Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

ROBERT HOPPER

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INTERVIEW

[Note: This interview was not edited by Mr. Hopper]

Q: Bob, it's really good to have this opportunity to talk with you and I'm glad that after a year or so of chatting about it, we're finally sitting down to talk.

HOPPER: Good.

Q: It looks to me like you were born in California, went to college in California. I'm wondering how and when your interest in international affairs and the Foreign Service – the State Department – got started.

HOPPER: It's actually a touching story that I can tell something about the continuity in the Foreign Service. I had a high school history and social studies teacher who was just a wonderful, amazing man. He seemed like an older person at the time and I guess he was thirty-five. He was a World War II veteran born in Brooklyn; a Scotch-Irish fellow with bright red hair and a kind of wild working-class demeanor, and a real intellect who had been a veteran; had served in the Pacific theater and in India during the war. It was what many schools call their great class of 1948, '49; the GI Bill of Rights (the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944).

He had gone to the University of Southern California (USC) and studied international relations. He passed the written exam for the Foreign Service, went to take the orals, and was rejected and came away feeling that he had been unworthy because he was a working-class Brooklyn Irish, and that culturally he had failed. He really was as qualified as anyone else, but it just wasn't a place at that time that wanted him. And amazingly, rather than embitter him, he still remained interested in foreign affairs and so became a teacher and sought to inspire people. He took me under his wing and encouraged me to try for the Foreign Service. I went to USC, studied international relations, and had some wonderful professors who did the same - encouraging me. In May of '65 I took the written exam, or whenever it was given in '65, passed it, waited a while, and then took the orals in May or June in Los Angeles.

It was an interesting experience. It was this typical mixed team; I think it actually did have a woman on it. And they played the games of – it was horrid. I didn't smoke so they had an ashtray and they were going to move the ashtray, but they did a couple of

culturally awkward things to see how I would react and had this wonderful question about if you're the public affairs officer in Stockholm and you're the person doing the American Field Service Exchange Program and the Swedes are getting upset because of the Vietnam War, and you're at a reception and how do you calm everyone down? It actually was a very good question that made me think about lots of things. That went on for a couple of hours. Then they said, "Well thank you, we'll put you on the list." I was ready to get out of there. So I got on the list, got married, went to New York, attended graduate school at NYU (New York University), and kept in touch. Then out of the blue, I got a letter from personnel for the junior officer people saying essentially that because of the Vietnam War they had some openings that they needed to fill, but that they didn't actually want me to come in and go anyplace, but it would be doing everybody a service if I would agree to take my oath, become a Foreign Service Officer (FSO) and continue what I was doing without pay.

Q: And go back to graduate school?

HOPPER: And just stay in graduate school. So in April of 1967 while in the middle of preparing for what I thought would be a Ph.D., I went down to a pen store in Greenwich Village and took my oath of office as a Foreign Service Officer and went immediately on leave without pay. I discovered, or rediscovered a month ago, that I was getting six months of both annual leave and retirement credit, for each calendar year I was doing this. So, I ended up getting three six-month segments of credit, which was one of the few managerial gifts I ever received. I finished up my orals and written Ph.D. exam in the late spring of '69 and came down in June and joined the Foreign Service.

When I started, the Vietnam War was really hot; the NYU students had just run McNamara off the dias at a graduation ceremony, and a lot of people thought I was weird to even want to work with the government. I got a little bit of pressure because I was doing it. However, by the spring of '69, the academic job market had gone south, and I had some of these same people asking me, "Can you get me into the Foreign Service?" and "Do you know how I can get a job with the government?" – that was kind of an interesting education on how the economy and people's political views are partly connected.

Q: In '69, campuses across the United States were not all that much better than they'd been a year or two earlier.

HOPPER: They weren't; it was the economy and job prospects that were different.

Q: Let me back up and clarify one small question. The high school teacher that had been such an influence on you in terms of what you studied and your interest in taking the Foreign Service exam and so on, what high school was that at?

HOPPER: It was at San Pedro High School in the city of Los Angeles.

Q: And then at NYU graduate school, you did all of the work for your Ph.D., but you never actually got it, or did you go back and write a dissertation later?

HOPPER: What happened was a story that shows that it's not just the State Department that is not well managed. I had passed my written comprehensives in March of '69 and then in June came down to start the Foreign Service. I'd made arrangements at NYU where they were supposed to get in touch with me so that I could come back and take my orals. I kept waiting and waiting and never heard from them. In January of '70, as I was taking Spanish and getting ready to go to my first post - which we'll get back to later – my wife got a call at home from NYU saying, "We're a little worried. We haven't heard from Bob and his oral exam is this afternoon at two o'clock."

Q: This afternoon?

HOPPER: This afternoon. At two o'clock. So Carol tracked me down and I went to the Foreign Service Lounge, worked out how to get on the shuttle, and took a cab home. I picked up my briefcase that had my NYU stuff in it, took the shuttle up to La Guardia, took a taxi to NYU, and got there a half an hour before the exam. I went through these notes quickly, than walked into the Department of Government board room. To my shock, instead of there being three people in my field, there were seven members of the faculty there. Then the exam starts by asking me about the areas I've done poorly in.

The thing rambled on. The exam was very awkward and rough because I had not studied any of the bibliographic material. After about two hours - it's sort of like the Foreign Service Oral Exam, in fact - the chairman of the group said, "Well, thank you. We'd like to go and consider this." Then, they broke for a half an hour. It was like a jury. They came back and said, "Well Bob, that was the strangest oral exam we've ever heard. You were like a rank amateur on the bibliographic and the factual things that people usually kill. But you were wonderful on the more difficult things, so we've decided to pass you and we'll go ahead and form your dissertation committee." I said, "Maybe you'd like to know why I wasn't ready," and I told them the story of only hearing that morning. They said, "Oh, my god." They later went and consulted with the secretary of the professor who was supposed to have written all the invitations and found that she had quit and that there was now a new person. They also discovered that the professor had dictated maybe fifteen letters inviting people that had never been transcribed or sent, and no one had ever noticed. So they frantically started calling everybody else.

I then went on to my first post in Monterrey with an agreement that one of the professors would be the chairman of my dissertation committee and that I would be getting a letter telling me what to do. I was going to do my dissertation on the role of centralization in Mexico using the struggles between Monterrey and Mexico City as the example. Well, I serve in Monterrey for two and a half years and I never get a letter from NYU. I wrote them three or four times, and nothing ever came back. So, while I was on home leave two and a half years later, I went to New York, and visited the department, and they apologized again. The guy quit who was supposed to be my chairman, and I said, "Well

okay, what do I do? I'd like to keep trying," and they said, "Well, we've also changed our policy and to maintain your maintenance of curriculum fee you have to pay the equivalent of full tuition for each semester you've been gone." So it's like I owed them $3000 or something…

Q: For nothing.

HOPPER: For nothing. And I said, "Well thank you. You helped me make a very important decision in my life; I don't want your Ph.D." That was sort of it for me for a long time with academia.

Q: Meanwhile you had come to Washington; joined the Foreign Service in June right after the end of the academic year in 1969. Did the basic orientation A-100 course and then Spanish language training?

HOPPER: Yes.

Q: For how many months?

HOPPER: For the standard twenty weeks. We were a pretty large class; and it was a very interesting one. There were sixty-five of us and in 1969 the orientation training combined USIA (United States Information Agency) and State people. There were only, I think, about eight or ten USIA people, but sixty-five of us. We were a really diverse class with quite a few women, quite a few minorities, and after a few days we all discovered that there was a special minority hire program. That was news. The Department had actually tried to get minorities into the Department who were truly disadvantaged; and who weren't just sons of ambassadors, although there were two sons of ambassadors who came into the program. I had sitting next to me a young Hawaiian fellow who was part Chinese, part Hawaiian, and part Hispanic. He was a very bright, engaging young fellow - as we all were - who interpreted every bureaucratic rule as being discriminatorily aimed at him. As somebody who didn't feel that they were aimed at me, I could just see them as, "Hey, we're working for the government." Almost every one of the minority special hire people felt them as discriminatory; aimed at them, and intrusive. I think every one of those people were gone before they finished their first assignment.

Q: Is that a junior officer or a mid-level special hiring program?

HOPPER: That was a junior officer program. Watching over the course of time how we've struggled with bringing in minorities, one of the great challenges is that the Foreign Service worldwide is at the very least an upper middle class profession; and in many places, an upper class very elite profession. When you try to bring people in who are going to bridge so many gaps, they have to be stupendous people to make it work, unless they get a lot of support from their employer. And we didn't give them that once they came in. The idea of fairness was just treat everybody the same, which makes some sense. But it didn't work.

Q: If you don't give some kind of special consideration as well - at least in terms of counseling or advice or encouragement either in the Service or before they come in, as we've also tried on various occasions - it is difficult.

Did most of your class go to Vietnam in 1969 or…

HOPPER: *(laughs)* Another good story. So I was on leave without pay and invited to come down to join a class for a regular tour. Nary a word was said about Vietnam. I arrived in June, we're sitting around a table just chatting, getting to know one another, and instantly it becomes clear that of the sixty-five people, about a third of them came in one way or another, like me; just offered straight entries. The other two-thirds had been told they could only come in if they would agree to go to Vietnam. Of that group, half of them told the Department, "Up yours. I don't want to go. I'd rather do anything than do that." Those people, all within a month, got follow-up calls from the Department saying, "Okay, we've found some more spots. Would you come in?" The other third took the Department at its word and agreed to go to Vietnam. Needless to say, when everybody started comparing notes, all of that group felt betrayed in one way or another. Then, when the assignments were given out on what's now called Flag Day, eight of the group who said they'd rather do most anything than go to Vietnam, were assigned to Vietnam. One of them called their congressman. They all went ballistic and by the end of Flag Day, the person in charge of the junior officer program had been fired, all those assignments were broken, and those eight people got what looked like better assignments than anybody else, because the Department scrambled around and found things that they weren't going to give to junior officers. And it just added to this sense that one doesn't always get treated in your best interest and you've got to look after yourself, which was a very bad experience for the whole class to have at the beginning.

Q: Were members of the class given an opportunity to express any kind of preference about their first assignments?

HOPPER: Yes, it was before the period of being given a list of what was open, but it was at the beginning of trying to help negotiate assignments. I remember my interview with - I don't know if it was called a CDA (Career Development and Assignments Officer) or what it was called at the time.

Q: Career Development Officer.

