go there. I think it was the Wall Street Journal that said that the Presidents of Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia were held captive at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base until they agreed, at least in nominal terms, that Bosnia-Herzegovina will remain a single sovereign state. And that's exactly what happened. And I use this example many times talking to students about foreign policy because it was quite a unique situation. It's my understanding, from what I've heard, that Milošević tried to escape. And they actually blocked him with an airplane. That's a lot of chutzpah to tell these leaders, "You will go and you're not leaving until we get an agreement." It's a pretty unique piece of diplomacy in my opinion. I've always considered it a very important one. And it's a fairly good agreement. In many of the documents I read after Dayton citing that it was a good agreement and one that you could build on and work with and negotiate, that it was much better than any of the previous plans. And so that leads us to the Clinton letter, which I read again. It's November 1995,

because I wanted to try and remember where we were at the end of this year as we reached a point where it looks like after all of the heat that Clinton had taken all during this year and everything I could read that he actually sends a letter to Congress and says that he could do it. It wasn't a War Powers Act, but he was going to include Congress in this and advise them of his plan. He lays out his whole plan. He points out that we're going to send forces in there, we're going to lay the groundwork to carry out Dayton. If I am right, this letter is arriving and Dayton is not quite done yet.

Q: But you could see the shadow of its conclusion.

CROCKER: Yes, because he concludes "We're laying the groundwork for the current negotiations in Dayton." So that was kind of interesting that he's gone ahead and sent this letter to Congress saying here's my plan and here's what we're going to do and here's the sequence and the timing. I think the troops had already been picked, because I'd read a piece by the commander who had been put in charge and which units were going to go there. And it's going to be a NATO-led implementation force. And Clinton, "Until I have a solid Dayton Accord, and I'm sure the parties agree, I can't tell you when we're going to leave," which was the big issue. They're all about the exit strategy? How long will our troops be there? He basically doesn't tell them. And he says, "Based on our current planning we think about 12-14 months. But I can't make that final judgment." So he left that door open. He laid out the mission, it would not be a UN peacekeeping force, meaning it was under NATO rules of using force if necessary. And they'll have robust rules of engagement. He mentioned there would be a Russian Brigade involved, that Russia will be a part of this. But Russia would remain in command of their own forces, but under tactical control of the U.S. Which I thought was interesting that they got the Russians to agree to that. He had listed the negotiations to do something about the weapons in the area. He talks about economic plans, investment, the political arrangements between a Croat-Bosnian federation. I mean he pretty much hits all of the issues people had been yakking about all year. He's also got the humanitarian issues and the resettling refugees issue covered, particularly up in the northern part of Bosnia. And he seems to have gotten the allies in line here. There were still some French problems. The French are still opposed to some of this because they're really adamant on not having a Muslim state.

Q: Did they give any rationale for this?

CROCKER: I have to believe, from what I read after this period, that there's a big division between Chirac, who was for using military power against Mladić and the Serbs and the French Head of the UN Forces who was against that view.

Q: Do you have any feel for where politically -- conservative, liberal -- this debate fell?

CROCKER: In France? Not a lot. I mean leading up to this point, I was really just absolutely unhappy with the French UN forces and what they had done, particularly when they let the Muslim leaders get killed by the Serbs. They just stood aside. There seemed to be, maybe a little bit like our own country because Washington was not on the same

sheet of music with our U.S. European command who did not like the Muslims and feared a Muslim state and liking the Serbs militarily. I think a lot of that went by the board with Srebrenica. Anybody that was praising Mladić and the Serbs and saying the Serbs needed a fair shake, that view pretty well died. And if you remember, going back to the Gulf War, the French leadership were willing to go into the no-fly with the British and the U.S. against Saddam Hussein. Later, that will disappear. So I think with the French it depends on who's in the leadership role, their politics, and their military not always in sync with the political leaders. But certainly the French UN peacekeeping were anti-Muslim. By the end of 1995 of course Holbrooke comes out. There was an article in The New York Times Magazine about Holbrooke that said people like him or not. I felt that there weren't too many people who could have pulled off the Dayton Accord.

Holbrooke knew who everybody was in contrast to Jimmy Carter. He knew all the leaders, the history of the Balkans, he'd read everything, and really knew what he was up to. When he worked the plan, he was working a plan that was much better than Vance-Owens because it really looked at all of the factors, not just the ethnic makeup. I think he should get full credit for what I consider a major diplomatic coup.

Q: He had something to back up his ego.

CROCKER: Right. I have one personal story in 1996 about Christopher worth retelling. I was called up to the Secretary's conference room. The INR Assistant Secretary wanted me there. When I walked in, there's a three-star Air Force General, a whole bunch of other lesser officers, plus colonels and majors, and big stacks of view graphs. I was sitting at the end and there's one person in the room that I actually knew, he was the Director of DIA, General Hughes. He's a brilliant man and I had some good dealings with him. I just took a chance and I said to this three-star general, "What the hell are you up to?" Warren Christopher's not a military person, he was a corporate lawyer and a person called in to settle many disputes. I said this was a real mistake. The issue was we had been bombing and evidence had come forward that we'd been shooting Serb dummies. The Serbs had been putting up all kinds of decoys, tanks, etc. and we weren't hitting anything. They were fooling us. And they were going to show him all the pictures before he leaves eminently for the NATO meeting. And they're trying to get him briefed on their point of view about bombing everything before he goes to NATO. It's an important meeting. I had some one-on-one meetings with him. He was an interesting Secretary. He would just call me directly, not go through my boss. But he'd call me and said, "Would you come up here and explain something to me?" And a lot of times it was detail, like how do these satellites work? When he got a security briefing, he did not learn about all these gadgets. Of course the security was not that great in the Clinton administration. My new boss didn't even have a security clearance for a year, which is pretty amazing. He wanted to know the mechanics of all this intelligence collection gear. And if he'd been properly briefed he'd have known. He'd have had the briefing.

Plus, he was fascinated with the whole "yellow rain" and getting proof that the Soviets were involved and the Vietnamese were using CW. He would call me personally to check on the progress. Later on, I see him in Los Angeles Airport long after he was Secretary

and he invited me into the VIP lounge. We sat and talked for quite a long time. You know, he was really interested in the CW/BW issues but didn't understand it at all. He says hi to me at the meeting and he sits down. This major is sitting next to him and we didn't even get to four minutes. He asked what the acronyms were and what the majors were talking about. I don't even know what he was talking about.

Q: I think I may have mentioned this earlier on, but I know when we were -- I think it was Liberia and we were having trouble getting people out of Liberia. We were getting all these messages from the military that the embassy couldn't read. They had to bring a clerk to come in to say what they were talking about? These people begin to talk in these acronyms and they pretty soon forget that they can't talk otherwise.

CROCKER: Yes. Whenever I attended a meeting out of my area of expertise this happened. I'll talk about an exercise in Europe. Once as Secretary of State up at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, Armitage was President and I was Secretary of State. And I had this problem. But the worst was at the European Command where they have one set of language there and others in the field commands.

I think one of the reasons we were so successful in my office in INR to a large extent, is we didn't use that kind of language. One of the worst examples which I threw out and had rewritten, was a piece on the Kurds that identified the three Kurdish units by their initials – PKK, PKU, and others all through the text. I would say Barzani's group. I do believe it's why Schwarzkopf in the Gulf War sent back a letter praising us, because we wrote that SIT-REP three times a day, that it was in English and you could understand it and it got right to the point.

At the national level, we only look for substance in the message. The problem was in the Gulf War they would have some corporal reading the national intelligence. He's getting the whole printout with all the addresses and logging in the message. We have burn bags right there. They're keeping all this stuff. I'm writing some notes and filling burn bags every day.

Q: Yes, I am very familiar with the process.

CROCKER: Destruction in the field is a major undertaking. We were sending intelligence teams to Bosnia in particular to help them read intelligence. They set up basically intelligence centers and we were filling it with people who could help them with all the intelligence. This included a few of my people.

Q: What was your feeling about the bombing of the Serbs? We have the horrible bombing of the Chinese Embassy.

CROCKER: I think that's Kosovo where the Serbs moved forces in and there was a UN reaction. I said to myself at the time we could have made a difference, but our office was gone, and also the crisis library, my assistant could have pulled the Serb folders. We had maps and intelligence reports. Colin Powell was Secretary because I remember thinking

to myself when the Chinese Embassy got hit, it's too bad I didn't still have my office because I probably would have briefed Powell on the Balkans. I could have questioned what they were going to bomb. And I'm also sure of that because later on I meet some people who were in the command doing the targeting of Serbia, and they were talking to me about plans to bomb the bridges on the Danube. It was a sergeant who stopped the bombing. They could have ruined commerce in Europe. Europe is not a war zone area. I was talking to some people the other day about targeting and I have a real problem with targeting people's rational. They live in this world that a bridge is a target regardless of the circumstances.

My office still has a group of people working on the Balkans and briefing and writing and going to all kinds of meetings. Don't forget Srebrenica. I should mention that I was one of the few people that believed that one of the ways Mladić was able to subdue these 8,000 people he had captured was that he used something the Serbs had called BZ, it's a psycho drug. We had it in the United States, but we decided it wasn't safe and got rid of it. I read quite a few U.S. army reports about BZ. The Soviets had it and used it in Afghanistan. And you'll remember the Army did LSD experiments on troops. It's like you're spraying an anesthesia. My friend at Virginia Hospital makes \$600,000 a year because he knows exactly how much to stick into you. And if he gets it wrong, he kills you. You're talking about people with different body weights in the target area -- all the children, women, fat people, skinny people, etc. You can't actually develop something that's going to knock out a lot of people successfully, it's going to kill some and others will just be giddy. But we know the Serbs had it in their stockpile. Yugoslavia was not listed as a chemical weapons country, by the way. But we ended up discovering the Serbs had grabbed it up in Bosnia and taken all of it back to Serbia. I was positive from all the reports I had that they had gassed these people and that's how they subdued them and buried them in the ground. I had stacks of cables from Europe saying there was no evidence of chemical weapons used, just tear gas they said and Muslims were also using it, which was ridiculous. We do deploy NATO forces which slowed the fighting. When we get into 1996 there's the Presidential election. I talked before about how Milošević never seemed to be culpable. Later on some of his people defect and provided evidence Mladić was working for Milošević. I mean Milošević kept saying, "Well, these are just paramilitary forces and I can't control them and they're not under my command." They finally were able to get Milošević with the really hard evidence that he controlled the whole show. In 1996 I was working in arms control to try to move the heavy Serb tanks and all the other heavy systems back, getting it away from Sarajevo. NATO was still running some air strikes against the Serbs because they didn't give up. In 1996 we do give quite a bit of money, somewhere around \$95 million in arms. We provide tanks, helicopters, and artillery. Our office had to start tracking the progress.

Q: How about coordination? For example, Hungary was the big depot area, wasn't it?

CROCKER: Yes. I mean the Clinton administration did some pretty interesting work here because we had good bases to operate out of, like Hungary. For the first time the Germans were involved, although their constitution did not allow them to send forces. But the Germans became big players, carefully easing into helping. And what's

interesting is the Germans will be in command in Afghanistan, which was unheard of in the days when I went to NATO. Clinton took a bold move and it worked.

Q: Was there an official problem of moving troops through Hungary and all? In other words, what you're doing is taking NATO troops and moving them into Bosnia through former Warsaw Pact countries?

CROCKER: The whole Warsaw Pact is now friendly and helping in the Balkans and in the Persian Gulf War. And by the time you get to Gulf II in 2003 you have all kinds of Czech and Polish units involved.

Q: Well, as you're moving the troops in, was it thought that you might end up with real firefights with the rogue units? Or did you feel that this probably wasn't going to happen?

CROCKER: U.S. troops went in with full combat gear. They were wearing flak jackets and helmets and they had their guns and ammunition.

Q: I remember when I was there for the elections, the Americans were all buttoned up and the Brits weren't.

CROCKER: I was in a meeting where the Brits were arguing the U.S. was wrong. And the Brit view was we should be dressed down and be friendly with the civilians and provide a peaceful impression. We totally disagreed. I come down on the U.S. side. I've been on this side of that argument a long time, going back to Vietnam. If you dropped your guard, the next thing you know the bridge is blown up. I truly believe that in this kind of situation or any kind of peacekeeping situation, you should go in tough, get the respect of the people. In Afghanistan our troops have done all kinds of activities with the local people, all kinds of really incredible projects. But you don't want to have your helmet off and no flak jacket. I remember that Bihac and Tuzla in the north was still hostile territory. The Bosnian-Serb areas were still real confrontational areas. We also still had all these refugees that had to move somewhere else. I think it was better to be ready and look ready. NGOs can take the non-military humanitarian stance.

NATO comes out looking very good and the UN's looking pretty bad. I think the UN got a huge black eye here. And partly because they took this sort of neutral passive approach of peacekeepers, not peacemakers. And I think initially they should have been peacemakers. They set up safe areas, they should have protected those safe areas.