HOPPER: We sat down and they asked me what I wanted to do, and I explained that I had done a lot of graduate work in the arms races between Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, and that ideally I'd like to be assigned to one of those three embassies. "We don't have anything in those three countries. Can you expand a little more?" I said, "Sure, I'd be happy to work in any South American embassy." "We don't have anything in South America. Would you be willing to consider Central America or the Caribbean?" I said, "Yes sure. An embassy in Central America or a fairly reasonable Caribbean nation, but I

don't want to go to an English speaking one; I want to do Spanish," and they said, "How would Mexico be?" "Sure, the embassy in Mexico City would be great." "Well, how about one of the consulates?" and I said, "Look, I'm from Los Angeles. If you try to send me to a border post, I'll quit." They said, "Okay, no border post." I said, "Yes, no border post, but sure, even though I don't want it, I'll go to Mexico." So we go on and I'm assigned to Monterrey. Three hours. It's like they had in their mind, "What is the closest we can get him?" If I hadn't objected, I'd have gone to Tijuana.

Q: Yes. But Monterrey is not quite on the border.

HOPPER: No, it's not quite on the border and it was actually a wonderful assignment. It was proof of a theory I would hear over and over again that oftentimes the jobs that you don't think you want can be very interesting and good. And I enjoyed Monterrey. But that was how they did it. It was the Department experimenting with trying to be a little more open and not really knowing how to do it. But I think that was the model that was followed. No matter how explicit they got, it was that negotiating with the employee, sort of setting limits, but not really knowing totally what the universe was. Also, with our class, the same thing happened on pay rates. When we sat down, we found out that there was a wide variance in starting pay among those with the same experiences. And it was like some technicians felt that the money was theirs and that they were going to get a bonus if they could bring somebody in as an 8 Step-10 or 1; whatever the lowest was. And other technicians had the view, "No, let's honor their experience." We talked to one another and complained, and they redid that. It was like we were told that we were the first class that had ever talked amongst ourselves about what the pay levels were and about their experiences, and that, until then, the Department had assumed that it could divide and conquer, and that since gentlemen didn't talk about what they were being paid, no one would ever catch them out. And they got caught. They established rules at that point that actually made it fairer.

Q: Had you had prior experience with Spanish or any other language before coming in, or did you come in very much as a language probationer, in effect?

HOPPER: I was a probationer, but I grew up in an ethnic town; the harbor of Los Angeles. We had twenty percent Italian, twenty percent varieties of Yugoslav, twenty percent Mexican, so there were lots of languages spoken. I spoke a little bit of Spanish for a long time. In fact, I was made the mentor, adviser, and interpreter to a Costa Rican immigrant in the fifth grade in my elementary school. So I'd had these experiences and I had gone to Brazil as an exchange student after high school and so spoke a little bit of Portuguese. I joke that I learned more Portuguese in six weeks living in Brazil and that it took college six semesters to make me forget it all. I spoke a little bit of some romance languages.

Q: Let me ask other question about before you came in. In 1967 you took the oath, then went on leave without pay until you actually came in, in June of '69. Was there any pressure from the Department during that period to come in sooner, or were they

content? I don't exactly understand why they wanted you to be on the rolls and then do basically nothing, as far as they were concerned, for two years.

HOPPER: They had positions and no money. They wanted to lock in and encumber the positions.

Q: So they didn't lose the positions?

HOPPER: Right. And I never felt a moment or ounce of pressure to come in until…they had always figured that I was going to do three years of graduate work; somewhere on some calendar from the get-go, I was penciled in for that June of '69 class. I did start to get pressure in the spring of '69 to not try to stay and write my dissertation, but to come in.

Q: So you came in, had Spanish language training, and went off to Monterrey? To issue visas?

HOPPER: Yes. I was in the immigrant visa section and there were five of us on the line at most times. The training then was scattered in the various buildings in Rosslyn. It was before there was a CONGEN (Consulate General) Rosslyn. The training for the consulate work was very academic. You studied the manuals and you took a test on the law. If you were a good student it was really easy, but you got no practice whatsoever at simulating interviews or any interpersonal skills.

Monterrey was a good learning pool; five people on the line, there were three of us who were brand new and two who had had some experience. I was paired with a senior or a mid-level officer who sort of showed me the ropes. But it was interesting; it was clear very quickly that there were two approaches to how to do immigrant visas. One was to assume that they were all lying to you and that your job was utterly to catch the liars and not let the people into the U.S. (United States). The other -especially in Mexico - was that they were all going to walk in anyway and that your job was to help expedite the process, if they had any equities and were okay and you were eventually going to do it, you should do it right away rather than string it out and use up all the resources. It was very hard to reconcile those two approaches because they both were based on a law and reality. So I felt sorry for the applicants at times, in that depending upon who interviewed them, they either got someone who felt they were in law enforcement and were trying to catch perjurers, or practical people who were trying to get them through.

Q: Who knew they were going to go through anyway, some other way?

HOPPER: Yes, and that was the other great frustration for everyone, including the head of the visa section who had worked at far-flung places. It was his first time in Mexico. He felt it was just so unfair that he had turned down so many Indonesians and Portuguese who couldn't swim the Pacific or the Atlantic, and why were these Mexicans able to thumb their noses at us and just walk across after we told them no. But they could.

Q: When you came in, you came in as a political cone officer or was this before cones?

HOPPER: There were no cones, but there were expectations. I was a political officer but there was no cone and I was told that it could easily be ten years before I'd be able to work in a real political job and that it might make sense, if I really wanted to get ahead, to consider specializing in consular, administration, or economic and commercial work. I ended up in Monterrey - there wasn't a political section. There was a large commercial section and after doing eighteen months of doing immigrant visa interviews, I did move up for the last year as the junior economic commercial officer and I actually liked it. I was quite content. There was a good job opening in the economic section in Yaounde and I used every ounce of influence - which wasn't very much - that I could muster to try to get there. After establishing I had some credentials and was okay at the work, the head of personnel on the economic side at State and the person at Commerce offered a deal. The deal I was offered was that there was some process to become an economic specialist and that if I would agree to be an economic-commercial officer and give up any prospects and hopes of political work, they would let me go to Yaounde. I wanted to be a political officer. I was happy to go do the economic and commercial work, but I didn't accept that deal.

Q: It probably would've involved going to the six month economic course or the FSI (Foreign Service Institute) perhaps.

HOPPER: Yes, something. It was fascinating, because that was a point in my life when I was interested in going to Africa. I was very much interested in going to a hardship post that had big differential and where it might be easier to take care of little kids. I probably had three places on my list that would've met that criteria and none of them came through. Instead, the Department asked me to come back to Washington and be the staff assistant in either EUR (Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs) or ARA (Bureau of Inter-American Affairs). I talked to people and I talked to a friend who was actually the staff assistant in ARA at the time and learned that they were going through a somewhat dysfunctional period, so I picked the EUR job and came back and did that.

Q: Let me ask you, before you get to that, just a little bit more about the commercial work in Monterrey, and also who was the principal officer of the consulate general. Was it mostly economic reporting or were you helping American businessmen – exporters? What sort of work did you do?

HOPPER: It was mostly helping new-to-market firms do commercial work. Doing the reports were very sector specific on opportunities. We set up little visiting trade fairs, but there was no macroeconomic reporting at all involved. I also was the political officer in that when I arrived, the consul general was on sick leave. Later he came back, and then left. Then we got a new consul general who had been the executive director in the Bureau of African Affairs. I think he's still around. I think I saw him a couple of months ago. He had been one of the first administrative officers designated to get an embassy. He had

been named the ambassador someplace in central Africa, and in his medical exam they found a tumor in his lung and he couldn't get a medical clearance. So, after some delay and hesitation, he was sent to Monterrey, because he could go up to San Antonio and places like that for medical treatment. So, he knew nothing about Latin America, didn't care about politics, didn't care much about the economics and was taking care of himself. It gave the rest of us a lot of scope for doing things. It was a period when there was a lot of left-wing turmoil in Mexico. It was after the Olympic problems of '68. The new Echeverria government was very difficult to work with. There were guerrilla movements in the north. There would be roadblocks out on the road quite frequently; and we'd see these fifteen-year-old Indians with sub-machine guns checking the papers. It was kind of spooky.

I had one episode. We had a legal attaché, an FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) person in Monterrey, into whose possession came a threat letter against me. It named me personally, identified my car, identified where I lived, identified my family, and said that in the name of one of the left-wing terror groups, they were going to get me because I had been insensitive to the needs of the working people and had turned down a bunch of visas. And they actually foolishly identified a case and so the FBI and the Mexican police went and interviewed the person named and found out that somebody who had been connected to the consulate was actually getting money to help people get visas. It turned out not to be a real physical threat, but it was kind of scary for a couple of days.

Q: So this was related to your work in the visa section. You did some political work; traveled around the consular district and talked to people?

HOPPER: A little bit. Basically, the politics of the district was in Monterrey. It was a major state capital, and there was a lot of turmoil in the university. As a recent academic, I knew some people at the university, so I followed the turmoil and did some reporting. It was all in my spare time because I had other things to do. About the second week there, I began to keep files on political things so I was able to volunteer to do it; it was a lot of fun. From Monterrey you'd do the reporting; and you'd send it down to Mexico City. Then, they would decide what to send in and a couple of weeks later in reading the classified stuff, you would see what they had included, if anything. But I did all of that.

Q: Did you do much work other than that with the embassy in Mexico City, or was it pretty much confined to the consulate general in Monterrey?

HOPPER: We were under pretty close guidance from Mexico City; we would talk to them a lot. From buying a ladder to reporting, it was all filtered through Mexico City. I also had a period where I got to be the acting administrative officer. That let me see more about how a consulate worked than I ordinarily would have. At that point, if we needed to spend more than $50 at a time, we had to get clearance from Mexico City. It was really, really stupid.

In some ways, if anybody listens or reads this, they're going to wonder why I stayed

because I had a lot of experiences at the very beginning that could've led to cynicism and concern.

When I filled in for the administrative officer, I discovered that he was a retired army colonel who had come in at lateral entry because we had shortages in the administrative field, and he was a protégé of a senior congressman who supervised the State Department. After a while, it was clear that he had been brought in because we were building a new building in Monterrey and we sometimes think that it's only third-world people who are corrupt. Well, the construction company that had the contract to build our building built a number of buildings throughout Central America and Mexico and they actually were in cahoots with the congressman and the congressman helped supervise the projects. It turned out that our military expert administrative officer never interviewed or visited the site and when the construction company people came in for their progress reports, they would just meet with the administrative secretary, sign something and go away. So, when I became the acting administrative officer, I made them meet with me and I actually did what I thought you were supposed to do to supervise the thing. The colonel got well very quickly and came back. So I went back to the commercial section. It was distressing to see that strange things could take place even within the U.S. structure. That congressman did get caught and was reprimanded. I won't give his name because I didn't know every detail and I've found after a while that some things you hear aren't exactly as you think they might have been.

Q: But overall, your experience there for two and a half years was positive enough that you didn't quit.

HOPPER: Yes, it was actually very interesting and the Mexican people in Nuevo Leon were so wonderful. So open. If you're ever going to run into people who you would expect to be anti-American, they were them. They had Texans coming down and vomiting on them every weekend and treating them quite badly, and they took it in stride. They humored them and they saw it as money in the bank, and money in the bank mattered to them. They saw that they were treated even worse by Mexico City than they were by Texas or Washington, and they wanted their options. It was very educational to watch people jockeying to create space knowing that we were part of their calculation. They were nice, and I was able to save money. It was fun. I got a range of experiences and there were positive changes.

The day we arrived at work in Monterrey, I went to meet the acting consul general with my wife. He told us, "So glad you're here. We're really short-handed. Mexican National Day is Tuesday and we'd really appreciate if you could bring two dozen hard-boiled eggs for the reception." I said, "Listen, we're in a hotel," and he said, "Oh you can figure out how to do it," and I said, "Well sure, what time does the party start?" He said, "Oh, you're not invited to the reception. Just have your wife bring the hard-boiled eggs around to the back kitchen door." Incredibly we did it. Then we complained: my wife wrote some letters to some friends. The women's group organized around issues like that, and she was part of the group that organized, and then protested; within six months there were

new rules.

Q: That was in Monterrey or that was in…

HOPPER: That was worldwide. It was fascinating. It was easy to see that the senior wives - it was all like a fraternity initiation - had done the hard-boiled eggs at places where they didn't get to do anything, and I'm sure that they didn't like it, but they put up with it, and now that it was their turn to get help from the junior wives found these uppity left-wing hippy women weren't going to take it. It must've been shocking. I give my wife's generation incredible credit for putting their foot down. They changed the system of being able to get two people for the price of one. My very first efficiency report had a confidential section where they talked very explicitly about my wife's role, and I was lucky as Carol was just a wonderful unpaid partner. I got better reports because she was my partner. But it was a strange process.

At the time, my hair was the same length that it is now. However, in 1969 that was considered to be long hair in the Foreign Service, and at my first efficiency review with my boss, we're going along and he's really pleased with my work and all of a sudden he starts agonizing. I said, "What's the matter?" He said, "Bob, I don't know what to do." I said, "What do you mean?" "I don't know what to say about your hair." I said, "What do you mean 'say about my hair'?" He said, "Well, you have long hair." I said, "Yes, so what?" He said, "Well, if I don't mention it, the boss is going to think I am not perceptive and this is an important factor." I said, "Look, please let me know. Is my hair getting in the way of my visa interviews and my work?" "Oh no, no. You're wonderful." I said, "I don't get it." He said, "Well, it's not typical Foreign Service," and I said, "Look, I don't care. If you feel you need to write about it, you write about it, but it sure doesn't seem relevant to me." In the end, he chose not to mention it.

Q: We were talking about your image as a hippy, anti-Vietnam, anti-government, internal person at your first evaluation. Let me ask you something kind of in a different area; you've talked about the construction of a new office building. I assume the purpose of that was to anticipate expansion, enlargement, because we were now adding DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) and the drug trafficking culture that was coming, or was it simply to replace an old decrepit building?

HOPPER: We rented the second and third floors of a downtown office building that was on a very noisy, busy street where the local authorities complained that our visa lines were blocking business. There was no place to park; it had become untenable. So we were mainly moving to be a little bit out of sight, but also to have more space. We were also getting two Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD), predecessors to DEA, who were coming to establish the first office at that time. They did arrive right after we moved into the new space. They were the only expansion at the time. So, actually, the building that was built, while just barely big enough for them, was foolishly small and had no growth room. And I understand that that has caused problems since. But I think the move was made for us to be more secure and for our location to be less of a public

relations problem. It also meant that because we got away from restaurants, we couldn't stay in touch so well. We were in a suburb and so there were real downsides to moving.

I got to be the action officer responsible for the move, which was my first experience with a special project. Eventually, I came to see that it was a lot like a SECSTATE (Secretary of State) visit or a CODEL (Congressional Delegation); you just had to do a lot of things, choreographed in a tight period of time. I actually enjoyed doing that. We moved over a weekend and it went very well. I gained some confidence in how I could help though I'd had no managerial experience. My father had been a businessman; I'd watched businesses being run my whole life, but I had never actually done it and hadn't wanted to do it. But I found I enjoyed helping to choreograph a complex activity.

Q: Coordinate and make sure…

HOPPER: That everybody is pitching in and doing what needed to be done. That was fun.

Q: Do you have anything else to say about the first tour in Monterrey from 1970 to '72?

HOPPER: It was actually a post that had enough going on that I was able to get a range of experience and figure out how I wanted to proceed.

We also were inspected, and having an inspection was interesting. I still remember my interview with a fairly senior inspector going over what did I want to do. He had been an ambassador in South Asia and had served a lot in the Middle East. He tried to get me to switch my regional expertise and consider working on Arab-Israeli Middle East issues. It actually made me think in policy terms about what problems did I want to work on. I sort of made the decision at that point, in a strange way. I had worked with lots of Middle Eastern students at USC. We had a big oil and public administrations building. I had five or six very good Saudi Arabian friends. And then, like anyone who's growing up in New York and Los Angeles, I had lots of good Jewish friends who had very strong views on Israel. The perception I had was that this is going to be a very, very hard problem to solve. Their hatreds and the feelings behind both sides were such that the room for compromise just didn't seem very obvious to me and that whenever you tried to talk about a middle ground, you just found that all you did was make enemies. I decided there was nothing I could do as I had no intrinsic skills and I didn't speak the language. And I said, "Nope. I don't want to work on those problems. Not going to go there," and I consistently followed that for the rest of my career, though that part of the world follows you in whatever you're working on. In my European work, I ended up doing Arab-Israeli things off and on, whether I wanted to or not.

Q: It can really certainly affect all aspects of U.S. foreign relations, one way or another.

So in 1972 you came back to be staff assistant to the assistant secretary of state for European Affairs. At this point, you really hadn't had much prior experience with Europe, or had you?

HOPPER: No. Other than being a sentient American, you know, I didn't know a lot.

Q: In that job, you shuffle papers, you support the assistant secretary, you coordinate or work with a lot of offices in the bureau and the secretary of state's office. Who was the assistant secretary for that period?

HOPPER: That late Walt Stoessel. He was a wonderful man. He was interesting.

It was a great place to be at a very interesting time. It was the period of Detente; Detente with the Russians and struggle with the NSC (National Security Council). It was when Kissinger was just the National Security Adviser and Secretary Rogers was at the helm at State. From sitting on the Sixth Floor at the Department, I could really see the tensions between the NSC and the Department.

The greatest experience that I got out of being a staff assistant was that I used the authority of the assistant secretary, and my own judgment, to get relatively senior, experienced Foreign Service Officers to shift their priorities and to do things that might not have been what they wanted to do. I learnt how to negotiate and communicate with them using somebody else's authority, and not get sucked into thinking I was that smart and that it was my authority. That it was certainly borrowed authority. I think I generally, most of the time, managed to do that. In hindsight I can see that many staff people, from time to time, interject themselves in ways that may be good or bad, but aren't appreciated.

This was in the period when all the telegrams were moved by paper. The European Bureau (EB) had a message center that delivered all of these things. They would come to the staff assistants; there were two of us; we worked rotating shifts. One of us would come in at 7:00 or 7:30 in the morning and go home at 3:00, and the other one would come in at 11:00 and go home when the day ended, and the one who came late would then come early the next day through the weekends, and rotate it that way. We had to deal with all this paper. There were four or five deputy assistant secretaries; they each supervised different areas and so our job was this take and it was every bit as big then as it is now. I think there actually might have been more recording then.

Q: Certainly more paper.

HOPPER: Yes. And so you would get these huge stacks and you'd shuffle them. You'd figure out which ones the assistant secretary need to get, and that was a lot fewer than anyone else. You also figured out what you give to the DASes (Deputy Assistant Secretaries) and you'd have to choose between, giving them the broad take or a restricted take, and there was no right answer. One of the DASes, a fellow named Will Stamler, who was a curmudgeon but a very bright, educated, and wonderful man under a lot of pressure, would sometimes comment, "Paul, use your judgment! Why are you giving me all of these things? I can't read all these things. Cut it way back." I'd say, "This is your stuff," and he'd say, "I don't want it," so I'd then go back and sometimes I'd cut back and

give him two or three things a take. Then finally, after two or three days he'd say, "No, no, no. I have to have more stuff." So, trying to get it right was very difficult.

The early staff assistant would sit in on all the morning meetings with the DASes; there would be a meeting with the assistant secretary, the DASes, the public affairs section chief, and the executive director. And those were fascinating meetings for a very junior officer because this is talking about everything in the world. The senior DAS, the principal DAS, was a guy named George Springsteen who was a very strong and outspoken person. I'm not sure what his career status was. He'd been in Washington most of the time. I'm not sure he was really a Foreign Service Officer. But he was a State Department person.

Q: He was probably part of the senior executive service, but maybe it didn't exist at that time.

HOPPER: Yes, to his bones. And he was a very combative, competitive person. It would drive him crazy if EB (Economic Bureau) or Treasury or anybody else was getting the jump on either the State Department or EUR(European Bureau). And he would always be nudging Assistant Secretary Stoessel to have fights. Mr. Stoessel was this calm, unflappable, dignified person who picked his fights very, very carefully. And, oftentimes, sitting there, I would think that Springsteen was really right and as this was worthy of a fight, why wouldn't Stoessel fight? You only had so much time; there were only so many things you could fight about. Then I noticed that whenever the assistant secretary was away and Springsteen was acting, he never fought on any of these things. And there was one period when he was acting for maybe a month for some reason, and it really was very educational to see that people would bring the fights to him and he didn't do them either. So I thought, well, it is where you sit and you've got to judge these things.