Q: What comes next?

CROCKER: I have a whole new role of working as a Special Assistant to the INR Deputy, Tom Fingar. I go to high level interagency meetings on intelligence warning. Madeleine Albright becomes Secretary in 1997.

Q: Within the State Department, how was INR being treated?

CROCKER: INR was treated extremely well and adjusting to changes. INR was still writing the morning summary for the Secretary, we're still briefing people in the building, although there's a little bit of CIA takeover. As soon as Madeleine Albright comes in as Secretary we change gears. Toby Gati was not good for the Bureau. Phyllis Oakley will come in as an old pro and will be the Head of INR in that time frame. And I was still there working with her. Madeleine Albright, for me, was a total change because I left the analyst business until I retired. And literally my whole office goes away. I had good relationships with the policy officers and the regional functional bureaus. We shared briefing duties when we went up to brief the Secretary.

Q: Well, you know, you mentioned that there's this Political-Military Section in INR. And very obviously, the Balkans, the Middle East absorbed your attention. But who was minding the store regarding China?

CROCKER: Let me go back just a little bit. We set the office up in 1974. Through time we covered the globe except in a crisis when I had to move people around. On China, I had Frank Jannuzi, who was my Asian analyst, covering North Korea and China. Jannuzi has just been made President of Amnesty International; a brilliant guy. On Latin America I had a couple of strong analysts. The Navy person covered the Chinese Military. We always had a Navy analyst provided by the Navy. I lost my Navy analyst in a struggle with the strategic office. We had several Foreign Service officers in charge of the larger office, but they had a lot of trouble with a bunch of headstrong senior analysts who'd been doing their own thing for a long time and were not about to be micro-managed.

Q: Today is August the 5th, 2012, interview with Gary Crocker. Was this on purpose to get rid of your office? Was it for administrative reasons or was it policy reasons?

CROCKER: Albright becomes Secretary and I get a whole new role. So what we're talking about is we had been fighting for some time against a move. But Tony Gati when she came in was very anti-military, felt that we should be doing global issues like the UN, environment, population and poverty, but not all this military analysis that the Pentagon should do. That was her view. She had no military background or understanding. Although she quickly found out that she had to know about Bosnia every day because that was the first thing on the Secretary's morning agenda and she had to be there. So she reluctantly listened to me about military affairs and what was going on in the world and the crises and whatnot. And she had to learn about intelligence, which was another thing. She didn't know about all the satellites and all the collection systems, which as the Head of INR she needed to know. I would say there were people who didn't like the idea of a military office. Let's try to take an example. Africa. I had an African analyst in my office doing basically political-military African issues and writing about it. The regional office wanted control of that and they wanted the analyst in their office, not mine. And that was pretty much the way the regional offices felt. We didn't do a lot of economics, but we did a lot of arms trade, which basically nobody else cared about. So I was always free to have three, four people working on worldwide arms trade and nobody else wanted it, so that

was never an issue. But there were some people who wanted to take my chemical-biological weapons issues and put them in the Strategic Office, which we had competed with since 1974. They also wanted to get my people because they were top quality. Downsizing from the Al Gore commission also was a factor.

Q: As I remember the Federal government was reduced thru early retirement and downsizing middle management.

CROCKER: Yes. There was major reorganization of the Arms Control Disarmament Agency which went into State. It was a little management, a little admin. People may have wanted the space. I had a pretty good-sized space in the vault area of INR. It's ironic in one sense too because we had gotten so many accolades for the work we had just done in the Balkans, we got all kinds of awards for the work we did on the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Gulf War I and the Balkans. Some of these awards were national awards from the Director of CIA. Plus all the chemical/biological weapons work over about thirty years. Phyllis Oakley was already the Head of INR when my office was slowly taken apart. Ironically, I'd been in this management position and they sent me off to the FSI leadership school at the Woods for two weeks. I only managed the office for a short time after. I loved that course and people there who became good, close friends, like Eileen Malloy. When I went to Russia, Eileen was there. And I loved that. I really enjoyed it and learned a lot, and have praised it. I even told Colin Powell once how much I thought this contributed. But what I mentioned -- this is obviously later -- I said to Powell in front of a big audience that I think that leadership training course should be for Civil Servants as well as Foreign Service, and it ought to be earlier in the career. I mean almost everybody that was there was getting ready to retire, you know. It's something you get to go do near the end. And I said, "All these leadership qualities, these things I learned, which were very helpful in my office, I should have known them earlier. I think we've had a busy time right up until when Albright comes with the Balkans, with all the things going on in the world. We had been very busy. And very busy on arms trade particularly. We had really done some pretty groundbreaking work on that. So anyway, I'm going to say today that we start where Albright becomes Secretary of State and Phyllis Oakley is the Head of INR.

Q: Before we move on, what happened to Toby Gati? I mean, you know, you mentioned a number of times how she really didn't work.

CROCKER: She left the government. And her husband had become a bit of an irritant because of their relationship with the Hungarians. Mark Palmer in particular was upset.

Q: Had been Ambassador to Hungary.

CROCKER: There were some very hard liners in INR that did not share her soft view of Russia and how to deal with Russia. And anyway, she unceremoniously disappeared. I mean there were some very formal complaints that she be removed. And there was talk of investigations on some of the security issues. They offered me Special Assistant to Tom Fingar, who was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Intelligence. I'd

worked with him many times. He came from academia, was the specialist on Asia. I had kept my contacts with the Defense Intelligence Agency, so I became a liaison to them. They had this idea that we shouldn't be doing all this military analysis nor should the Political Military Bureau of State Department. So I should work with the Defense Intelligence Agency to get more direct support and from the military services themselves. We made some progress. Albright had an affinity for military officers. She really got along well with the military. Later I go around the country speaking for her and I'm surprised how fond some of the military organizations are of her and, and her support. And she becomes very closely linked with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Hugh Shelton. He was a special ops type. Together they immersed in diplomacy and defense.

Q: Is that kind of dangerous?

CROCKER: Of course, he was very above board. He was not really a spook. He had a totally different background than most military officers. There's a lot of special ops going on. Remember in 1968 I was on an interagency warning committee. It was an interagency committee that looks at the future on a regular basis and produces a warning report for the government that says here's the warning problems. Now there is an interagency committee that meets out at the Central Intelligence Agency. It was a whole new system. We have reduced funding and reduced resources (satellites, human sources, etc.) therefore, prioritize the world and figure out what the main priorities are to put our resources on to collect information. I never agreed with this right from the beginning because their premise was the priorities were Russia and China, Iraq, the Middle East, anywhere where U.S. forces were engaged. And then the rest of the world got divided into three and four tiers where we needed less collection. For example, Zambia, let's pick Zambia. Well, we don't have any real national interest in Zambia. We'll just rely on the embassy and we won't put a lot of money in collecting information about Zambia and it'll become a tier four country. Their plan was to bring a bunch of old retired guys, particularly CIA, and they're going to read all the traffic and write reports. There's a problem with this that I had right from the beginning, having done this my whole career. They're assuming that where the problems are going to rise in the world are in this number one category. Well, if you looked from the time they started this program, where do the problems come from? Grenada, Haiti, Liberia. Where do we have to pull off embassy rescue missions and send forces in? Where were these places? Tier three and four.

Q: I agree with you. Information on the top priorities may come from tier three and four.

CROCKER: We also didn't have any collection going on in Bosnia and Kosovo and Albania. They made the cut early when this program was started. When the whole Balkan thing starts we didn't have very good intelligence, especially human sources. These meetings had a formal process where State for example, would put together a formal report that we would take and argue what we thought, based on inputs from our embassies, were the hot spots that should make the warning list. We had information coming in at the time from Cambodia from our embassy saying, the situation is getting bad. And some of these other places I just mentioned. One of them was Liberia and I had

to carry the Liberia water to the meetings and argue that my people were telling me Liberia was a growing problem. And I got the cold shoulder. Most important was Kosovo or what the people at State, the ambassadors, called the "Albanian Problem." In other words, the experts at the State Department and in our embassies didn't look at it as a Kosovo only issue, they looked at Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania as the "Albanian Problem." They looked at it as a package, because they saw the inter-relationship of this area of the world and the impending conflict. I kept losing that argument. They didn't want to hear about it. I was arguing with very senior CIA types and they had made up their mind what they wanted to spend money on. And they had a couple of old senior people that had been around a long time that are very prestigious supposedly. And they kind of ran the meeting. Albright let it be known to me that she particularly wanted collection and information on Morocco and Algeria. I for the life of me don't remember exactly why. But she had a meeting about it.

But this is the part I think needs to be recorded for history, because it doesn't make any sense to me. This is the Secretary of State saying directly to the Director of CIA, "I need increased information on Algeria and Morocco." And I assume she told them why.

They refused her. That's what I remember so distinctly was they told her no and they told her she had to go through the process, which was me, which is you have to file this report and give it to me and I would take this to the meeting. I'm thinking, "our government's broke." I remember saying to myself well, the Secretary of State says, "I need some information," and is told no, I mean the system just broke down as far as I'm concerned. What the hell is going on here? It was a very bureaucratic, political kind of interagency committee system that was very much tied into expensive collection systems, big collection programs. And that's when I also began to learn that -- and probably still true -- that there were all these buildings in different places where I attended meetings. These weren't analysts, they were process people. They were big buildings out at Tyson's Corner full of people with no names on them.

We're cutting analysts and staffing buildings with process people. I had some bad encounters with these kinds of people throughout my career. Later, I'm going to have some real encounters with them. I'm old fashioned. It would be like saying you're going to do foreign affairs in the State Department doing a behavioral analysis instead of having a desk officer who served in the country, speaks the language and reads reports every day.

Q: Well, it's a problem. I think it's the same with political scientists. They've gotten so involved in colleges and in the mathematical and behavioral approaches, generated by computers. That they begin to lose sight of the fact that somebody can go to a place and say, there's tension in the air. Something's going to happen.

CROCKER: Or you have people who have been doing this for 30 or 40 years and know the country backwards and forwards and have sniffed out a problem and are trying to tell you about it. My daughter was looking at grad school and she had a chance to be Madeleine Albright's assistant at Georgetown. But she and I went through the books looking at courses in different schools. And I said boy, I would want to go to Tuft's. I

actually had to take a course of this at GW for my master's degree. And I hated every minute of it, quantitative solutions. It's some of the same approaches as Huntington at Harvard, they come up with these models that predict the "fault lines" and where the conflict's going to be. Give me in the warning business good solid people who have worked in the area, maybe lived in the area, speak the language, can read the papers, who have maybe even met the leaders. We've got plenty of these great experienced people around. And I was always able to go talk to those people. I mean I could see Ellsworth Bunker, Ambassador Davies, Herb Horowitz, and many more. Ellsworth Bunker told me about his negotiating career. I've always maintained that my small office was motivated, we had high morale, we had really bright people, and we basically had the freedom to write and get reports to the Secretary without a lot of people fooling around with our text. Which was beautiful because I'd been over in the Pentagon where I always said my draft -- depending whether it was an odd or even number of people that looked at my draft -- would come back the way it was originally. I was able to push my philosophy, but I was really fighting a bureaucratic problem. I discussed this issue of warning with so many people like Armitage and George Vest and others. And Ambassador Negroponte and I used to talk about this too. I kept in touch with all of my chemical/biological nuclear friends in other agencies. The most interesting thing I do in this period for Albright was I went on speaking tours. I don't know if you ever heard that Albright had a big map for speaking; she wanted to push the Foreign Service. She'd basically say, "Everybody knows the military but nobody knows what the Foreign Service is, what they do, what we do at embassies. So I want to do something about that." And she had a big map and she had people in public affairs that were really pushing this. And I had done a lot of public affairs speaking for State, so I got tapped and was happy to do it. For example, I went to Freeport, Illinois to a huge barn where they had a large roast pig. He was a hog farmer. He was somehow tied in with Albright and one of her assistants. I'm supposed to speak in this huge barn to a very large gathering of people. It's just one of the more unique ones. This is not your typical Rotary or Chamber of Commerce lecture. I was thinking there is going to be kind of a hostile audience. It's a depressed town at the time economically. Well, it turned out they asked very friendly questions, were extremely good. The reason -- I was staying in the home of one of the people -- was that all of these people had one thing in common, they hosted foreign students in their home.

Q: Albright was right. We need a constituency.