Also, EUR did a briefing book for one of the key Brezhnev-Nixon summits. The bureau had worked really hard, and the assistant secretary had been over meeting with Helmut Sonnenfeldt at the NSC and getting guidance in working out the book. This huge book was sent over and about four or five months later, Kissinger as NSC adviser sent a letter to Secretary Rogers thanking him and everybody for the briefing book, saying these books had been of great use. The whole package came to me first and when I saw them I could tell that the boxes had never been opened because I had been the one who had shipped them over there. They were sealed up; they had never even been opened. I actually opened them and checked them. I don't know whether I should've done that or not, but it just seemed like it would've been too discouraging.

Q: It was better to accept the gratitude and the praise.

HOPPER: But I knew that. I knew that all these books had never been read. And you wonder what good it was having people do all that work in that way?

Q: Well, jobs like you had, certainly for a junior officer, gave you an opportunity to learn

the way the State Department works, or doesn't work, the way it functions and otherwise, and in a sense the whole U.S. government because you're dealing with other agencies; such as the NSC and others. Do you want to talk a little bit more about your relationship with the secretariat, the Seventh Floor, and the people around the Secretary? Did you spend a lot of time doing that or was that pretty much just pushing paper?

HOPPER: It's interesting. At that point in time, there were these SF (seventh floor) line teams and the Secretary didn't travel quite as much as they do know, though they would soon. When Kissinger came in, it changed dramatically. Somehow, the system didn't pick people to be those SF line officers and team leaders who they thought were going to be something, and were knowledgeable in their issue areas. At least every other week, the line officers would call together a meeting of the Regional Bureau Staff Assistants – the people that they were working with – and give you a sense of what was going on. Over time, I've seen that role diminish to where they've been so eaten up by being the advance officers for the trips that they play much less of a role in tracking, guiding, the policy papers. Also, that was during that period when they were doing more of the paper memo policy guidance interaction with the bureaus. Some of them in many ways overstepped their bounds and got a little big for their britches, and you could watch the DASes especially, start to chafe at getting guidance from FS-4 and 3 line officers. Some did it better than others. But there was a lot of interaction. Most of the bureaus had a special assistant; a senior middle officer or a lower senior officer who would also go to some of those meetings or would meet with the head of the line. We didn't have very much interaction with the deputy executive secretaries. I can remember they were pretty distinguished people. Pickering might've started doing that. But we staff assistants didn't meet people like that. Jack Rendahl, who was a special assistant at EUR.

Q: And he was replaced, I think by John Rouse, but perhaps you had left by then.

HOPPER: Yes, Jack had been up the whole time I was there. There were interdepartmental working groups under whatever the NSC guidance was. The special assistant was the executive secretary of all of those working groups.

Did you do that job?

Q: I did that at the beginning of 1975. I replaced John Rouse, who I think replaced Jack Rendahl. By that time, Kissinger was Secretary of State and the NSC. The interagency working groups were far less important. The structure I was nominally the staff director for, I don't think ever met; and that role certainly was diminished. The special assistants supervised the staff assistants; didn't try to second guess their distribution, but certainly kept an eye on their work and were available to advise you sometimes on questions.

HOPPER: I think, more than most young officers, I got to see how an executive office works and I gained a respect and appreciation for the importance of the EUR/EX, the team, and staff assistants. A very complicated bureau where I was lucky to be. EUR has always been a major resource on policy player. You could see how it protected itself. It

was able to carve out incredible amounts of autonomy. I then worked on EUR things a lot over most of my career and I'm not sure it was a good example or not, but my time was all either EUR or ARA and those bureaus were so different.

EUR viewed itself as the queen and mother bureau; it was the most important part of the Department and the Department revolved around EUR. And EUR felt a certain responsibility that it had to get things right and it protected itself. It tried to set an example and influence the whole Department.

ARA viewed itself and called itself the Buccaneer Bureau and felt that it hated the structures of the line procedures. It generally tried to not be guided by the overall procedures of the Department. It didn't mind when other bureaus ridiculed it and said, "Well, who'd want to write an ARA memo?" They didn't want the Seventh Floor doing their thing. It was a totally different way of doing business.

Also, there was watching EUR manage its money. There were periods where, because it was so busy, that at one point the executive director, working through the finance officers and the various embassies, was actually able, as far as I can tell, to use variable exchange rate gains. There were periods when EUR was a profit making business. One time I had heard that EUR had a slush fund of $50 million that it had developed over time that it could use for rainy days – and there weren't many rainy days in Europe – a lot of overcast. It was a bureau that was well managed and the executive director at the time was Joan Clark who then became the Director General and the Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs. I always felt blessed to have gotten to know her. She was a very talented person.

Q: One other thing that speaks to me about being a staff assistant in a major bureau like EUR is that just within the bureau you find out which desk officers are effective, how they go about their work in terms of writing, but in other ways as well. And certainly the office directors; some are obviously better than others. Sometimes, in your position, you probably could see the difference.

HOPPER: Also, what I found is that they all had different strengths and that actually they were all good in different ways. The challenge was different kinds of crises; some crises would be just what the person's strengths would require, and with others, oh my god, I wish we had a creative person rather than a thorough and organized person here. But I was always impressed with the overall levels of competence.

Once again, I think most of them were around fifty; some of them were FSO-2s, which before the 1980 act would've made them at least OCs. So, they were all OCs and MCs, and some of them were very senior.

Q: These are the DASes or…

HOPPER: No, these were the office directors. I remember Jim Sutterlin, who was really

incredibly talented, running Central Europe. But of course, now I look back, I was twenty-eight, so they looked and seemed older than they were; but they were good. I enjoyed working with them and I learned a lot from them. And as I say, there were some who weren't as effective.

One of my favorite interesting experiences; EUR-NE – Northern Europe – was struggling with the Northern Ireland problem in '72. It had gotten pretty ugly right then. The problem didn't go away; it lasted for a long time. What kind of firearms could be provided to the British that might eventually be used there? The desk had struggled and they'd been asked to do a policy paper and they'd worked with the interagency community. They had done a very thorough paper that recommended that the policy not be changed. It went up to the DAS (Deputy Assistant Secretary) who was working on it. He sat on it a couple of days and he had his secretary retype the paper and he changed it (the argumentation had hardly changed at all) he changed one sentence in the concluding paragraph and he took out the word "not" in the recommendations and so he changed it from "not being changed" to the policy "be changed". And I got this thing and he initialed it and said, "Okay, Bob, this is ready to go up to the Secretary," and I went over and I said, "Don't you think we should show Scott George? This is pretty significant and they've worked very hard on this." He said, "Bob, I'm responsible for this. I'm the DAS. I only changed one word. You can give them a copy in the morning. I want it to go forward." It was a little education; if you want to use your authority, you can. We sometimes obsess over words, but sometimes a word makes a difference. And of course, other times, over time you see that there are problems that are so hard that no matter how much we strain at playing with it, that it is actually the actors in the field who have to deal with it. And it was the Catholics, the Protestants, and the British who really had to step up and they didn't care what the DASes had decided.

Q: Did the secretary approve the recommendation, do you remember?

HOPPER: I don't remember, and you know at that point things would sit a long time that were typical recommendations. I don't remember ever seeing it come back.

Q: This period was before computers, word processors.

HOPPER: The European Bureau bought a fancy IBM (International Business Machines) – I forget what it was called, but we had one fancy thing. We had two people who were on-call constantly. If anything was complicated and had to be perfect, it was done on the machine. Generally, that was it. Otherwise, it was all done by IBM Selectrics. I'm awestruck with the secretaries of that time who, as far as I can recall, were secretaries and called themselves secretaries; if they were upset about what they were called, they were internalizing it. They probably were, but boy could they do a lot of perfect work. It was incredible. The good ones were just so good. I'm still in awe of some of them. And they could do things letter perfect. And also, there was less compunction to change everything because it was done this way.

Q: That is to redo a page or even lightly change papers, especially when only one word was being changed, even if it was the key word.

You talked before about one of the Nixon-Brezhnev Summits that you were involved in, in coordinating the briefing book. Do you remember any other particular crises, trips, or meetings, that took place while you were there?

HOPPER: Yes, two. A really shocking event took place during the Munich Olympics when the Black September people kidnapped and then there was a shoot-out and much of the Israeli team was killed. There actually was a television set in the assistant secretary's office and staff assistants got ticker tape; we had ticker machines in our office. So, as this started, we were running back and forth, and they turned the TV (television) on. Because it was the Olympics, there was a media infrastructure in Munich so things were pretty live. We were trying to cope with this thing where you knew it was bad, and you just watched it going worse before your eyes. For me it was a bit stomach-turning a bit like the World Trade Center in that we're working on this, struggling, and then it's just awful. We all knew it was going to have ramifications for the Middle East. When people talk about the world not being the same, we knew that in terms of our lives then, that if that many people could get killed, nothing was going to be the same again. That was one issue.

The other was watching Portugal. The office that dealt with Iberian affairs was a backwater. Not that the people weren't good, but there hadn't been change for a long time and their job was a little bit distasteful: you had these dictatorships and we had forced relations with them. You had a struggle between older officers who thought their job was just to keep their trains running on time, and the younger officers who wanted to nudge things along. There was an education in this for me. The office director at the time – people will know who it was, I won't mention a name – had a reputation for being very, very conservative, and very stodgy. As things started to change, I can remember thinking, "Oh my God, we have the worst possible person in charge." And amazingly, he ended up being quite able to deal with the changing situation. I think it was as well managed from the U.S. perspective as it could have been. Later on, you had the fears of Euro-communism, and we can get back to that. Portugal – it doesn't go away; but actually, these stodgy, old guys were able to handle the initial ebbing and transition period quite well.

Q: Do I understand that you spent two years as staff assistant?

HOPPER: Yes.

Q: That seems a little long to me compared with what I think sometimes is the case. Sometimes these are one year assignments, aren't they? Or was the standard two years?

HOPPER: No, it was the standard. Once I took the job in EUR, I figured that my payoff would be an EUR assignment, so I kept looking around. I actually wanted to go to

Portugal, but there wasn't anything coming due and so I negotiated an assignment to the political military section of Rome. I actually probably served about eighteen or twenty months in the job.

Q: In Washington?

HOPPER: In Washington, and then went in January or February of '74 and did language training to go to Rome.

Q: And you went to Rome in the summer of '74 to the political military section after having some Italian here in Washington.

HOPPER: It was wonderful. I had a great time there. I was the deputy chief of POL/MIL (Political Military) section in Rome. We had a lot of bases; we had a lot of military things.

Q: You were number two, of two?

HOPPER: Yes. *(laughs)* It was clever titles. The price I paid for that was the way the duty system worked. Each section was expected to have somebody in on Saturday and either the chief or the deputy was supposed to go in, plus somebody else. Since essentially there were just two of us, I ended up going into the embassy every other weekend for a year. It was a little bit of a burden on my family. There were things that they would've liked to have done in Italy that we could never do. And the POL/MIL section was in the middle of every tough sort of European issue. When I arrived, the section turned over. Obviously, I replaced one of the people – a very wonderful guy who had been very close to Kissinger in the Vietnam talks.

Q: David Engle.

HOPPER: David Engle. And then Jim Devine was the section chief and he went on home leave two weeks after I got there, so it was just me by the middle of July of '74. You will recall that the constitutional protection forces of Turkey went into Cypress that summer. All of a sudden, you've got the six fleet movements. The Mediterranean became a hubbub of military activity and I was right in the middle of it. I was meeting with senior Italian officials and meeting with our people and doing reports on the southern flank and trying to figure out how long does it take an aircraft carrier to go from Naples to Cyprus – and longer than you would imagine.

Q: But your main involvement was really keeping the Italians informed of these movements, or getting their concurrence or dealing with their objections?

HOPPER: Mostly it was keeping the U.S. military and the U.S. Embassy together, and making sure that the command in Naples and in Gaeta didn't go stripping everything they were doing that the Italians felt was partly defending them. So it was making sure that

they thought about things before they did them.

I've found over time that if you're doing something that you've actually thought about, and you've thought about how to consult on it, you can explain almost anything. It's when you wait and you've done it, and maybe it doesn't make a lot of sense, that you have to explain it later, but it's hard.

Also the Department, at that point, needed to hear from us to know what the U.S. military was doing. So we would pick up things that the Department didn't know. The Department, in making its recommendations, sometimes would be glibly thinking, "Well, we can have forces off the coast." Then, I'd talk to them and say, "What do you mean? The crew has been out on liberty, the ship doesn't have any food, they won't be leaving here for a day and a half, and it will take two and a half days to get…" So you're time horizons change. It was interesting playing that role and before pagers and beepers. Just being around and doing some quick reporting. It was hard, but I did okay. I was a trusted member of a pretty senior embassy team very quickly.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

HOPPER: The ambassador was Governor John Volpe; a political appointee. He felt he was very close to President Nixon.

Q: He had been secretary of transportation, governor of Massachusetts.

HOPPER: And a successful industrial construction company executive. The DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission) was Bob Beaudry, who was a long standing career officer. Generally, I found that the political appointees I've worked with have been wonderful. When I hear career people complain about the lack of talent in political people, I think they tend to focus on the exception. However, Ambassador Volpe was one who did not have the right mix of talents and temperament to do the job. That's the time when your career people have to help out even more to make it work. We weren't very good at that. The embassy was a pretty sour place. I think if there were a way to go back and do personnel checks of records, one would see that at that point in time, people assigned to Rome did not extend. Even though it was a beautiful spot and seemingly great, people got there, did their time, and left. They weren't …

Q: Trying to stay as long as they could?

HOPPER: Yes.

Q: Jim Devine eventually came back or did he…because he had been there quite a while.

HOPPER: He had been there a long time. Basically it turned out he went on home leave, there was some kind of family illness, he came back, but only to check out again. So then it was breaking in a new boss, who actually was wonderful. We had one of the most

highly skilled career Foreign Service secretaries and that made so much of a difference for me as a young person trying to run a section and make it work. Just having somebody who really knew how to do was a godsend.

Q: Now the political military section was separate from the political section, but in terms of the office layout was quite sort of…

HOPPER: We were in the political section.

Q: Part of it.

HOPPER: When I ended up at the end of my career, training political officers at FSI, I told them that there were two magic words for doing political work: serendipity and propinquity. Propinquity means a location. I said if you go around embassies all over the world you'll see that political sections – I'm not aware of one exception – where they aren't just right next to the ambassador and the DCM and they're somehow situated in such a way that when anything is going on, they're going to be in the middle of it. And that's how the section was in Rome. We opened up right onto this huge, grand reception room. That was where you went into the DCM, and the POL and POL/MIL sections were literally extensions of the DCM's office. We were, in fact, too close; the DCM wasn't far enough away. He managed us and didn't manage the rest of the embassy. But, after the first year, they sort of reorganized the sections. After a year of doing POL/MIL work, I then moved into the political section.

Euro-communism had started to become an issue. The Church Committee revelation to the U.S. had led to changes in how the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) was able to work overseas and in Italy they had been very directly involved in U.S. inputs into election campaigns. With the changes brought about by the intelligence research and leaks of that period, there were laws and regulations that took place that really changed what the CIA could do. So we had a major election coming up and we were going to have to do it in a new way. It was a new era for the embassy in working with the Italians, and the political section explicitly got the lead. We formed a country team committee dealing with the elections and I was made the executive secretary of that committee. I basically ran to save Italian democracy.

Q: You were dealing with the Italian Communist Party, PCI - or were you dealing with everybody else?

HOPPER: We were dealing with everybody. Our goal was to make sure that the Communists did not win the election.

Q: When was that election?

HOPPER: The election was in…

Q: Early '76?

HOPPER: Yes, I think it was in early '76. It was before I left in the summer of '76. For all of us it was so frustrating, especially for the younger officers who had been through Vietnam. It was after the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S., and we wanted to make sure that the U.S. and western democracies lived up a little bit to the rhetoric in their theories, and wanted there to be a more participatory, inclusive politics. We felt that if that was good enough for us, it should include Italy as well. And the more one was in Italy and watched things, one realized that for a political activist and an idealist in Italy, because both the Christian Democrats and the Socialists had been burned with corruption and just silliness, and were so despotic and removed from the people, that there weren't very good places to do politics. And then you would watch and see that at a local level, in terms of political organization and open political processes, it was very frustrating that the Italian Communists were actually the Democrats. That was at the local level and no matter how idealistic one might be, you could see there was no guarantee in the world that they would actually be foreign policy Democrats if they won, and no guarantee they'd be able to continue with the local patterns if they had power. So, for a lot of us it was, despite what we could see of our partners, allies and opponents, how we wondered you kept trying to help the Christian Democrats and the Socialists and not let the Communists win, even though in some ways they were very appealing. As an embassy, we did that.

There were some people, of course, who felt the Italian Communists, as Communists, were this evil incarnate - and so it was easy. The real tension within the embassy was that both the ambassador and some of the senior people in the political section thought the Italian Socialists were the real evil people in the piece. People sometimes now wonder why religion plays such a role in politics, and what this new feature of religion is. It's not new; religion always was a major factor in Italian politics; and the Socialists and the Social Democrats were validly Catholics. In some ways the break between the Socialists and the Communists was over the Vatican, the role of Catholicism, and divorce, and a whole range of issues.

I actually heard Ambassador Volpe and one of our political officers say – they never said it publicly, but said it privately many times – that they could not understand how the Socialists could be against market forces, and could be willing to consider some cooperation with the Communists when the Communists were Godless and were virtually against God and were anti-religion. And that was the key dividing point: the role of God in politics. That never stimulated me very much as an analytical point, but one had to be careful even doing reporting for the embassy in how you described people. There were black hats, and white hats.

The other thing that made it all very complicated was that the ambassador went on all of the really important calls and he liked to do them by himself. This was complicated by the fact that the version of Italian that he spoke was essentially an Abruzzi dialect that he learned at his mother's knee in Boston at the beginning parts of this century and that dialect in Boston and the one from the same region in Italy had evolved differently. So

with his hometown Boston-Abruzzi dialect, he had trouble being understood and understanding what was being said.

Q: Back to his home village?

HOPPER: Yes. But when he went to the foreign ministry, speaking to people who had grown up in Florence and Milan and who felt that the Abruzzi of Naples did not speak Italian, they didn't understand; they would choose not to understand him. So he would understand them, more or less, and they wouldn't understand him.

We had this reporting process involving the ambassador's calls at this time. It is something that I think political scientists who try to do content analysis and other assessments of our reporting should bear in mind. The ambassador would come back and dictate to the DCM, the chief of the political section, and generally to one of the internal political officers who was responsible for the Christian Democrats and was a good drafter, and he did his reporting. Ambassador Volpe would dictate what had happened and this fellow would write up the report. Over time, we developed a procedure where the guy in the political section who was doing the report would call the senior staff level of wherever the meeting took place, would figure out which senior Italian official had been there and who you could talk to, and would sort of replay the conversation on the phone with him and would find out from them what they felt had taken place. You know what they got. At that point, the political officer would steer them back towards any things that had been sort of miscommunicated by the ambassador. Said, "Well, you know, really, that's important, but we're also getting at this and this and this," so we would try to correct the record. But we had to find out what they had said. So we'd write up these cables, through this third-hand correction mechanism and it'd be signed, it'd go in like that with the meeting, and it was a complicated process. And oftentimes, more often than not, one of the Italians would call right away as they knew how the process was. You know, "He said this. Is that really what we're supposed to be getting out of this?" So we had a record collecting reporting process.

The other thing that was so important at the time was that the Italian officials within the key ministry were so good. A lot of them had a lot of continuity and knew what they were doing. I would, from time to time, be asked to go in and deliver demarches on the MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions) negotiations, and the Italian foreign ministry official I would meet with was actually the chairman of the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) working group on MBFR. He would go to Brussels all the time and he really knew it all. We would get an instruction maybe every two or three months at a level where we really had to go in and do something and much of it was very arcane. The first time I did it, I was a very good boy and sort of memorized and mastered the brief and went in to talk about it, and he said, "That's really interesting." He said, "I'll tell you what; I think I know where you're going, but I don't think you quite have it right. If you don't mind, let me see your instructions." I had done it in a way where there was a little comment part that I had, and I knew this guy really seemed very trusting, so I showed him and he said, "This is what you're trying to get across. Thank-you, and here's where the

NATO group is going. Here's where the Italian…" and it was incredible. Afterwards, I just studied a little bit and when I would get the instructions, I would go up and we worked it out together. It's the kind of thing that when I was training people later, though I wouldn't recommend always doing that, there were times when it was clearly the best thing to do and it worked out very well.