CROCKER: I got a wonderful reception and *lots* of questions. I stayed on there quite long after and we had this marvelous big pig roast. Another good one was Corvallis in Oregon State. She couldn't go in this case. So I was her stand-in and I spoke to the American Legion. It was Veteran's Day and there was this large military crowd who all loved her and hoped she was coming. I did the usual radio/TV that public affairs sets you up with. But the neat thing was I got to ride in a car with Secretary of State in it and the guy that led the parade was in an old Model-T and he was a hundred and some -- the oldest World War I veteran living in Oregon. I also spoke at Oregon State and they invited me back. I spoke at Willamette University, which was one of my favorites. And then later I go up to Washington State, this is a typical trip actually and spoke at Evergreen College in Olympia, Washington. I spoke at my alma mater, the University of

Washington. And that became a regular stop. They had me out quite a few times. And one time I went out to Port Angeles, which was interesting. For most of these places there's a retired Foreign Service Officer living in the community who's my host. This was the case in Port Angeles, he was a great guy. And I did radio/TV, several lectures in town. Port Angeles is not a very big place. I did Wyoming, Colorado, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Houston, the Keys, all kinds of great places. It was not all the big towns. A lot of the previous speeches I'd done in fairly good-sized cities. But this was small town America. And it was more fun. I mean I got to go out and talk about the Foreign Service, got to talk about how under-funded we were and other great subjects. It was a change. Rotary and Chamber of Commerce, Elks, Lions, and universities. They really appreciated hearing about State Department. I also got very involved working with students and bringing students here, the group I'm in called Lead America. I think I talked to 16 different universities.

Q: So this is one of the major arrows in our Foreign Service?

CROCKER: I think you and I talked about under Secretary Baker when Margaret Tutwiler told me that they didn't see any value in speaking to these groups, especially students and everything. And I said, "Well, I'll do them all, or I'll get people who want to." And that's really when I started speaking a lot, because she said, "Well, we're not going to be bothered." Public affairs just lined me up to speak to all these groups in the Dean Acheson Auditorium. I always thought it was one of the most useful parts of my career. Tom Pickering was Deputy Secretary to Albright. And he asked me through Tom Fingar for ideas on how to change the whole foreign policy apparatus. Out of the box thinking. So I wrote a very out of the box paper, spent a good bit of time on it. I actually don't know what Pickering thought of it. I never got any feedback. But I went all around town to other agencies and did some research. I don't know if you'd be amazed or not how many agencies of our government have their own foreign policy establishment, including the Pentagon. So I outlined a paper to try to give the Secretary of State some control. It was amazing how much I found out.

Q: Yeah, there's a hell of a lot of foreign affairs work done without consulting State.

CROCKER: I proposed a whole new framework to elevate the sort of political and economic parts of foreign policy creating four much higher level people under the Secretary. They were almost like Secretaries themselves. I mean I'm looking at the Pentagon sitting over there and they have all these Secretaries of the Army, Navy, Air Force. Why shouldn't the Secretary have more higher ranking people with more power and prestige and more control of what all these other people are doing. I had fun working on the paper. The next talk I was very proud of. Tom Fingar said, "We want you to go to all the bureaus. Ask them what's really important and what they think we need to be spending more time on in intelligence, getting intelligence and writing papers and assessments. What do we need more of?" I hit most of the bureaus. But then I also went over to Commerce and talked to people on the Hill. I don't know if you're going to be surprised by what I came up with, but I've been talking about this for a long time now. What I came up with is that probably one of the most vexing problems in the world that

affects everything was crime and corruption. That includes dictators and sleazy governments. They did set up a whole new office at State that covered this. Randy Beers headed it.

Q: I am surprised, but it makes sense.

CROCKER: I used to go to the American Bar Association breakfast, which is on national security at the University Club. Attorney General Janet Reno was the speaker and I asked her, "Should we have more people studying crime and corruption and becoming experts on worldwide crime just like in the old days we studied the Soviet Union and military power?"

She thought that was a great idea. She thought of it in that context that we need universities to have whole courses on international crime and corruption. We would have people become experts and understand this whole global phenomenon. It would be helpful in terms of terrorism and drugs and many other issues. I learned a lot about the global effort from my lawyer friend, Ed Wilson.

I finally submitted to Tom Fingar a pretty large research paper featuring crime and corruption. We need experts on those subjects. Most people said, well, that's an FBI issue, not State Department. But it was far beyond the FBI. When the Soviet Union collapsed, 700,000 KGB agents were unleashed on the world, with all the expertise and money and connections and communications. I still talk about that subject and speak on it. I would say that's kind of the end. I go to the retirement seminar. I did protect a lot of my highly classified information that I was afraid would be destroyed. You have to send all your files to a big warehouse and I found that a lot of important memos to the Secretary and other very highly classified things were lost. Subjects like Iraq and Syria, for example, keep coming back. They were on floppy discs. Well, floppy disc is about where, six or seven technologies back. I was told there may be boxes of floppy discs in the State Department storage, but you wouldn't have a machine to read it. There were no Wangs around or whatever is the next system. I made arrangements when I retired to give my files to the Arms Control Disarmament Agency which still existed. And I had spent 30 years working with ACDA. I knew the people. They're close friends. I had lived with them in Geneva, I had them in my home for dinner. So I was very tuned in to the Arms Control Disarmament Agency and I knew they had a big vault with lots of classified material. This will all come back because I end up working with all those people again when I come out of retirement.

Q: Yes. Incidentally, while I've got you here. What do you think about right now, at least in my mind, it looks like the Israelis are trying to get us to go bomb Iran? And I personally think this would be a disaster. As you know, we're in the middle of the political season.

CROCKER: If I said Obama should do something on Syria it would be in concert with other countries. It's giving us all a black eye, this killing is going on like Rwanda and other crises we ignored. He needs to meet with the Brits and the French and the Turks

and others in the region and ask everybody to bring this to a halt. My thoughts come from the CNN discussion about the conflict last night. The Republican said well, Obama always leads from behind. The other participant articulated my view that's what we're supposed to do. That's what we did in Gulf War I. That's what we're supposed to do as the U.S. gets a consortium of nations together, likeminded, to solve a problem, rather than the United States and the U.S. taxpayer paying for our military to charge off like cowboys and do it all by themselves. Now I know for a fact that Hillary Clinton has been on these trips around the world in the last six months and that one of the main secret discussions is about these problems, particularly with Russia and China and trying to get Russia and China to help stop Assad. I see the hand of the Israelis. My relatives in Israel have brow-beat me numerous times about the dangers of Iran and Syria and U.S. naiveté.

Q: I understand, they tell us we have got to do something about it. And I have a horrible feeling that we're very vulnerable right now because of the political season.

CROCKER: Romney keeps calling Russia the Soviet Union. He's not that swift on foreign affairs. Certainly Paul Ryan doesn't know anything about foreign affairs, his advisors are real lightweights. For example, John Bolton, former ambassador to the UN and Undersecretary at State.

Q: I think if he were nominated for Secretary of State that he would be turned down. He was a recess appointment to the UN.

CROCKER: When I go back to State in 2003 I go to the Verification Bureau and I'll talk all about this later, how they brought ACDA in and split it up into four bureaus of State. John Bolton as Undersecretary for Security had these four new bureaus under him. And the stories were legendary. I mean, you're talking four Assistant Secretary level people who go up in the morning and stand -- he sits at his desk and they *stand*, they don't sit around the table, they *stand* there. And he has a fixed 10-minute time limit.

I remember Dick Clarke did that one time. We came in and he declared there was a major world disaster and that he was going to be going to The White House. We came with sensitive, pertinent information. And all he said was, "Where is my memo? I said before I left I want my memo." "We need to tell you something!" "Get out of my office!" he said, he yelled at us, told us to get out of the office. He went to the White House uninformed.

Would you imagine that? I mean Bolton was Ambassador to the UN, wanted to destroy the UN. He didn't want the U.S. to have anything to do with it.

I'm more scared that we have an election and this short window until the new president's sworn in. We could have leaders who know nothing about foreign policy and haven't got very good advisors around them. They're probably going to listen to McCain. Something could happen right after the election. Netanyahu could decide this is the right time to attack Iran.

Q: This is an important election coming up.

CROCKER: Our military have *no desire* to start a war with Iran. I mean they know what that would be like. I think that they're not going to get any serious feedback from the Pentagon and from the Military. I think the Israelis have probably been having talks with our military chiefs. I'm sure they let them know where they stand on this sort of thing. We also have people saying we need a no-fly in Syria. And now Andy Marshall -- I don't know if you know who that is, but Andy Marshall is the net assessment guru at the Pentagon. He has been there since I was in 1968. Forty or more years in the Pentagon. He writes these big net assessment plans, net assessment meaning you'd think of every single factor possible. They just came out with a paper. They have this new air-sea battle to take China on. The new contingency to fight China is we're not going to use any ground forces, but we're going to beat 'em with air power and naval power. I think I heard that before. We bombed the Vietnamese for what, 10 years? "Going to win with air power." They just kept coming out of their holes.

Q: Small little country made us look bad.

CROCKER: Bombing has never been the only answer. Like in Kosovo, when we start bombing Serbia, they had all these fake targets that fooled us. In Iraq, Saddam Hussein cleverly hid all the scud missiles. We bombed the heck out of everything and then all of a sudden scuds started flying to Israel.

Q: It's a very dangerous time. Let's end here for today.

CROCKER: Good. Before I go into the Foreign Service Retirement program, I have a few comments about some activities I was involved in.

Q: OK, today is September the 7, 2012 with Gary Crocker.

CROCKER: Well, I'm getting close to retiring from State Department. And one thing I did before I went to the retirement seminar was I was assigned as the State Department person to go to large national exercises off-site. It got me thinking, that's probably something I haven't mentioned before. I did a lot of these actually. My very first one was at the Defense Intelligence Agency where we went under Weather Mountain, remember the blast proof bunker. I was a current intelligence analyst in DIA, Defense Intelligence Agency, and I had a desk down there way under the ground. We had the old traditional exercises, with about 600 people. Most of those exercises were done with a scenario all scripted in a book. In those days you had to get to the nuclear execution, called the SIOP (Single Integrated Operational Plan), no matter what the scenario. I used to raise my hand and say, "Wait a minute, that's really stupid. You can't do that." But it didn't matter because they were going to proceed through this book, because in the end they had to initiate nuclear war. I remember saying this scenario's stupid. They didn't want to hear from me. In 30 years or more that I did this there is little change. To give you an example, very typical, they moved all the Soviet forces, 90 divisions, into Eastern Europe for this

big attack on Europe. But the targeting people had all these barracks targeted with nuclear weapons. And I kept raising my hand saying, you're firing at empty barracks. Read your stupid scenario, all those divisions moved toward Europe. They fired nukes at nothing. They said, please don't bother us, we have to execute the SIOP. Another kind of exercise, which I also did at State and in the Pentagon is what we call a desk exercise, where there's a scenario and messages are flying all over the place. It's a very dangerous time, because some people might not read this as an exercise and it says the Soviets are going to launch a nuclear weapon! And it's very dangerous stuff. All this traffic's flying around and there have been cases where the exercise traffic got into the wrong hands.

Q: We sent something from Ethiopia saying Haile Selassie's been deposed. At that point, he hadn't been.

CROCKER: Right. Anyway, so I thought you probably would understand what I'm talking about.

Q: Yes.

CROCKER: A very important one under Henry Kissinger when I was still at the Pentagon was he wanted to do a huge national exercise and actually alert, I mean for real, alert all our forces, everything, worldwide, to see what the Soviet reaction would be. And our job as intelligence people was to monitor real intelligence and see whether they reacted or not and what they did. Well, they didn't do anything. There was a leak. The Soviets knew what we were doing, so they didn't do anything! It was really a joke. But anyway, I do quite a number of these and I had not mentioned them, because they're kind of offline. And one in particular I just have to mention, I had done a lot of work back in my Air Force days on civil defense in the Soviet Union. Certain agencies, but mainly Air Force, said the Soviets had incredible civil defense and if there was a nuclear war they would protect everything. I saw a lot of papers and studies and junk coming out of the Soviet Union. They produce trainloads of this stuff. A Russian general once told me in Geneva, "Gary, we produce those things by the trainload," meaning studies and plans. In this particular one I was thinking of, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) was coming into its own and held a briefing at Weather Mountain.

Q: FEMA is the Emergency Management Agency, set up for disaster relief.

CROCKER: Yes, disaster relief. But also it was supposed to cover for terrorism and military attacks. They were just really getting into terrorism and biological weapons attacks. This is toward the end of my time. And, and so I listened to this briefing about the incredible amount of Soviet civil defense and how they were going to survive and we wouldn't. I had just been all over the Soviet Union doing missile inspection and then later chemical weapons. By that time I had been to Geneva and I'd talked to Soviets. I remember, I asked this FEMA official who's doing this briefing, I said, "Have you ever been to the Soviet Union?" And he said no. And I said, "Then you've never seen a Soviet fire truck." And he said no. And I said, "Well, never have I and I've traveled all over the country." They didn't have some elaborate civil defense organization. It was on paper and

they talked about it all the time, but anybody who went to the Soviet Union realized that they were primitive when it came to anything like disaster relief. Plus, it was a country that was so poorly built that it would fall down in a nuclear attack. They also sent me off to this big Air Force exercise as the State Department representative and right away I had a problem. This particular exercise is different in that they are playing the future. It was out like 2020 or something. They were testing all their new toys and new incredible systems, particular in space. And finally, again, I raise my hand and I say, "Excuse me, General, but we have treaties that say you can't do that."