Q: To be accurate and in dealing with an arcane, technical, complicated subject, and with a real expert, you have to.

HOPPER: I had a chance to get a lot that otherwise I couldn't have. There was another thing that was atypical of the period. That I know has changed in Italy and changed in many places, but it's an interesting sidebar. In the mid-'70s - and this was sort of the tail end of the period - the foreign ministry in Rome started work officially at eight, though nobody was there until about eight-thirty or nine in the morning. Their official hours were from eight to two. All of their official business was done from eight to two. In the morning there were dozens of Communists who worked in the foreign ministry: the secretaries, the staff, some of the mid-level officers, and some of the senior civil servants were known or suspected to be Communists. So it was explained to me by the head of the NATO desk and a couple of other people that to cope with this and given the fact that Socialists were in the government and there were lots of compromises made, that the way the foreign ministry worked was that from eight to two unclassified work was done and at two everybody went home and then at four-thirty or five all the career people came back. All of the secretarial work was done in the afternoon by the *cada mineri* and there were these Italian military who were trained typists and everything and they would do some reporting.

But basically, the Italians have what they believed were encrypted, secure phone lines and they were doing all of their important work in the late afternoon and evening on the phone. I was doing NATO and we could never get an appointment before six at the foreign ministry, because that's when they did our kind of work; after a while you figured that out. The foreign ministry in Rome was up on the outskirts of town, actually near where most of the working level U.S. Embassy people lived. It was like in most posts; it was much easier to get a car going to meetings than coming back. So, we'd get an embassy car to take us to the foreign ministry at six or six-thirty, do our meeting and then just walk or take a taxi home and go in and report on it the next morning, or write up a little bit at home. When you think now about all the concerns about security - there were concerns and there weren't. I mean, if you were dropping off a paper, you'd take it home and bring it in, in the morning. And I'm sure nobody does such things anymore because there would be too many security risks.

Q: Well, as you suggested, the work schedule in the foreign ministry has probably also changed from those days. I remember from my days in Rome, I was the action officer for some delegation that was traveling around Europe on a very tight schedule and they asked to call on a ministry immediately after lunch and they were arriving at twelve o'clock or something and when they got there, I said, "Well, we've got the appointment

at…" (I think it was at the Foreign Ministry) "and it's at five o'clock, but I'm not sure anybody will be there yet, but they've agreed to that." And they said, "Five o'clock - that's a waste of our time. We don't have that much time to spare. Why can't it be earlier?" and I said, "Well there's nobody there."

HOPPER: That was immediately after lunch.

Q: And you're lucky if it can be that early. It's more likely it'd be at six or six-thirty.

You mentioned the MBFR dialogue that you had occasionally, and this was presumably when you were in the political military section.

HOPPER: Somehow that was considered more an arms control issue. It would depend upon staffing and what people were interested in, but the POL/MIL section essentially was looking at the U.S.-Italy bilateral military relationship.

Q: The bases.

HOPPER: The biggest issue while I was there was that we had a nuclear submarine based on La Maddalena.

Q: On Sardinia?

HOPPER: That was on Sardinia. Very isolated. Lovely, lovely spot. Some early environmentalists and nuclear disarmament types really made a big push to get us out of there. In doing so, focused on wanting to look at the bilateral agreements and finding out what the Italians had conceded; what the legal basis was for our being there. That was one of my jobs. In working on that, we made the painful discovery that there wasn't much of a written record. We had to basically renegotiate an understanding of what the rules were, and this led to our deciding that we needed an inventory of just what facilities there were in Italy; what their standing was, and what the agreements guiding them were. So I was tasked to do an inventory of all U.S. military facilities in Italy. I spent six months working on that and it was really amazing. We found out that there were hundreds of facilities, from little radar bases and radio transmitters to pretty significant things. In trying to find the record for them, they discovered that the establishment of most of the facilities reflected that pattern of how the ministries worked in Italy. They had almost all been done after five in the afternoon with phone calls and meetings that were not memorialized - and that was fine when there was no question, but it became a problem. We looked at the bilateral SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) Balance of Forces Agreement again. We shared some of this project with the Italians and we an agreement on what was regular and what wasn't. It came in very handy to have this project. That became an almost full-time job for one of the POL/MIL officers, just to keep track and make sure that everything was more or less regular. The era of doing things informally had evolved into a more formal one while I was there.

Q: Some of these facilities, I think, were unmanned. In particular, beacons. In other cases there were people involved as well. I assume you worked very closely with the U.S. military trying to sort this out.

HOPPER: There were two military wings of the embassy; there was a Military Assistance Group (MAG) and the Defense Attachés Office (DAO). The attachés were in the embassy, and the MAG was across the street in an office building. Many times, I was the link between them. Here was this recently-long-haired, semi-hippy, intellectual civilian who had not served in Vietnam, serving as the link between an army brigadier general and a senior navy captain, and getting them all to work together. That was an interesting challenge to my diplomatic skills. Once again, it was very good for me. I came away not only with a respect and understanding for how the U.S. military works, but also a realization that they are very different cultures. The navy is very different from the army and getting them to work together was a challenge.

Q: In terms of your dealing in the embassy, and dealing with the demands in Italy: NATO command, Naples, and the Air Force in the north, and so on, how did you do that? Did you do it through either the MAG or the defense attaché or were you doing it directly?

HOPPER: There was a POLAD **(**political adviser) at one of them; I think there was a POLAD at the embassy. Ironically, there was a POLAD in London who had some role. Though I had more later, I had less then. We mostly dealt with the defense attaché's office on navy and shipping things because he was a navy captain and the senior navy person. The MAG was more army and air force. We mostly just used the phone and dealt directly with the big bases. I had learned who to talk to there. Keeping the MAG and the DAO working together was this constant challenge. Another was knowing what we were doing. Someone would write these cryptic messages and it took me a while to understand what UNODIR meant; U-N-O-D-I-R, which was the abbreviation for "Unless Otherwise Directed." It basically said, "You're free. You can do this." And after a while I'd see that the attaché was getting UNODIR messages, so I'd have to jump in really quickly to make sure that it was actually what the embassy and the State Department wanted to have done.

Q: You started out talking about events in Cyprus shortly after you arrived in 1974. I guess the other thing that probably is worth saying is that U.S. forces in Italy were very much involved in things way beyond Italy, as well, on occasion, whether it was with Cyprus or other things in the Mediterranean.

HOPPER: Especially the navy at that point. The Air Force and army units in the north, sort of around Vicenza, were more geared toward Germany and at that point they really were part of the position, and practicing to deal with Soviet East-Bloc attacks. They were starting to get sort of a Middle Eastern mission, but there wasn't anything to do with Africa. I mean it was easier then. There was much more of a focus on the real risk; the risk is from the Soviet Union and from China and keeping that together. We did some things in trying to help with relations with Yugoslavia. There was some competition with the embassy in Belgrade, who saw that as part of their mission, but it was a side show.

The real issue in Italy though, was dealing with the Communists. And that's where things have gotten incredibly complicated.

Q: Talk some more about that. Was the Italian Communist Party in government at that point?

HOPPER: No. They were out of government, and were flirting with the idea of some kind of a compromise; the *compromeso historico*.

Q: Opening to the Left.

HOPPER: Well, the opening to the Left had been in like 1962 with the Socialists, and the Kennedy administration had helped facilitate that, and had brought the Socialists into government. For me, the lesson from looking at history and watching both the Socialists and the Social Democrats, was how skillful the Christian Democrats were at sharing the pie and compromising; at bringing people in, but keeping control. Their view of compromise is an interesting one. It's sort of you share the spoils and you literally compromise people by letting them get pieces of the corruption and then they couldn't go back, and they couldn't really be as oppositional because they were dependent upon the largesse of the state.

A friend of mine who was in language training with me – a great fellow, Marty Wenick, went out at the same time I did. He was the first person in the political section to be responsible for embassy relations and to overtly have a relationship with the Communists. Got there and found that the deal that had been worked out was that he could only meet with the one person who was the head of the international section of the Communist Party. He was a very able and interesting counterpart, but it's hard to do good political work if you can only have one contact. There were real tight rules on who could see or say anything, and at one point the embassy information officer from USIA was fired because he was at one of the big hotels at the bar and there was a major event taking place and a lot of press around and he made some relatively innocuous comment. It was just nothing. And he was fired because nobody was supposed to say anything about that.

Q: And he was quoted?

HOPPER: Yes. It was really an eye-opener to see. This happened over and over again. We think people don't get fired, but press officers get fired and consistently it's the one position in an embassy that is the most vulnerable and where there is a lot of pressure and direct accountability if you could measure the results. I've seen them come and go more than anybody else. Some former USIA people would talk about what they wanted as part of policy. That was all of them except the press officer who was the ambassador's close associate in all this.

Q: And could easily make policy or interpret it.

HOPPER: And also had the sort of twin jobs of making U.S. policy explainable and looking good, but with the ambassadors with the wrong sets of ego, had to also make the ambassador constantly be a shining star and look good. That was something that wasn't confined to just the political ambassadors. When I was in Mexico when Bob McBride was the ambassador, if there wasn't a good story in the Mexican papers every other day, the press section was in trouble. Wasn't doing its job.

Q: Let's go back to this committee that before the 1976 election you were the executive secretary of, and was the embassy sort of outreach, if you will, toward the period leading up to the election. I guess I'd like you to describe it a little bit more. You mentioned brass bands and villages. What sort of things did the committee do? What was its purpose, and did the embassy feel that it had any particular impact on the election as a result, even marginally?

HOPPER: Well, there's the embassy and there's me.

Q: Well we're talking about you.

HOPPER: What we did was to have two meetings a week to review and revise our plan and to make sure everybody was doing everything they could do from the different sections of USIA, and having AMPART (American Participant) visitors and cultural exchanges and to see that the right U.S. media things played in Italy, and to be sure that the internal political officers were arranging for people to meet with their contacts and kept encouraging and pressing the Christian Democrats, the Socialists, and the Social Democrats to work with one another; and to not give up; that they could win if they just had the right spirit and worked hard, and that even though it was easy to be discouraged, they could win.