I tell him that in his scenario in 2020, he has abrogated all these treaties? The Weapons in Space Treaty is gone? In 2020 they have systems up there with lasers and all kinds of things to shoot from space. The big subject at the time was them shooting down our satellites. ASAT was the acronym for anti-satellite. It was an interesting scenario and what struck me was they ignored all of the international treaties.

Afterwards I go to the retirement seminar, don't need to say much about that. It was extremely well done, I must say. So I have retired. The reason I brought up the exercise is that fairly soon after I retired I got calls from contractors asking me to participate in exercises. The first one I did was up at Carlisle Army Barracks. It was a national Army exercise. I was Secretary of State in charge of real allies who were there. They had the NATO allies to play in the exercise, and they even had political people from those countries. And the president was Deputy Secretary Armitage. And of course he played it up for all its worth. They had a big General Patton style American flag and he was in front when he spoke. But the only thing I wanted to point out in this exercise is that they were playing in the future, about 2020, and it was a scenario that included the allies. And I was supposed to be going down the hall to the allied cell to coordinate with them as Secretary of State and try to tell them what the heck was going on. Well, in good fashion, they weren't telling the allies, even in the exercise what we were up to. I mean literally cutting out the allies in an exercise, played in 2020. And it was very frustrating.

Finally, the allies said, "Well, if you're not going to tell us what you're doing and what the scenario is, we do know it says you're going to need our bases in Europe for this exercise. You go back and tell the president that no European bases will be available to him. See how he likes that one." And of course that just screwed everything up big time. And Armitage was furious and we had some incredible discussions. With me as Secretary of State in our morning meeting I would try to do certain things and point out various treaty obligations and Armitage was going through the scenario the way it was laid out so they could get to the completion. And they threw a lot of red herrings into the exercises, always something about India, for example, this or that seems important, but it's not important. At the very end, I was sitting up behind the Chief of Staff of the Army. He was sitting with his back to me and they had this big discussion on the exercise and then I raised my hand and said, I would like to get at least a word in here from the State Department's standpoint and the ally's standpoint. I said, "This exercise didn't work. It failed. Because you didn't include the allies. You have to include our allies. You can't have a unilateral U.S. military operation. And he turned around and he said, "You know, you're absolutely right. And I know better. I coordinate with the allies all the time. You

can't do this unilateral operation and not include them in the plans." I did another Carlisle exercise later where I got into quite a hassle with Army and Air Force people who were defending the bombing of Serbia. That's where I found out that a sergeant had stopped the bombing of bridges on the Danube. That would have been a disaster in Europe. It's a difference that I notice my whole career with people who do targeting. They develop target packages without real analysts who actually know and study the countries. I did two of those on contract and then the last one I wanted to point out was fascinating -- it was in 2000 -- called Europe 2000. Now, this was a big exercise with the allies, the Air Force, Navy, and Army. All the commands were there from Europe. And they all sat at a big table. It was chaired by Wesley Clark, the Supreme Allied Commander. We were in a room where we could do analysis and write and send messages into the room for them to read. We would point out something wrong with the scenario or provide useful inputs. It was a Balkans oriented, post-Balkan exercise where we would have to go in with forces. I got in some serious discussions with a number of senior people there of things I saw that were just wrong. I asked if the Army forgot everything they learned. Mostly from my long experience in intelligence and my experience in Vietnam, I was just sending all kinds of messages. One of the main issues had to do with when you send forces in you need to have trained intelligence people who can recruit agents, set up agent nets, can work with the population, liaison with the mayor, etc. Troops should keep moving, not do civil affairs and military police work. We saw this concept violated in Iraq many times. That comes later and I'll talk about that. It was a fairly long exercise in Europe, with about 700 people including enlisted troops, and our allies -- all listening to what's going on in that room. It's also broadcast and it's actually on a secure television. This Air Force General started criticizing President Clinton, just *railing* on him as President. I thought this is just really wrong. I went to the bar afterwards and I got a hold of a very senior army officer and I said, "This was wrong. I mean you've got all these troops listening and everything and you've got this Senior Air force General railing on the President, talking about how incompetent he is." And the general agreed with me and it became quite a discussion at the bar, most of the senior people agreeing that he was way off base. Same General, by the way, that ordered the bombing of the bridges on the Danube, it turned out.

One last thing, I kept in contact with the State Department Public Affairs officers because I had done so much briefing for Albright and others. I went to them and said, "Why not use retired people? People complained that Foreign Service Officers are too busy to go around the country and do all this speaking, and Albright wanted people out speaking." I said, "Why don't you use this tremendous talent in the retirement pool? I got to go out and speak after I retired and so some of the speaking that I'd been doing before and, and I was still on the board of Lead America, which I still belong to. We bring the best and brightest students to Washington, DC. And they go to the State Department and the CIA and the Pentagon and Congress and, and we have several different groups. Some of them do UN type activity, some emphasize Congress. I worked with national security. And so I kept that up and actually went back and worked out a new schedule for our Lead America group to come and get briefings at the State Department. Once in a while I came in and just consulted about particular issues, like Iraq.

So that takes us then quickly to 2003 when we were getting ready to go into Iraq. I haven't read any classified information in this period, 1999 to 2003. And I get a call from the State Department asking me to come back.

Q: Were you a WAE (When Actually Employed)?

CROCKER: No. When I get there I'm called in and they say, "We want you to come in and work on Iraq and the chemical weapons issue. But they said, I was not going to be working in the Bureau of Intelligence, but rather in the Verification Bureau. I was not on a regular government contract. While I was retired they took all of the Arms Control Disarmament Agency and moved it into State in four bureaus, each with an Assistant Secretary. There was the regular Political Military Bureau, an Arms Control Bureau, which has a lot of the arms control people that did the various arms control talks and treaty negotiations. They were really the people that go to Geneva and the UN to negotiate. That was a pretty powerful bureau. And they had a Non-Proliferation Bureau, which was where people out of the Bureau of Intelligence and ACDA monitored the proliferation of chemical, nuclear, biological weapons and some others. They had a fairly good intelligence component. And then the fourth one, which a lot of people hadn't even heard of is called the Verification Bureau. That was an office within the Arms Control Disarmament Agency that I spent a lot of time with because they did some pretty high-level intelligence work and were cleared to look at some very sensitive intelligence. I was often the person that brought that sensitive information to them, including the Director of ACDA. Most of the people who came into State were people I knew. Some of the big hitters they brought were people like Don Maley and Ed Lacey and a number of others. A few of the people from the Bureau of Intelligence had also moved into these bureaus. All of these bureaus were under John Bolton. He had four Assistant Secretaries. And he would have his staff meetings with the staff from these four bureaus. I worked with ACDA for 25 years and it was a fairly well organized, well managed, important agency. And what I ran into was four fiefdoms in State not talking to each other or effectively coordinating. Right away I was questioned when I walked over to the Non-Proliferation Bureau. There was competition and jealousy. And a lot of them just plain didn't like each other. I'm an old coordinator guy. I'm used to roaming the halls and talking to people. I would also go see the Bureau of Intelligence and I was amazed that they didn't have the Secretary's morning briefing anymore, the CIA was doing a lot of the functions that we used to do. I mean I was pretty amazed at how things changed in that many years. I go into the Verification Bureau and I'm assigned to a very technical office doing issues that I never enjoyed, which was all the technical things about satellites and the technical details about airplanes we have snooping around the world. And it was all about basically collection platforms and they would have these meetings and talk on and on about all these collection platforms. I could have cared less. I was brought there by Paula DeSutter, the Assistant Secretary. I had known her from way back. Not real well, but I had known her. And she was very familiar with all the work I did on chemical and biological weapons. She knew I had been an inspector which was important, and had been around the world doing inspecting and briefing. She tells me to dig into the issue of Saddam Hussein having nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. She just assumed that was true. And so did John Bolton. That this was the truth. And what she wanted me to do

was go through all the intelligence and prove it, demonstrate it, and figure out how we could increase collection and find out where he was hiding all of these chemical/biological weapons. Now, you remember this was a big issue at the time. It got Secretary of State Colin Powell in some trouble in the first term when he was Secretary of State. So at first, I have to say, I was at least prepared to believe that Saddam Hussein had all these chemical/biological weapons. And so I proceeded on that basis, doing my work and talking to lots of people and going over and visiting the CIA and Defense Intelligence Agency and visiting people I knew. It turned out that in order to solve this problem Tommy Frank, picked as the commander for the Persian Gulf War, deployed teams of three chemical weapons experts and biological weapons experts, they were all friends of mine. I mean they're people I'd known for a long, long time. And even some of the international people I knew from working on cases, people from the United Kingdom for example. So they had these teams running around the country and then they had a reserve of some 1,500 trained people sitting in Kuwait waiting to go in and start investigating what was going on in Iraq. I had a lot of theories that he had moved them out to other countries. I was looking for information that he shipped them out by boat or he was hiding them on boats. I looked at the idea that he may be hiding them in lakes or in the sand. I really pursued it. It must be true and I had to find out where they were. Well, the odd thing is I began to get messages from my friends, back channel and even email saying they don't think we're going to find any chemical weapons, especially not the way they had set up the investigation.

Q: Meaning the way the Army was investigating?

CROCKER: One of the inspectors told me he was assigned to an artillery unit and they had Army chemical weapons officers who didn't know anything about Iraq. My friends had been tracking Iraq for years. He described being with a colonel. They would drive up to a facility and he would say, OK, you have five minutes to look at this location and determine if there's any chemicals there, and then we're moving on. They had some line officer dictating the investigation. One of my friends told me there was a little boy in sandals yelling he can show them what they want and they tell him to leave or they will shoot him. One wrote, "I don't think we're going to find anything. If they're here, we're not going to find it the way they're doing it." This invasion was about moving fast. You might remember Judy Miller of The New York Times.

Q: Yes, she went to jail instead of revealing her sources.

CROCKER: For a civilian she knew a tremendous amount because she'd been briefed by many people in Washington. She was embedded with the forces. I've heard her testify several times, she kept trying to tell them to go to Samara, or another location. She was very frustrated. And of course she got into a lot of trouble. But most of the military people were saying she was such a big help. She co-authored the book Germs, which includes her experiences. One of the things that happened is they found a big trailer. I remember my office saying, "Oh, we found the smoking gun! We found the mobile biological weapons vehicle", the one that a source (not credible it turns out) talked about. Whoever that source was, Dick Cheney and company loved him.

Q: Didn't it turn out he fed us false information?

CROCKER: Yes.

Some experts had taken pictures and done an engineering analysis. They came up with the idea that it was for weather balloons for artillery or something. Well, my office didn't like that at all. They told me to go read the reports and tell them it's a biological weapons related field production unit. That's when I'm beginning to believe that they're pushing the evidence and that it's not there. And so I had quietly started doing my own research based on my knowledge of this whole issue and I began to realize that we had an accounting problem. We knocked out all these chemical facilities and we destroyed a bunch of the weapons. But we also had this highly classified data that gave us real production numbers and manufactured numbers. So we knew a lot about it. What we had here is Saddam Hussein boasting about what he had and people believing that and believing that we just hadn't found everything. A number of us started saying the problem is he's saying he has weapons he doesn't have. It turned out we began to think, there's no chemical/biological weapons left. With nuclear all we found was just an old centrifuge and some stuff that was buried that some professor told us about it being buried in his backyard. A group of us in the interagency community are beginning to say there's something wrong with this whole story, but we're being pushed, basically by Cheney and others to say they're definitely there. He went out to the CIA and said we want an analysis that says they're there. At the CIA a lot of my friends are unhappy. A lot of us interagency analysts were still connected and we're saying that nobody's talking to us anymore. We're being ignored. And somebody else is writing assessments to satisfy Cheney. INR's analyst was threatened by Bolton. Analysts in other countries were ignored. I have no idea what happened with Blair.

Q: The British Prime Minister.

CROCKER: Yes, he was later criticized. The British had a lot of real experts, which in the not too distant future I'll be working with again; all my old friends. I had worked with them for decades on the Soviet Union, Middle East and Libya. They're having the same problem in their own country.

Q: Well, you're up against -- correct me if I'm wrong -- but people who have reached a conclusion for you might say political reasons. And they become extremely fixed on this.

CROCKER: Yes, to support their rationale for intervening in Iraq.

I think the best book on this subject was written by General Bernard Trainor, he was the Head of CENTCOM at one point and he was involved in the meetings with Rumsfeld in that early period before they make all the decisions to intervene. The book is called Cobra II. Now, that's the best record in my opinion of Gulf War II. Rumsfeld says in the beginning he doesn't want all these army plans, army troops, and logistics. He says we will be out of there by September. That's in the first chapter of the book. He doesn't want

all the logistics, And, he wants to find those chemical weapons. I'm not going to talk a lot about that war, but it's a well documented book by Michael Gordon and General Trainor. And it lays it out sort of how this falls out and this desire to do the Blitzkrieg and run the troops fast, which got us into a lot of trouble. They went so fast they left all the bad guys behind.. It was a disaster. I'm watching all this happen and trying to make an input. I had an opportunity to talk to General Trainor about his book and his experiences. I've been hired as an expert and I do go to staff meetings and I do see the Assistant Secretary frequently and I walk around the building talking to people. I knew Armitage from several adventures over the years.

Q: Richard Armitage. You mentioned being in an exercise with him.

CROCKER: I had briefed him on quite a number of things, mostly on chemical weapons issues. I didn't get to see Colin Powell, only Armitage and some others. Basically I was told I was right, and my colleagues were right on views about the war. I had views that I expressed about how we should use the allies more and not only say the U.S. is winning. I suggested giving them a little more TV time, like the Czech chemical group rather than stressing the U.S. is doing everything. The word I got back was you're right and your colleagues are right, but it's out of our control. Rumsfeld is in charge of this along with Cheney and the National Security Council, and the CIA to some extent. People said to me it's a shame that the only military person on the Cabinet, with any experience whatsoever, was Powell, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and head of the NSC. He'd been a commanding general. He had written books and he wrote the Powell doctrine. Certainly Wolfowitz who wrote the concept paper in 1998 was a Far East expert. He was the Assistant Secretary for Asia. And I've since dug into a number of books and interviewed people and everything to get a sense of what a mess this whole thing was. I should mention I had a lot of contacts at the senior army level. It goes back to a friend whose father-in-law was General Kingston who used to throw big parties every year for the who's who, including Powell and General Zinni. I talked to those people myself or I knew somebody who could talk to them for me. One that Rumsfeld fired was General Shinseki.

Q: He became Secretary for Veteran's Affairs. There was nothing but praise for his military career.

CROCKER: He was a brilliant man and he was unceremoniously retired without a party. He was somebody that really understood army planning and what you had to do for a war. Tommy Franks, according to my sources at the time, was saying that he didn't really believe his superiors, he believed in the army approach and the army planning they'd done for this war. But he'd been given the command. Franks left back in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia these trained scientists who could have gone through the country intelligently. One good example was they drive up to a big building and troops go in and say it's full of all kinds of paper and file cabinets, no weapons. It was actually the Iraqi Intelligence Headquarters. They move on and will exploit it later. Probably everything you ever wanted to know was in that building. When they finally come back, the building's empty, all the papers are gone. We actually did a national exercise where a lot

of the people in this verification bureau were active players in an exercise about a biological weapons attack on the U.S. There were a lot of problems happening in our country, like in D.C. they had an incident and they treated it like it was mustard gas or something. The anthrax crisis was treated wrong. They were hosing everybody down. There was a big push that several of us participated in to help first responders around the country respond to a chemical/biological attack and do the right thing. I got pretty involved in that because Iraq was going nowhere. In one exercise we were the people to call from around the country and our experts would answer questions in conjunction with the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

Then they sent me as the representative to a National Science Foundation Committee, which was made up of people from NIH, the National Institute for Health, the CDC in Atlanta, and the Agricultural Department. All these people from various agencies sat on this committee and the subject was to figure out how well prepared America was in terms of hospital beds and anecdotes, shots, for a biological weapons attack. I worked on the biological threat programs with Bob McCreight who used to work for me in INR. Together we tackled some complicated, scientific issues, including debriefing Russian defectors from the biological weapons program. We also worked on the evidence from the attack on the Moscow theater by Chechens and the Russian response with gas. Autopsies were done in the U.S. to prove gas was used. I sat on that committee the rest of 2003 at least and even a few times into the following years actually. We got briefings from people all over the country, even other countries. The French gave a briefing on how to detect with alarms and how to train hospitals. It was a very rich environment and I learned a lot and I was able to contribute quite a bit as I represented the Assistant Secretary, Paula DeSutter, at these meetings. I wasn't going to be doing a lot on Iraq. And that brings me to January 2004 when I was going to quit. Condi Rice moved from the NSC to become Secretary of State.

Q: It's the second term of George Bush.

CROCKER: I haven't been contacted at all during Christmas and New Years even though there's a lot going on in terms of the Iraq War, and even the Balkans. I come back ready to say I've had enough, I'm going back to retirement. I walk in the door and they come into my office and asked why I was there. I was supposed to be out at CIA right away. They said my clearances were passes. I said, "Why?" They say because Paula DeSutter has decided that you're going to head the U.S.-UK team to go into Libya. I said, "Wow. I'm a contractor." It struck me odd that a plum job for people working fulltime would go to me. I went to CIA. The room was so full I couldn't even get in for the briefing. I stood in the hallway and heard as much as I could. And they were giving a briefing on Libya. And it turned out that some people had been in Libya talking with Saif, Qadhafi's son, who is in the news today by the way. Saif had been meeting with CIA and other officials and wanted diplomatic relations and investment, with a new embassy. He was willing to give us access to the whole country to make sure there were no chemical/biological or nuclear weapons. Qadhafi had decided his little plan hadn't worked out. He was not the head of the Arab world or the Muslim world or anything else and he was having a lot of economic and security trouble.

Q: The Muslim Brotherhood, Islamic radicals, opposed him.

CROCKER: He was particularly having trouble, it turned out, with his oil fields falling apart, those the United States had built. He's got some of the purest oil in the world with a very low sulfur content. There's a fairly long story that we learned about later. But suffice to say, people had been secretly having meetings with him. And there was a move afoot to go ahead and start going over and inspecting. Afterwards, I went up to what I guess was the person in charge and I said I was actually going to be the one leading one particular team. They divided the group into four parts, and I said, I need to hear the briefing. They had already done the groundwork on nuclear, chemical, biological and the missiles. They said that my piece would be the more difficult, because we knew so little about the biological weapons side of Qadhafi's program. When I came back, Paula DeSutter said I would head up the U.S.-British team, and I was free to pick my team. The Brits had already picked their people. The Arms Control Bureau informed me there was nothing to the biological issue, and not to waste theirs or my time. They wanted to concentrate on the nuclear, chemical and the missiles. Paula DeSutter felt different. So I'm thrown in with a whole new group of people now and this project will be run by the National Security Council. Condi Rice had a lot to do with the implementation of this plan. She actually did a very good job getting this organized. She comes over to be Sec-State and Paula DeSutter was put in charge of the whole interagency effort. The Verification Bureau verifies treaties, runs inspections, and writes the global compliance report, which monitors all the treaties and agreements we have and declares who's in compliance and who's not. I immediately went over to the Defense Intelligence Agency, Fort Detrick, CIA, everywhere I could go to get myself beefed up. And I found a young lady analyst, PhD in biology, who seemed to know more than any other person I met. And so I picked her for my team and then I was told I would take a medical person who was in the Arms Control Bureau. The main group will meet with the government officials. One of them is our Deputy Assistant Secretary, another is a very old friend of mine named Don Maley who was a long-time arms control person, former army officer. We have some planning meetings with the British, some of them come over. Peter Huggins was an old friend of mine. He had a three-person team. We did a lot of studying, had lots of intelligence information, to get us prepared. We make the first trip in 2004. And it was pretty amazing how fast we got things done. A lot of the missiles were either sent by plane or boat out of the country to here and Britain. We shared with them all of the long-range missiles. We finally get to go to the famous Rabta chemical weapons facility that all of us had worked on and written about. And a program is set in place to destroy the chemicals. And then there's the nuclear facility, which we got to go see, which wasn't all that impressive. If you remember, Khan in Pakistan supplied Libya with nuclear equipment.

Q: Yes. The nuclear fellow, sort of father of the Pakistani bomb. He also sent nuclear production equipment to the North Koreans.

CROCKER: Yes. He ended up being the one that they had sent materials to build nuclear weapons in Libya and it was intercepted. We had pretty good, firm information going into

this on all the weapons systems. We had good information going back twenty years. I had a person who used to work for me that had done arms trade and tracked all of the dealings with Libya. It turns out as I kept working this problem over a two-year period that sanctions really worked. A lot of people say sanctions don't work. Well, sanctions worked. There's no doubt about it.

We do a tremendous amount of staff work and coordination with The White House.

Q: Well, tell me. Was there increased skepticism? I mean were the true believers getting bypassed and the experts taking over?

CROCKER: No, this was a very different case. I've done several lectures on this. It's quite different in that there was excellent coordination between the National Security Council, the CIA, State, and Defense. There was nobody bitching that you can't trust Qadhafi. That comes later. Everybody's pulling together. Defense is providing airplanes and ships and experts. Everything is done in an interagency meeting at State with Paula DeSutter as chairman. And sometimes the Brits would come over. It was a group of people, some I knew, some I didn't, who pretty much stayed on the exercise through the two-year period. We had the same CIA and Defense people. It was really a remarkable piece of foreign policy and coordination. Paula DeSutter did an excellent job in making sure nobody got their nose out of joint. We had incredible support, particularly from intelligence, but from others. A great working relationship with the British. For all the visits we had to go through London, usually spend the night, coordinate with the British, and this is each of the four groups with their counterparts. And then we flew to Libya usually the next morning from London. It was somewhat of a nightmare diplomatically because we had to go to this Libyan consulate.

Q: I've seen pictures I think. It's where a British policewoman was shot.

CROCKER: Yes. It took me a good while to get over there. I go over by myself and sit down and have this talk with the Consul General and explain we need to have our visas right away and we're heading out in the morning, this should all be smoothed over. And then of course I remember sitting there in a room and there was one of the drivers for the Libyan Embassy and he said, you know, "He's going to make you wait until the very end." So I'm spending my whole day sitting here waiting for these visas and it's getting close to prayers. The driver says if he doesn't come out of here, they're going to go to prayers and it'll be several hours before they even come back and open the consulate. He says the best thing to do is start hollering and making trouble. Sure enough, out they came like one minute to 12. I remember telling them I don't appreciate this. This is an official visit set up by our three governments. I don't have time for this kind of crap. Anyway, it did get better later.

On the first trip I have my incredible CIA analyst with me and I have this person from Arms Control. We go to London, meet with our counterparts, get everything set up and make our first trip. There'd been some people already there to make arrangements, try to get the meetings set up. From the cables from Libya you couldn't tell are they actually

going to be there when we get there? I mean it was very haphazard dealing with the Libyans. I was supposed to go and then I didn't go because we didn't think they would be there. But then we finally make our first trip and it was kind of interesting if not surprising. What happened is we have two professors, two very distinguished professors, one from the university was a biology teacher. And the other was the head of a scientific institute where he was doing research. But he was connected to Qadhafi's family. And the first thing they do is tell us a story. They'd already told somebody else this story. The story was along the line that way back when Qadhafi wanted to build a big biological center and as far as they knew had nothing to do with weapons or anything. It was to build this huge showplace biotech center. The academics were all excited to have it. But it becomes apparent to them later that they want some foreign contracts to build facilities that would appear to have to do with biological weapons, not just science. What the academics actually did is not too clear, whether they resisted this or not. But these were the two people the government gave me as my contacts. They've told us this story that they kept trying to build a biotech center, but they knew it was for biological weapons, but they hoped it would be big and they would actually use it to help the country. Neither one of these academics are weapons people or National Security people. They tell us that there was no paperwork. They can't provide us records as was done for the other weapons programs. They never got it built, so there's no place to go see and they used to have an academy of sciences, but they had dissolved it they said. In general there's nothing I was told to see. I was wasting my time. They never made biological weapons. They tried, but they said for some reason the Americans kept cutting contracts off. They said every time they got a contract with somebody, usually one of our allies, by the way, it was stopped.

Q: Germans and others.

CROCKER: Every time one of these negotiated a contract, our intelligence was good enough that somebody went to that country and told them they were helping Qadhafi build biological weapons. But anyway, that was their story. Some people back home were saying I don't see why Crocker should even continue because other teams are more important. Missiles must be removed. Chemical weapons must be destroyed. The nuclear reactor and centrifuges must be dealt with. I was fighting to keep my team as well as being one of the larger teams. I would go to all the meetings about chemicals and the missiles and participated in the meetings with the Libyans. We stayed in a beautiful hotel right on the Mediterranean, the only really beautiful hotel I think that was there. And because people were pouring in, the word was out, Libya's open for business. Every time I flew on British Airways there were a bunch of gentlemen, Brits, oil people. I'd tell them to go back. They were wasting their time. I said the Americans are going to get the oil field, not you. Then, of course, they'd tell me they had been coming to Libya for years. The more I learned that people had been going in there for quite a long time and of course the Italians had a thriving business relationship and when you went through the beautiful shops in Tripoli it became very apparent that there was a lot of thriving European business there. I say to the Libyans that I am not satisfied, that the other teams were getting stacks of papers and documents and the actual weapons, and we're getting words. There were some people, by the way, on the UK group and others that said, we don't

need to push them on the biological side. I said, as long as Washington backs me up I'm going to turn over every rock in this damn country, everywhere, to see it all. I got backing from the NSC and from Paula DeSutter.