We had these plans and were just constantly doing things and making sure that no stone was left unturned. We reported a lot. In the end, my sense was that the Italians are very skillful at running Italy and that they had probably taken most of the money out of the black bags and done whatever they wanted to do anyway in the past. I doubt if the results were changed very much, though I do appreciate that in the late '40s and early '50s the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organizations), and the urban ground, had done some really important work, that continued to keep the trade unions and some of the base of the working class institutionally supporting the Christian Democrats. In those first rounds of elections in the late '40s, things could've gone in different directions. Even then I would be inclined to trust Italian instincts, but at that point there, a lot had gone wrong. By that time, in the early '70s, there was a lot of inertia and we were playing on the margins. We did good things and in the end it worked out, though it was that period of slipping into really frightening terrorism. When I think back, it was before the no double standard policy and we used to get threats from Black September and different PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) groups against the embassy quite frequently.

I can remember at least three or four times when we had threats we would bring sharp-shooters and people down from EUCOM (United States European Command) and we might close the embassy on Thursday and Friday and heavily guard it and watch what was going on, and not tell anybody. It happened once maybe that the RSO (Regional Security Officer) and the Gunny and the marines and the EUCOM team was there and everybody else was working from home. There were a couple of times that we were even encouraged to go out of town on a long weekend, and just be gone. But we didn't tell the public. What were these Americans wandering in to get their passports supposed to do? What if there had been something and there were people standing in line? But, the good side was that you could really keep an eye on things without tipping everybody off and publicly it didn't look like you were in some ways caving in to, in some general way, terrorism. So then when you later got to the no double standard policy where if you knew something to protect yourself, you very understandably had to tell everyone. It meant you had fewer options for how to deal with it. So now we see embassies closing all time.

Q: Everybody knows. Was this a period in Italy where there were acts of terrorism directed at Italian officials or was that a little bit later?

HOPPER: Yes it was starting. When I was there, it was more like they were gearing up. There were more kidnappings and it was aimed at businesspeople and the prominent. At one stage, it was kidnapping for money and then it changed. The big change, of course, was right after I left, when they grabbed Aldo Moro.

There had been these outrages where Fascists had bombed train stations and they felt that only the fascists who would kill other Italians and then the left started doing it.

Q: With your committee and this coordinated effort before the '76 election, were you doing anything vis a vis the NSI, the Fascist Party?

HOPPER: No. It was interesting, but no one wanted to go there. One of the strange realities was that in terms of political correctness, the Fascists had so burned their credibility that at that point it was still just an outhouse term; they were in the wilderness. Even though there may have been some who were smart, decent, skillful people, they were Fascists, and there was a fear that if there was just any sign that we were willing to countenance some compromise with Fascists, that that could tip things the other way.

Q: Why don't you talk to us a little bit about the role, if any, in terms of this political activity, of the consulates in Italy outside of Rome. I guess I'm a little curious as to whether you ever got outside of Rome yourself. It sounds like the two years you were there you were very tied down.

HOPPER: I was a lot. Basically, the consulate in Milan was a very strong place, run much of the time by Tom Fina, who was a very strong career officer. He tried to deal with Embassy Rome as little as possible, but we'd have meetings and he'd come down and

he'd talk to everyone. He was sort of co-consul for northern Italy. He did a very, very good job and had very good contacts and I think played an important role and had a lot of leeway to do much of the work on his own.

The other significant post was the one in Naples; they were still operational in the sense of doing visas and dealing with the navy. They didn't have much of a say in politics. The shocking thing about life in Italy was that politically the Italian establishment despised the south and didn't pay any attention to it. Bought it and rented it and didn't worry about it. So that politics was all going north. And most of what we did was run north. I now realize that you could do a lot with people outside of their bases or outside of a center, by working with them within their homes. We did most things in Rome; probably too much.

There was also little background noise. There were always worries that there would be military rumblings and we worried about coups.

Q: The Italian forces?

HOPPER: Yes, Yes. It was sort of nonsense, but we worried a lot about it. There were days when somebody saw tanks rolling in front of one of their downtown bases. We would pay a little attention to that. We started doing counter-narcotics and international crime things in Rome while I was there and we had a fairly big legal FBI section and we had a drug section. As I became the secretary and I started looking at what everybody did, it was sort of naively shocking to me that our international crime activities also focused on Rome and the north. I'd love to know this, but I've heard several times that we'd actually reached a deal that BNDD (I think they were drug enforcement by '74) didn't go to Palermo; it was too dangerous so we did it through liaison in Rome. If we were doing very much down where the drugs and crime were, we kept it secret. The other thing that made it hard was that Ambassador Volpe absolutely believed there was no such thing as the mafia and no such thing as Italian organized crime, so we couldn't report on the mafia because there wasn't any.

Q: It didn't exist.

HOPPER: It didn't exist. I once did a big report on the Lockheed scandal, and in it I committed two crimes. I actually got the cable out when the ambassador was away and I both compared what the leader of the Social Democrats had done and problems we had to Watergate, and I talked about the mafia. And when the ambassador got back about a week later he called me and the DCM into his office. And really, I was really afraid for the DCM. He said, "You know, it's your job. You're supposed to make sure that this kind of thing doesn't happen." "Watergate is," I forget how he put it, "it's a tragedy that poor President Nixon is being harassed and for embassy reporting to give it credence by using it as an example of how somehow it may harm Italy is just wrong. I don't ever want to see that again." It was really a wonderful piece that I had done, but the only person who didn't like it was the ambassador.

Q: It probably didn't have his name on it if he was out of the country.

HOPPER: Yes. The other thing that got him upset was that it actually got leaked and ran verbatim in the Chicago newspaper and got carried and then they copied it in the media and Time magazine and everyplace.

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Q: Bob, you're still on the Via Veneto in Rome; you were in the political military section. This is the period from 1974 to '76.

HOPPER: I was the deputy of a two person Pol/Mil section, as we mentioned earlier, and in fact it sat in the larger suite that held the political section. From the get-go, I went to all of the political section staff meetings and we might as well have been just a subdivision and an integrated part as well. We had the benefits of sort of being independent and apart.

I wanted to mention that in a big post like Rome another issue that was very important and became more so as time went on, was taking care of high-level visitors. In the fall of 1974 - I can't even remember the policy impetus for it, but there was pressure to hold an international food summit, and since the Food and Agriculture Organization is headquartered in Rome, it was decided, in a fit of good sense, to hold the food summit in Rome. President Nixon had been interested; he couldn't come, but still there was very high level U.S. representation and in one week, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the big U.S. delegation were coming; I believe the Secretary of the Treasury was coming because of the large financial implications. And there were some scattered congressional involvement.

Then the embassy got a cable one morning that a wonderful man, Clem Zablocki from Wisconsin, the Chairman, at that time, of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, was going to lead a large delegation. I'm not exaggerating when I say there were at least nine members plus staffers who came on the delegation. All senior embassy people were already tied up as control officers for everyone else, so the DCM called me into his office that morning and he said, "Bob, I'd like you to be the control officer for CODEL (Congressional Delegation) Zablocki." I barely knew what a CODEL was and I'd never been a control officer for anything bigger than the Nebraska State Popcorn Trade Commission visiting Monterrey, Mexico, but I said, "Great. Sounds like fun. I'd love to do it." So I got in touch with Zablocki's staff and started organizing things, and I had an instinct that while I should do what they wanted me to do, that I should also take advantage of their visit to try and do things that I had wanted to do that weren't readily available to me as a pretty junior officer. I recall I took them to see the Italian Minister of Defense because I couldn't get in to see the Minister of Defense and they were important enough that they could. We went and visited a number of places. I had gone to Orvieto, which is a lovely mountain town and where very few tourists went. So, I got a bus one day and I took them up to Orvieto and these skilled world travelers just thought I had taken them to heaven. I learned they really appreciated little trips to heaven every now

and then. We also did a day where we went down to the Sixth Fleet command and then went to Monte Cassino. where it turned out both Chairman Zablocki and his vice chairman, Dante Fascell, had been foot soldiers during World War II, and as Catholic Americans, one a Pole and one an Ital-American, cared deeply about the fate of the abbey and its rebuilding.

The prior bishop or whoever was in charge of the abbey agreed to give them a guided tour and meet with the group. We had a wonderful meeting and got a historical accounting of the tragedy and the crisis and the problems of the area during and after World War II. And at the end – I think it was Fascell – asked, "Why did it take so long to rebuild this place given all the money we provided?" The rebuilding had just been finished and blessed a couple of months before. The priest in charge, in an endearing feat of honesty, said, "Well, I'm going to tell you why. We knew that you Americans felt guilty and had a sense of responsibility, but we decided that the best way to get money from you was to say that it was for rebuilding the bomb damage to the abbey and so we did a big campaign. But what we really needed the money for was taking care of all the orphans, and a lot of social work in the area. So we spent most of the money on that and we drug out the building. We could've built this thing in a year, but we used almost all of the money for other things and just kept dragging it along so we probably got ten times more than we would've needed just to build." He did it in such a nice way that they actually agreed with him that it would've been harder to sustain funding for orphans; and so everybody had a good laugh. But for me, it was interesting to think that money can be used for many different things and can be raised in many different ways.

But it was a good visit. The guys went off and the number two, Dante Fascell, seemed to really like me. I got to know his wife and I saw a report that wives were on such trips, and he said, "Look, if you ever need anything, just be in touch." I know people say that a lot, but I decided that I would try to put that away in a little bank and keep using it. Sadly, within a couple of years Zablocki died and Fascell moved up and became the chairman of the committee. Later on I did have occasions to help other people go to him and to go to him myself. For the rest of my career, I was in touch with people on his staff who I had met through that visit. So I found that you should take seriously those offers of being in touch and staying in touch, and that high-level visits are great occasions for meeting people.

Q: And would you go a step further and say that at least based on this first CODEL experience in Rome, that CODEL visits can be very useful not only to the members of Congress in terms of what they learn and the experiences that they have, but to the embassy in terms of opening doors that wouldn't otherwise be open and so on?

HOPPER: Well, absolutely. They will often ask the intelligently naïve big question of people when they're sitting on the ground. You sometimes get so enamored of knowing what's the latest twist in something that you fair to ask these questions. I found visits invaluable.

The other thing I learned very early was that for a political section officer, it was a somewhat unusual opportunity to be a manager, if management is using resources and other people's time, doing a high-level visit was an occasion where you got to call upon a lot of different sections and assets of the embassy. I found it was really good experience, that I enjoyed it and that, evidently, I was fairly good at getting other people to do things.

Q: You didn't feel that this particular visit was simply a boondoggle; a junket shopping expedition?