Q: Well, one of the things that would scare me, we've already seen the Soviets idea of maintenance is pretty low. And when you get to the Arab world, you're moving a grade or two lower.

CROCKER: Actually part of my briefing was about this subject. Some people, especially in Congress, say sanctions don't work. They say sanctioning countries produces nothing. If you went and looked at all the places we've embargoed and sanctioned like Cuba, even South Africa, where we've used sanctions as a weapon like against Iran. If you really research the sanctions, they hurt them. But in the case of Libya, we had absolute proof that it worked. I'm going to give you a couple of examples on your point. One of the very first places we went was this scientific center belonging to one of our two academics. It was a fairly modern center. And they were doing a lot of agricultural research on potatoes, goats milk, and other kinds of products. I pointed out a really nice, big electronic microscope, costs a couple million, it's just sitting there unused. He said, they got it on the black market five years ago and we put it here. The problem is they have no manuals, no maintenance contract, and no tech experts. It's been sitting there because nobody knows how to use it. Libyans don't produce much. For the most part -- there's only five million of them -- they mostly live along a thin 30-mile band on the Mediterranean Sea, from Tripoli to Benghazi. There's a few people we visited out in the desert, like Sabha. Anything they've got going on in that country as we found -- we went to lots of places in six visits over two years -- was from another country. Even that big beautiful hotel was Maltese.

Q: Except oil, I presume.

CROCKER: Yes. Mostly bazaar items -- gold and jewelry and silk and pottery. They do a lot of palm dates. I had all the dates I could eat and took home whatever they gave me. They wanted the Americans in Libya, especially agricultural people. They wanted water irrigation people. Qadhafi spent like 10 billion on this huge agri-project, billboards show it all over the country. We'd go into classrooms and laboratories in Benghazi, hospitals, universities, everywhere and what you find is some computers from the black market, but no Microsoft, for example, to provide technical support. The embargo and sanctions really hurt them, although some had squiggled through, but not enough to make a difference. Qadhafi was such a pariah and so involved with terrorism, like Lockerbie, it hurt him pretty bad in Europe. I can say without a doubt sanctions hurt Libya. And Libya was ready to deal. Their planes were falling apart, they had an old order from Boeing we cancelled which they wanted. They wanted to resume diplomatic relations with us and get their planes they had ordered a long time ago. And I can attest their planes are in bad shape, because one of Qadhafi's planes we flew on couldn't take off and the seats broke. That particular day when we were in Benghazi when that plane broke down, Qadhafi sent his private luxury jet.

Q: That indicated Qadhafi approved of your visit.

CROCKER: The plane, with his very attractive hostess and everything was sent up to Benghazi and we flew from Benghazi to the former U.S. Wheelus Air Force Base. The first time I made that trip I had very little money and I was traveling around the world on the embassy flight. This time I arrived in Qadhafi's private jet, cooler than my landing in 1966. The next thing I would point out is that everywhere we went people were very friendly. When we went to the university in Tripoli, people would say, I'm a Tar Heel, oh, you went to the University of Washington. I'm a Husky, I did my research there. Almost every dean had gone to a university in the United States. A number of them said their kids were born in the U.S. I knew we used to own the place. We built the oil fields. There was an Italian king. The U.S. had the big airfield and military presence. They wanted to send their students to America. That will come up at the end of this story here. It was an eye opener in that so many of them were attached to the United States and wanted to go to the United States. Of course Qadhafi had never let them send their students to America and we wouldn't have let them come to America. The number two eye opener, I began to notice a lot of women in charge of labs, including the administrator of the big hospital in Benghazi. We don't want to forget to talk about that a little bit later. There's the famous case where people were killed and the Libyans accused the Bulgarian nurses of killing them. In this briefing in the hospital a woman is the administrator. And obviously I'm not in Saudi Arabia, because women were driving cars. When we had receptions at the hotel that served as our embassy, women came in western dress. When they were at work or at school at the university they wore a headscarf. I saw no burka except in the worker areas and on worker buses. Some of the workers from Sudan and other places had burkas on. Women seemed to have rights. I don't know if you know all of Qadhafi's bodyguards are women. And he's got a woman military unit. The third eye opener was free healthcare for everyone, including the migrant workers from Sudan and elsewhere. If they have something serious they fly them to Malta or Europe. I got a good look at the health situation. I encouraged a team from NIH and State to come. They did a complete survey of the health situation in Libya. That was one of the good recommendations we made right off the bat. The fourth eye opener was education, free education. Everybody gets free education all the way up to about a master's degree. And again, they may send them off to a university in Europe. Now, that was a nightmare because we went to two big universities, Haifa and Tripoli. We go to a big university in town and there's thousands of students, the place is jammed. And it's opening day of school. And we get to go up and meet the administrator of this university. They have no prior enrollment and they had no prior information on the students. He says he desperately needs American educators to come and help because he has 70,000 students who have just shown up on the first day of school. He doesn't have them enrolled, he doesn't know which classes they're going to go to. To recap, free education, free health, women's rights, and a love of America. I don't know what I thought, I knew a good bit about Qadhafi and security issues, but once I get there I realize I had to learn a lot more. I went to the bookstore and I bought the Green Books. You may have heard of the Green Book.

Q: Oh yes. Qadhafi's version of Mao's Little Red Book.

CROCKER: It's not a book. It's an entire shelf of books on every subject known to man. Agriculture, carpentry, religion, politics, whatever. If you haven't read it, it's almost humorous to read it because it's his brand of Islam mixed in with some socialism and a little bit of dictatorship and his own screwball ideas. And of course everybody has to read it in school. And then he built mosques all over the country and *huge* convention centers. We went to these monstrous, modern convention centers and I ended up attending two biotech conferences with scientists from all over the country and the world. His idea was he would become the Islamic leader. He was going to become the Islamic leader and he would build all these conference centers, inviting everybody, plus he had all kinds of schools to train people in his brand of Islam and teach the Green Book to them. It was a big infrastructure actually for such a small place. I had this incredible person from CIA who really knew where everything was. Based on her knowledge, we told them where we wanted to go—factories, laboratories, airfields, universities, storage areas and others. That even included a place that looked like they may have drones and aircraft to spray biological weapons. There were good-sized plants that could have had labs for doing biological work. We went out to Sabra University in the middle of the desert, an old Foreign Legion post. We're really in the period here of trying to figure out where everything is, see if they're being honest with us, taking us everywhere we want to go.

Q: Was Qadhafi being open or was he being sly?

CROCKER: It's probably why Paula DeSutter picked me, because I'm a real skeptic and I have to see it for myself. I'm not just going to have somebody tell me there's no biological weapons. I'm going to find out if there's a program or not. At the end of the visits I, as the team leader, am going to send a message back to The White House that says I am convinced there's no biological warfare program, we've looked everywhere. Two years of inspections and we're heading to a verification judgment that we've now got Libya under control, we've got all the nuclear systems out, got all the long range missiles out, we destroyed the chemical weapons and there's no biological weapons plant anywhere that's making pathogens. When that is done we will recognize Libya and set up an embassy. That's the end game. He's giving up his weapons of mass destruction and inviting investment. He also solidifies the agreement to pay each family from the Lockerbie crash their million dollars. He would fulfill that obligation to pay all the Lockerbie victims' families. There's a couple other sensitive agreements that we've worked out with him, concerning Israel in particular. We never see Qadhafi, by the way. We are meeting with his son, government officials and academics. That includes a former Prime Minister and the head of their intelligence and their national security officials.

Q: No sort of opposition is developing at this time, was there?

CROCKER: No. We have no problem back in Washington. Most people aren't even paying any attention other than the National Security Council, and State and Defense. In my opinion we're embarked on probably one of the most important foreign policy successes Bush had. We're doing the groundwork with this team and we travel pretty extensively and see a lot of laboratories, universities. I feel like I'm not getting access. When I go back to Washington, I pick a new team and, and then at the end I pick another

team. I looked for a different set of expertise. I want some different kinds of people this time, people who really know the ins and outs of laboratories and spend a lot of time in them and can walk into a lab and tell me they're doing bad things here or not doing bad things. And on the British side I've got some real experts. A number of these UK people are the ones who went into the Soviet Union and looked at all the biological weapons labs. I'm fighting a constant problem, it's easy to hide biological weapons. Particularly those from new biotech. We had agent reports that turned out to be the same kind of bad ones we had in Iraq but they were saying there were facilities built in the desert, which turned out not to be true. But we had to find out if it was true. We had to go look. Another thing I should point out is that once we got past that consulate in England, as soon as we arrived in Tripoli there were no customs. I mean they whisked us right around the airport into a nice lounge with food and drink, no alcohol of course. Our bags are whisked off and we have absolutely no trouble on that first round in terms of coordination and seeing people we wanted to see. On our first trip, our whole group, which is all four teams, were in a big religious compound with guest facilities with a tall wall around it. We were totally locked in. Everywhere we went we had at least six large security guards with us. We were allowed to walk in the bazaars with our guards. The later visits will be much different, with trips to beautiful Roman ruins, Sabratha and Magnus.

Q: I'm told they're really spectacular.

CROCKER: These sites rival Rome. They are two big cities that Marcus Aurelius built to rival Rome. And of course eventually they send the Roman Army against him. The two Coliseums are like Rome. Later I'll tell you about Sabratha and Magnus. They were wonderful about taking us everywhere we wanted to go. On the next three trips we stay in the lovely Corinthian Hotel. I used to actually walk into the hotel lobby, the center, and all I did was raise my hand and my driver was there. He was a great guy and spoke perfect English, was very friendly, loved to hear all about America. And of course I brought him all kinds of music tapes, things he wanted when I came back. And most of the bodyguards didn't talk to us, they didn't speak English much, but they were all big guys with bad beards and suits and big guns. And they weren't afraid to pull those guns out either and scare the living daylights out of the Libyan citizens. Some people were very scared of Libyan security people. And we would go through town at 110 miles an hour on these boulevards, all built by the Germans. Everyone got out of the way. And every policeman knew we were coming and had the street blocked off. If somebody started to pull up in a car, that big gun came out, pointed out the window.

Q: OK, today is the 11th of September, 9/11, 2012 with Gary Crocker. And Gary, we talked about your first trip to Libya. But what were you out to accomplish and what was accomplished?

CROCKER: There were secret meetings that went on for about a year with Saif, who is Qadhafi's son. And it's interesting that it's Saif because he's trained in the UK at the London School of Economics. He was pro-western investment, was somebody that we

were able to deal with. As far as I know they didn't deal with Qadhafi at all. It was with his son. But Qadhafi approved everything. He makes all the decisions in Libya. The idea that there's a government is a joke, which I'll mention later. They made a deal that the British and the U.S. would come and take all the long-range missiles that could hit Israel, we'd destroy all the chemical weapons, destroy whatever biological weapons program they had, and whatever nuclear program they had. In exchange, we would grant them diplomatic recognition and form an embassy in Libya. Basically the US had left when Qadhafi burned the U.S. embassy. We're there when they are celebrating his 40th anniversary. Qadhafi is not the Chairman or the President or anything like that. He is the tribal leader. He is Colonel Qadhafi. He holds no actual official position. My son said once -- I was telling him years ago about Libya -- and he says if the guy's so powerful why doesn't he make himself a general? But you'd have to know Qadhafi. He wears many fancy uniforms -- he's on I think it's around 30,000 billboards. Kim Jong-Il in Korea, not the father, had more.

Q: He's the son, Kim Jong-il. Kim Jong-un is his son.

CROCKER: Yes, the little short guy with the bad haircut. He had 37,000 billboards, but he also had thousands of statues of himself, Qadhafi didn't do statues. The irony of dealing with Saif is that in the 1980s they had a big chemical weapons factory called Rabta. We were threatening to bomb it. Qadhafi had his people bomb the PanAm aircraft at Lockerbie. In 1986 we send the planes in and we bomb his house. It's a huge palace right off the big boulevard with all his women guards. The only fatality was Saif's daughter. It's sort of ironic that we killed his daughter, yet he's the guy we negotiate with. It's significant that in 2004 we finally get a chance to get rid of Libya's weapons of mass destruction.

We take all the missiles out by boat and plane and we start destroying the chemical weapons. It takes me six trips through to 2006 to go to every lab and place there could be a biological weapons program. There was a very scary (*to me*) kind of open pit with the nuclear rods visible in blue water. The plan was a good one, to go in and each of the teams look at everything in that country and make sure we could verify compliance in the Verification Bureau, which writes the compliance report. The Bureau has a large intelligence component and scientists.

Some of the people we met had been in the U.S. because their children were born there and they had certain rights to go back. But most of them had never been back to America. We have an education program in mind with another separate team working on the problem of bringing Libyans students here. We also have some agricultural teams, business people involved. Oil was the big one, obviously.

The Corinthian Hotel was our base the last three trips. We also stayed in a hotel in Benghazi, which is to the east of Tripoli. We temporarily had our embassy at the Corinthian with secure communications so we could send cables to Washington. Qadhafi doesn't allow drinking or nightclubs.

Q: Excuse me, I just want to stop for one second. For the transcriber, you might put in here that we're doing a bit of a reprise because we have two interns in our program to whom he's addressing.

CROCKER: To recap for the interns, three things surprised me: first, women rights, one woman was the head of a hospital, they can rise up to positions, drive cars and wear western clothes. Secondly, they have free public health that includes all the migrant workers. There's very little disease in the country because it's very dry and hot. But they did have TB brought in from other places. Third, free education for everybody, including the workers. I talked to the college administrator about having American experts come help them with the administration of the education system. The plan is to get the weapons out, start programs, I'll mention some of these later, actual programs that will help us work with them. The idea being that we would move into a new relationship of trade and investment and diplomatic recognition. And we actually have an ulterior motive. We're looking at Syria next, we make this work as an example to Syria, give up your weapons of mass destruction, you don't need them anyway and good things come your way. We face an uphill battle with a number of congressmen who don't understand dealing with a terrorist. There was a view that Qadhafi was doing this because of what we did in Iraq. It scared Qadhafi in this view. My answer should be that's not very likely, quite frankly. The list I'm going to give you is much more likely from what we saw. His economy was really going downhill fast and he was losing the oilfields because they were deteriorating, they hadn't been maintained. And actually I should say that the first thing we find is sanctions worked. Usually you hear in political arguments that the sanctions don't work and diplomacy doesn't work, you have to use the military. Well, sanctions do work, and we have lots of examples around the world. We saw case after case when we go to the schools, the hospitals, the laboratories, that they were using black market products they couldn't use. One of the beautiful things about doing business with America is that you get an entire tech team and manuals. The Soviets, then Russians just never did that well with support. They gave them military equipment, but didn't help them make it work. A lot of their weapons didn't work very well anyway. Ten thousand Soviet tanks rusted away. Saif is probably thinking too, he's going to be the new leader eventually when Qadhafi's gone and he wants to get this economy straightened out and get rid of sanctions. Some of our European allies were helping on sanctions. But underneath, companies were trying to do business, the Italians and Spanish were still doing a thriving business in Libya. There was a very wealthy class of Libyans. There's only five million in a 30-mile stretch along the sea. Almost all labor is done by people brought in from outside. And the Libyans don't really make anything important at all. Foreign companies make everything important. Qadhafi's dream failed. He was going to be sort of like a Caliph with the whole world under his vision of God and Islam. He does get a lot of people, by the way, from all over the world to come to his conferences. I went to an impressive biotech conference in Sabha as a guest of the former Prime Minister on his jet. He had the money and the facilities and he paid foreigners to come. But he gets more unpopular in the world with his constant fight with the Saudis and others because of his terrorist problem. Part of the agreement for us going in is he pays each family of victims from Lockerbie three million dollars. I'm not sure he finished before they killed him. I think he realized weapons of mass destruction was a bad road to go down. Qadhafi did

support all kinds of terrorist-type activities around the world. Lots of small countries came to him for money and weapons.

Q: When you wound up this first meeting, you didn't really say how you felt about this first meeting, the accomplishments of it?

CROCKER: Our teams operate on different planes: the missile people are successful within a month or so. Libya gives them up and we ship them to the UK and the United States. Chemical weapons were found and destruction started.

Q: How do you destroy them?

CROCKER: The Soviets do it one way and the Russians do it another way and we do it another way. We actually burn everything. And basically reduce it all to ash and it's put in these big containers, because it's still got a lot of heavy metal and junk in it. It's stored out in Colorado and other places. The Russians liked to drill, get the agent out, burn the agent and then burn the shell casing. We'd incinerate the whole thing. We met with them on building the destruction facilities, some U.S. money went in to help them destroy it, and still they're long ways from completion. We're way down the line, we've destroyed a lot. Rabta is no longer a production facility. On the nuclear, we took out the centrifuges and everything that had anything to do with nuclear and shipped it out of there very easily. My team has the problem that we have to poke around the whole country looking for hidden laboratories and plants. The first problem is we have these two professors, one is an actual university professor of biology, and the other is a scientist, who has a research institute. These are our two contacts, period, no government officials. It was a government biological weapons program. But I don't ever get to see any government people. All my colleagues are meeting with the generals and the vice-premier and other senior officials, and they're getting boxes of documents. Except for a story I got nothing. A story about how they were asked to build a biological plant that they knew was for biological weapons, but they were hoping it would help the country in biotech. Every time we bring up national security they don't know anything. I started complaining fairly early during the second trip. On the second trip I changed to a world renowned expert on smallpox who's a colonel in the U.S. Army. And he's kind of considered the world's expert on these kinds of things. And then I picked another sort of expert on weapons. And I went a different route, especially in Benghazi where the Libyans accused these Bulgarian nurses and doctors of killing Libyans.

Q: I remember the case. It was about smallpox.

CROCKER: Yes. They said they had spread smallpox in this hospital. It was a cover-up for something bad the Libyans did, but they were accusing the nurses. We went right into the lion's den with the world's best expert and he just told them that their story was totally unscientific and made no sense whatsoever. They knew who he was and there wasn't much they could say. We said they should let these Bulgarians go, which they eventually did, I believe.

Q: Yes, they did.

CROCKER: We went to a place called Sabha, which is in the desert. It's an old Foreign Legion post. We looked at their laboratories. We actually flew on an airplane with the official who used to be Prime Minister of Libya, now he was a senior army officer. He was very friendly and very interested in getting the United States to come do more biotech work in Libya. We sat through an all-day conference at Sabha. The first thing that interested me was everybody who came there from other countries were all using U.S. slides from TV shows or documentaries from the U.S. PowerPoint, canned PowerPoint.

The General made a talk and he pointed out that our presence could lead to great things. I'm pointing this out because we're not there on a diplomatic mission or to help them with their education program or whatever. What happens is they are showing us anything we want. It's not like the old Soviet Union days where we had to go poke all over looking for where they hid everything. We're talking show me where your secret biological weapons plant is. They're talking they want to send their kids to the U.S. and they want biotech from U.S. companies. I made six trips to Libya because I wouldn't give up. I felt we had never met the right people. I'm back at State and we have an office in State, OES, Oceans, Environment, and Science. Their Assistant Secretary is a former astronaut. And I went in to see him and he said well, I want to go to Libya and I say great, we want you to go to Libya. I said he needs to go through my science contact, a friend of Qadhafi's, relative actually, and he's the one who has the scientific research place. I point out I am using him to establish an Academy of Science. You have to contact him and he'll arrange for you to be met at the airport, go through customs, and they'll take care of you in Libya. He says, I'm not doing that, we're going through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Well, I pointed out an official I met who said he was in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sat in on the meetings, and said nothing. I could never find his building, because Qadhafi is the government, period. There's a thing called parliament, but nothing gets done unless Qadhafi says it's going to be done. If you want to go there and visit, we plowed the ground and we have the contacts. I should mention I'm really unhappy they've gotten rid of the Academy of Sciences, so they don't have any records. They destroyed the records. UK Peter Biggins and I told them we're going to be doing business for quite a while and we need some kind of place that we can meet with your scientists, like an Academy of Sciences. I wrote the charter. It was British, U.S., Libyan, tripartite Academy of Sciences. I had a reluctant British member of our team at this time. He and I weren't even on the same sheet of music about our goals. By the third trip, we came back and they had an office in Tripoli, well staffed and funded. We needed some way to meet and make sure there's never any biological weapons programs and that they are doing science in a transparent manner.

On the next visit we would just go straight there and it helped us expand what we were doing. I have all this pressure from The White House and State to wrap up. I said, I was not even close to being at a point where I would sign off that they haven't got a biological weapons program. Because I've uncovered some little things that indicate to me there was a national security element directing these professors, and I want to talk to them. I

mean I'm not going to be happy until I understand why they wanted biological weapons. I was also burned from years in arms control in Geneva where we talked in the abstract with all the countries of the world, who said they do not have any of the weapons under discussion. And we were the only country at the table admitting we did. By everybody else, I mean that includes the French and the Israelis and many others. In nuclear weapons negotiations in Geneva, where we're talking about big missiles, everybody admitted they had them and we argue over how many.

I insisted that we meet the former prime minister, now a general, and lay out my case. On the last visit in 2006 I beat them down and they arranged the meeting. He knew who I was from the trip to Sabha. I talked to him on the plane and I talked to him at the conference. They opened the meeting and turned it over to me. The two professors are there and the British and the reluctant Brit who thought I was being way too hard on the Libyans. The general said he understood completely. He looks at the professors and he says he will call his national security contact and they will have 24 hours to give me every single document they have. He said he wants this solved. I got lots of documents on the different projects, architectural designs for the bio facilities, I mean it was people like the South Koreans, Yugoslavs, other allies and friends had been in there bidding, trying to build it. But every time they did over a 20-year period, every time we stopped them. Our intelligence was good enough that we found out what country was bidding. We ratted on the company to the government and they stopped the projects. So what had happened over all these years is they'd been filing away these plans, but it was never getting built. They actually had one place that they had taken us, a place that was partially built. I got what I wanted, which was a bunch of documents that most people didn't care about that much, but I shipped it back to CIA. Some was in English because they provided us with material on their products, dates and milk and goats milk. Then I went into this little secure room and typed a message back to Washington that said OK, they don't have a BW program. And that was the end of that.

There is one more ending here. There were six visits over a two-year period from 2004-2006. When we come back, we meet with an interagency team and with the British and we go over all the intelligence and everything that's happened and there's a great sharing program of what we're going to do next. And it was an extremely well run interagency program. Not all of them are, this was done well. Paula DeSutter was the Assistant Secretary in charge. Condi Rice was at the National Security Council, but then becomes Secretary of State through this process. We met with her and, after the last trip we had brand new computer technologies that prepared the records. We had some meetings at The White House about where we were going next. One would think we were on a whole new track because Qadhafi's done everything we've asked. I mean it's been smooth. So, we trot down to the Hill (I'm not a big fan, by the way of hearings on the Hill).

Q: I take it you had bad experiences there.

CROCKER: Yes. You get a bad taste in your mouth on the Hill. This was particularly bad because you have two Assistant Secretaries, Paula DeSutter and Nicholas Burns. Two

pretty well known officers. We have the four team leaders sitting behind. Henry Hyde is the chairman of the committee. We've already been kept waiting 45 minutes. That's not unusual. Then he says, "Well, before we start, we want to have some of our witnesses." And he trots out no-name think tank people to lecture us for the next hour or so about how bad Qadhafi is and that he's a terrorist.

I want to jump up and say, "This isn't a liberal administration! These are conservative Republicans!" Obviously we know he's bad, that's why we defanged him. The four of us are to testify about a very successful international foreign policy. Paula DeSutter and Nick Burns finally told us to leave and go on back. We never testified. I mean it went on for hours. I remember Larry Eagleburger was the best at this. He used to be Deputy Secretary of State and acting Sec-State at one time.

Q: From Wisconsin.

CROCKER: Larry Eagleburger's one of the real interesting officers in the State Department. At this hearing many years ago I went with him as backup. Larry just said, "Well, I have to get over to The White House, so here's my testimony in writing for the committee. He just walked out. He was not going to sit there at his level and be fooled around with. We had this opportunity with Qadhafi and I had argued at The White House that we have to really bite a bitter pill here and somebody's got to go see him. The UK Prime Minister, Blair, had gone to see him in Libya. The EU had invited him to bring his big black tent and put it on the presidential grounds in Brussels. They're courting him like crazy. Everybody's thinking trade. We're told by the FBI and all other authorities there would be *no* Libyans coming to this country, they're terrorists and they're not coming to this country. We're not having meetings with these people, the military and the professors and officials. We wanted to have a meeting at some neat site here and bring them all over here and have a sort of lessons learned conference and where do we go from here. Not going to happen. I wondered who's running the government. The highest ranking person to see Qadhafi from our government was a Deputy Assistant Secretary. All Qadhafi wanted was to be invited to The White House and then he could thumb his nose at the Saudis. But that wasn't going to happen. Somebody senior should have seen him. And at the very end of the Bush administration, Condi Rice actually met him, but then it was far too late. Because he got really ticked off and he starts spreading the word, the Americans can't be trusted. The embassy got established and some things got done. It soured the program we had in mind that the next step was Syria. I'd sort of end by saying Bush deserved a foreign policy success. He did a good job. I have had a long history in bringing foreigners to this country, particularly Russians, and showing them our country. I thought it was time to reestablish friendships with Libyans.

Q: I agree that Eisenhower's old "People-to-People" program was successful.

CROCKER: I worked with the "People-to-People" program for many years. Fortunately, we have lots of Americans that take in international students and adults. It's a shame because we should have had that generation of Libyans coming here. We had lots of other ideas, military and business ideas. I'd already contacted people in South Carolina. I spent

a lot of time down there. Libya had a sister city kind of thing going with South Carolina because of the similarities with palm trees. Dates are one of their big products. So it's really kind of a shame in the way that the end of the story, you know, wasn't a complete success. And, as you know, it gets really bad. Saif goes ballistic and is now a criminal. They kill Qadhafi and the whole country is a bloody mess. And one thing I should mention too is that sort of like Saudi Arabia and others, Qadhafi and his people were working with our intelligence services on Islamic terrorists. Qadhafi did not like al-Qaeda, he didn't like the Muslim Brotherhood or the radical Islamic terrorists. Those were his enemies, people who tried to kill him, who didn't like his brand of Islam and thought it was heretical. He was very happy to cooperate on terrorism. But that's sort of the end of the story. After me, many people did still go to Libya until the whole thing went to hell.

Q: One of the things I'd like to mention is that one of our strongest foreign policy weapons has been the openness of American society. I mean, particularly students, come away with a positive experience. Some don't, of course.

I was interviewing a lady, Leslie Rowe, who was ambassador several times in Africa. But as a young student, she went on a scholarship for one year to France and went to Sorbonne during '68, during that whole thing there. But she went on a tour of Eastern Europe, mainly the Soviet Union, Moscow, Leningrad, and then Prague, and Warsaw, and East Germany with mainly French students. And she came away with a bad impression. The Soviet Police apparatus searched their luggage when they weren't there and they were contained in their travel. It left a bad taste in their mouth, which lasted for the rest of the time. I mean this shows you how one should keep in mind the long-term impressions. Students aren't going to destroy a country and we automatically treat them nicely. I mean this is in our nature.

CROCKER: In college I met an African student and he said he went first to Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow where they sent him. He said he did not like their system, their communism, the way they treated people. He said the only reason they had us there, they couldn't stand black people, but they wanted to exploit Africa.

Q: The Soviets are not very good with foreigners.

CROCKER: This African then went to Oxford after that. And now he'd come to the University of Washington in Seattle, because we all know how great that is. (For the interns, I went to the UW in Seattle). He said Washington was totally different, I feel so at home here. People are not fawning over me in a way. I'm just a student here and I'm enjoying this as a student and everybody's very open and friendly. There's no prejudice here. It's a university with people from many, many countries.

I mean I used to go take a shower when I got done having a meeting with the Soviets. You just feel dirty. I mean it's just the lies and insults. I remember a KGB official who I asked about Ambassador Israylian, a man that I had worked with in Geneva who I was very fond of.

And he said, Oh well, he's in Georgia now. He's *Jewish* you know, like we big powers know about Jews.

I could have been Jewish for all he knew. They're so sure everybody shares their bigoted view. My wife brought foreign students to America, put them in homes all over the country. I talked to a lot of students all summer, we'd bring kids from every state, for a program called Lead America. I talked to them a lot about getting into international affairs. I stress English and language and history. But I always used my daughter as an example of the language and the history, because she went to the Sorbonne and she lived with a French family. We had lived in Geneva and she went to French school. So her French was beautiful and she went off and taught in England. And then sent her resume in and got a job in The White House where she worked for many years. I tell students all the time that language can be that difference. I had a young lady I hired from Stanford who studied Russian and was really fluent. And the opportunity came up when the Soviet Union fell to go to a meeting in Central Asia with all of the new 16 republics and Yeltsin. And she got to go. She had also studied Central Asia. My daughter would get calls at The White House to meet the President and his wife from France because her French was better than anybody at The White House. She got to escort Havel. All these great things happened to her because she could speak French. Her writing ability was strong. I also make a very strong case that if you're going to do international affairs, the Foreign Service, you've got to know history. I mean you can't mess around in these issues without knowing history. I have seen very senior people who did not know the history go to an international meeting and embarrass us. My daughter's international affairs studies – plus living with me – helped her at the White House.

Q: We've got a real problem coming up with our republican team, which has no foreign experience.

CROCKER: I've been watching the conventions carefully and I think at the Republican Convention there's not a single mention of our troops, veterans, military families.

Q: I find that incredible.

CROCKER: Romney doesn't have any background in military affairs or any background in national security issues. It takes me years to teach an intern. National security is complicated and difficult. The Middle East negotiations have gone on as long as I can remember and as long as you can remember. We haven't got it done yet. I mean these are hard, hard problems. You have to surround yourself with the best people. And Romney has already got Bolton as his advisor

Q: It's incredible. OK, we have two interns here today. If you'd introduce yourselves and where you're from and then I'll let you ask questions.

BEST: Sarah Best. I'm from Wisconsin, but my home school is Bradley University, Peoria.

CROCKER: What are you going to do? What's your major?

BEST: I'm an international studies and Spanish major with a minor in religious studies.

CROCKER: Oh good! Well, that's interesting, sounds good.

FISHER: I'm Jessica Fisher. I'm from Florida and my home school is Stetson University. And I'm studying political science and French.

CROCKER: Oh, that's a great school. I did a debate down there one time. As I'm doing this history, a lot of things are coming back to me and I'm going through old records. And one of them was my time at Stetson and the debate and it was all about NATO expansion. I was voted against; 100 against one. I mean they were all against me. I was representing the State Department view and everybody was saying we are going to upset the Russians if we expand NATO. And I've always thought, "I need to call Stetson and say could we have another one of those debates?"

FISHER: I'll arrange it for you.

CROCKER: I would love to go down there and speak again. It doesn't have to be NATO expansion, that's not all that interesting a subject these days since we expanded and the Russians haven't attacked yet.

FISHER: Yes.

CROCKER: They would be more interested in hearing about our Libyan adventures or a few of the other issues, like Syria. But I would love to go back down there. I have an uncle living there.

FISHER: Yes.

BEST: On current affairs, I know I saw the other day that I think France is really worried about Syria using chemical weapons. I mean do you think they're actually going to? Or what do you think is going to happen?

CROCKER: Well, first they have a serious chemical weapons capability. The Russians helped them originally and then they become very good on their own. They have serious nerve gas weapons. Why do I say this? Because many times we haven't known. Like if you asked me about North Korea, we've been trying to find out about their weapons for years. We don't actually know how much they have, it's such a closed nation. But in the case of Syria, we have a lot of information. It's supposedly secured, but not secured if the people fighting Assad take over that area and go tromping in. If we hadn't destroyed the chemicals in Libya, what might of happened? We took all the missiles out. The Syrians might use them on people if they are desperate.

Q: It's not very usable.

CROCKER: Well, it is usable actually. In the old days you had big canisters of mustard gas, all right. Today some countries have lethal nerve gas, but the area affected would be small compared to nuclear or biological weapons. Chemicals are hard to use properly because of terrain and weather. But we're talking about new sophisticated delivery devices and enhanced agents. The world of biotech can enhance the effectiveness. Assad may use chemical weapons and there may be cries to attack him for doing so, but there is also a strong reluctance to get involved in another conflict after Iraq and Afghanistan. However, if Obama said enough's enough and they started shooting down Syrian planes tomorrow, I don't think anybody in this country would care much. There is a good article today by a general who defected from Syria who's saying that we don't want any troops or support, this is our fight and we don't want anybody else interfering with it and getting in the middle of this. But I think the worry would be somebody overruns a chemical area and gets a hold of the weapons.

BEST: Do they know what they're doing with these weapons?

CROCKER: They know there's a big market for them, they would sell for a lot to terrorists.

FISHER: I just have a comment. It's interesting how you're talking about in Syria they don't want troops or anything. Because last week my class actually met with the Foreign Affairs Director of the Syrian National Council. And he was telling us his view. He was giving a story, like, we need help. He said we want your troops. And he was almost begging for help.

CROCKER: That is very interesting. It proves that good information can come from somewhere besides computers and classified intelligence.

FISHER: So I just think that's interesting that there are all these conflicting views within Syria, and I think that's why it's such a touchy situation, because it's messy.

CROCKER: I mean in some ways I think that's why Hillary Clinton as Secretary has been guarded and others question who the opponents really are. We had this problem in Libya. Who's going to take over?

FISHER: I agree. That's my point.

BEST: I also agree. Who is fighting Assad?

CROCKER: We just had an Arab Spring with mixed results on the voting and whatever. So the question is who are you going to back. Let's take a whole new approach and see what your attitude is. That it's not so much about Syria, but it's about our allies, the Turks in particular. I mean do we owe the Turks? They've been a good NATO ally. And they're stuck with this bad situation. They've got the refugees, they've got the nearby threat. Do

we owe our allies, and if not the region, some sort of leadership? What do you think about that? I mean it's not so much helping the Syrians going down, but we have allies and a regional problem that if this gets out of hand it's going to be oops, now we have to do something about it. So that's a whole different way to look at it. Having talked to that Syrian, what would you do?

FISHER: Well, a lot of people kept bringing up that we're right now just kind of sitting on it and just giving aid because of the elections. A lot of people are making that argument, that's playing a big issue. And I also kind of think it's smart right now, considering our allies are in this situation. And there's other countries involved like Iran and Israel and others that make it complicated and dangerous

CROCKER: That it could spin out?

FISHER: Yes. Expand into a wider conflict.

CROCKER: My gut feeling is we can't go on too much longer without leading. Sort of despite the election problem. The problem is that if the President does take action it's going to be seen as political, that he's trying to win the election. I personally think he's gotten involved in the national security issue pretty well. I think it's becoming rather obvious that he actually has been the Commander in Chief and he's been decisive. I think he's got the edge on that one. But, my gut tells me that if I was working in State I'd be saying, we can't let so many people a day get killed. Our friends, the Turks, are stuck with a huge refugee population, I think we have to make a move. Like most crisis situations, it poses difficult and complicated decisions. What do you think?

Q: I don't know. It's complicated.

CROCKER: It is complicated. I know.

Q: Well, also, I think there's another shoe that's hanging, and that's will Israel bomb Iran? And this would be seen as using the weakness of our being in the middle of a political season. And the Jewish vote is so important. This could be a very complicating thing.

CROCKER: Yes.

Q: And decisions I think would be made that might not be strategic, but more political. It's disturbing.

CROCKER: I was reading this morning and thinking of an academic named Graham Allison who used to be at Harvard and he actually did a stint in the Pentagon. He's written some interesting books. But I was very impressed when I first came to Washington with his advice about writing government papers. It was that you shouldn't say Russia believes or Russia this or the Soviet Union says that. In today's paper it would be "Israel." It's not Israel. He would say you should say Netanyahu, not Israel. And he had all kinds of

advice like this. And I changed my writing style, both at Defense and when I went to State Department to be very careful not to do that. It's like saying, "American's believe." What the hell's that supposed to mean?

FISHER: I understand your point. We all do it.

CROCKER: You hear it all the time. Just travel around the country. So I was thinking today, I'm not Jewish, but I have a lot of Jewish relatives through my wife's family. And I visited them. I remember all of them, they *hated* Sharon and they don't like Netanyahu a lot. I mean Netanyahu represents the very orthodox side. The side that believes that Arabs never had any right to any part of Israel, they shouldn't even be in Israeli territory. That's Netanyahu's view. I learned from experts that have spent time studying him. He has a very orthodox view of history and he's not about to compromise. And Sharon, if you could get him to say it -- he basically said the only good Arab's a dead Arab. I mean he hated Arabs.

Whereas Perez, Rabin, these were all the more reasonable people that we've dealt with for a long time. But lots of Israelis don't share these orthodox views.

CROCKER: You are undergraduates?

FISHER: Yes.

BEST: Yes.

CROCKER: Where are you going to go to graduate school? What's going to happen next?

FISHER: I'm currently applying to Northwestern for a master's in public policy and public administration.

CROCKER: Is that the double masters? I know Georgetown offers one with an international affairs and public policy double

FISHER: Yes. And my focus is global policy.

Q: And both of them are at American University now for the Washington Semester. Roz Ridgeway actually was a graduate of this program.

CROCKER: I'd put her right up there in the top list of diplomats.

Q: And we have this intern program, which I think works very well, which includes sitting in on these interviews we have here. But also, to work over our oral histories and to extract from them nuggets, which we use for various collections.

CROCKER: I've lectured there and it's actually where my Lead America students, the

high school students, stayed. We used American a lot. And then my daughter and I have done some work with American University with some of their great programs. They have some women studies programs that include TV productions.

BEST/FISHER: Yes, we've heard about them.

CROCKER: The one they did on Muslim women was incredible. The dean of the School of International Affairs is also the president of the national international affairs association. I have to lecture there soon.

FISHER: Yes, I like it.

Q: OK, well Gary, I want to thank you very much. This has been fun.

CROCKER: It has. I'll miss these sessions and talking to interns.

End of interview