HOPPER: That kind of thing never bothered me very much. I felt that for most of us our whole careers were boondoggles and shopping expeditions; that one of the reasons we joined the Foreign Service was to be able to go to these wonderful places and experience them at depth. So what's the problem if a Secretary of State or a congressman wants to visit them for three days and because they don't have so much time to sample, they sometimes overdose and seem to lack good sense. But no, that didn't bother me.

Also, the timing of the World Food Summit, and the timing of the congressional elections were such that they acted as a stimulus for a rule change in the Congress on when members could travel because there was a senior committee chairman who had lost a primary because of some problem and had been allowed to travel. Interestingly, he used the military to facilitate his logistical details. He stayed in a hotel across the street and away from everyone else. It turned out he was actually using the trip to have a liaison with one of his senior staff members of the opposite sex. It was infamous that he never went to any meetings, they just sort of camped out and went shopping. Somebody leaked it to the equivalent of an in-the-loop news service at the time. It got a lot of press and as a result Congress changed the rules to if you were leaving the Congress you had to jump through some real hoops to travel. My group was so serious and had such legitimate business, that compared to somebody who was actually using it for not the best purposes, it seemed wonderful. What happened as a result of my having done a fairly decent job on CODEL Zablocki and taking care of them, was that maybe about five or six months later, after the resignation of President Nixon, and President Ford was in office and he did a tour to wrap up the Helsinki process - I guess the concluding document was all signed in Helsinki…

Q: In 1975.

HOPPER: In '75, and he did a tour through eastern European capitals and because the Romanians had played a major role in being a little bit independent of the Soviet Union and helping it happen, he decided to honor their role by including a stop in Bucharest. Embassy Bucharest was a little bit small to take care of a presidential visit on its own, so the European Bureau bolstered the staffing of Embassy Bucharest by sending people TDY (Temporary Duty) from all over Europe and from the Department. And because I had done the CODEL Zablocki well, I was asked if I would go to Bucharest on TDY to assist with the presidential visit and I said, "Sure, sounds great." So I went there ten days before the visit and I was the Henry Kissinger control officer and scheduling person and I

assisted a wonderful senior USIA person as the site officer at the presidential palace residential section of Bucharest. Working on the schedule was very interesting and working on a presidential visit, for me – I guess it was the second one; we'd had one in Rome that I'd worked on a little bit, too – was just fascinating. When the Secret Service people came in and were doing all of the practice for the motorcades and the arrival at the airport in Bucharest, there were a couple of anti-aircraft short-range missile sites and somehow they bragged that they had actually dismantled or found some way to take them out of commission.

Q: "They" being?

HOPPER: The Secret Service for the arrival and departure. It seemed pretty clear to me that they had not done that through overt negotiations with Romanian officials. So that was part of it. As they practiced the motorcades, and building on the masses of experience that U.S. officials had had with high-level visits, we had little cards to use to talk to the contract drivers for every situation. I'll never forget there was a card that said, "Hurry up. We're late." One day, in fact it was the day of President Ford's arrival, one of the people who had to get out to the airport was saying, "Hurry up. We're late. Hurry up. We're late," and their Romanian driver started driving a hundred miles an hour and there were people lined up near the motorcades and the person realized, "Oh my god, I didn't mean to go that fast," and they had no card saying "Slow down. Be careful," and the driver hit a pedestrian and killed them. So from that day forward I understand that people always had a card saying "Slow down. Be careful."

We took care of working on the visit of the arrival of the team. We'd been at this lovely big guesthouse complex where President Nicolae Ceausescu lived and he'd invited the senior U.S. delegation to stay there. It was summer time and it was hot and it wasn't very comfortable. I kept pushing and saying, "When is the air-conditioning coming on?" and they'd say, "Don't worry. President Nicolae Ceausescu is also up in one of the rooms. We haven't had it on, but it'll be fine. Don't worry, it'll be fine." And about ten or eleven o'clock in the morning when they were going to arrive, it's still real hot. And the embassy people didn't want to upset the Romanians – they were very nice. Finally, I pushed and I said, "When is this air-conditioning going to kick in?" and the management team from the residence comes down and I started pushing them rather directly and they said, "Well, you know air-conditioning systems in Romania aren't the same as in the United States. Our system here is that we run lots of water on the roof and then turn the fans on and it's just been too hot for that to work. This is about as cool as it's going to get." The administrative officer came out and we thought, "Oh, what are we going to do? They're not going to be able to sleep."

Secretary Kissinger was pretty infamous for not liking to be too uncomfortable, so the embassy called around and sent a truck from the administrative section to people's homes in the embassy community and they collected about twenty fans and they brought fans in and put them in the senior U.S. visitors' rooms. It actually made it tolerable. The day goes on and it comes to be evening and Secretary Kissinger gets to his room and tries to get

some rest and his fan is very noisy. His staff on the trip was Jerry Bremer and David Passage and they come out and they had heard about me; one of them knew me, and said, "Bob, we're counting on you. The Secretary can't sleep. You have to get another fan. This is just no good." I said, "We have all the fans from the entire American community. We're kind of stuck." Then a light went on in my head and I said, "Oh, but you know, Ron Nessen and one of the president's aides, they're still downtown and having a late night. Let me go check around." I went and checked the fan was on in Nessen's room. It was bigger and real quiet, so I took the fan out of Nessen's room, brought it to the Secretary's and we switched. That was considered such a coup that I went up in a steam and went on the secretariat's list of the best and brightest and even got an accolade as an honorary administrative officer. But it all went really well.

In substance it was a great visit. I was able to watch the sometimes kind of petty competition between a White House staff and the Secretary's staff. I think no one will doubt that Secretary Kissinger is a great man with a huge role, a brilliance and an ego to match. It turned out that President Ford's staff had just about had enough of it and felt that they needed to bring Secretary Kissinger down a peg. So, on the afternoon of one of the key meetings, they'd had one after-lunch session with Ceausescu and another one was scheduled in the late afternoon, and as the group came back to the guesthouse, I watched them – I was out there to move them along, they were sort of loitering outside the motorcade and President Ford told Kissinger directly, "Well you know, that was okay, but I think we don't need that meeting in the afternoon, so we've worked out we're just going to skip it and we can all relax. We're tired. And we'll just go back for the dinner." So the State Department people who were staying in a different wing of the guest house; go in one direction. The presidential people go in another. Then about ten minutes later, I see the presidential people coming back; they're chuckling and they get in the motorcade. They actually had not canceled the second set of meetings with Ceausescu; they just wanted to fool Kissinger and go do it on their own. So I ran back to the Secretary of State part of the visit and told them, and not amazingly, they were very upset: they ran and they got Secretary Kissinger, got in their cars, and sped off. God knows what excuse they thought of, but they did arrive at the meetings ten minutes later. It's just of such things that are superpowers made.

I also found out that all of the visitors from Washington, especially the Secret Service and the WHCA (White House Communications Agency) communications people who work very hard on these visits, actually got a lot of money. They got overtime, they billed for overtime for every minute, from when they got on the car plane. They knew how to bill for their expenses. And one of the reasons they were willing to spend so much time traveling is that they did alright financially. The State Department people, we were under a much tighter resource control and we were encouraged not to ask for anything; just to see it as a great opportunity. Then I discovered that the State administrative people who came out and did the trips also knew how to bill for things. One of them told me, as an FSO-6 or 5 or whatever I was, I was under that federally established limit where you could get overtime. So, I kept track of my records and when I did my voucher, I did a supplemental request for overtime. It got signed and went in. The administrative people

thought I was brilliant and smart to do that. I then got a call from the late Leman Hunt who was a senior administrative person in the Department and who had worked with Joan Clark who was still the executive director for the European Bureau. They said they were really surprised I'd made a mistake and had submitted this request for overtime. I talked to him and I thought about it and I called him back and said, "No, I checked. It wasn't a mistake." I was entitled to it. Other people were getting it. I'd been away from my family for two weeks. I was out-of-pocket on my apartment. I said no it wasn't a mistake; I wanted my money. They then had somebody in EUR at a lower level call me and said they'd give me one last chance and that if I didn't retract my request for the overtime, I should know that I would never be asked to go TDY to do a presidential visit again. I said that wasn't much of a threat, and would they please send my money. And they sent my money; I got my overtime and I was never asked to go TDY by EUR to do a presidential visit again, but probably I learned what I could out of the first one.

Q: Well, you probably had another year to go in Rome so there may not have been all that many more chances in any event.

HOPPER: Yes.

Q: The food summit was probably right at the end of 1974, after the general election in November, before the new congress came in.

HOPPER: Yes.

Q: Anything else that you particularly want to talk about in connection with the assignment in Rome?

HOPPER: Just a couple of things about management issues. In Rome, it being a large embassy, we had a cadre of incredibly talented Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs). It was because of World War II. We had people that the embassy was able to hire in the late '40s when there were precious few other opportunities. I can recall a couple of the senior FSNs; they should've been CEOs (Chief Executive Officers). I mean they were so good. And to our credit, we identified early on that they were good, gave them opportunities, and we really trusted them. They had a lot of autonomy in running different parts of the embassy. But here it was, 1974, twenty-five plus years after World War II, these talented people had been here for (most of them) well over twenty years, but they'd been hired when they were eighteen so they were still relatively young and they had seen us come and go so many times that the downside of the match of transient Foreign Service Officers and skillful somewhat underemployed locals had gotten a bit sour. And they had figured out how to run the embassy the way they wanted to and all of the younger officers found the situation with the FSNs to be intolerable. We had not been trained at all in how to deal with FSNs. We have the bizarre view that we were actually the employees and that we were the bosses and that even if we were twenty-eight that a fifty-year-old FSN who was the head of some autonomous management section, in some strange way should work for us. And so, when we would have an idea, invariably the response, usually not

stated but implied, was "You foolish jerk. We've heard that same dumb idea from fifteen other brand-new wet-behind-the-ear FSOs. Thanks. You're going to be gone in two years. We'll consider it. We'll do it if it makes sense, but it doesn't make sense and it never made sense." So there was a lot of tension between the FSNs and the junior officers.

After a while, it became obvious that at a large post like Rome to make things work the FSNs had figured out that if they kept the ambassador and the ambassador's wife happy, if they kept the DCM and the DCM's wife happy, and they kept the admin counselor and his family happy, the rest didn't matter. And it was really interesting to see that the political counselor and the economic counselor didn't have much more luck in pressing their cases than a junior officer, and that there was this sort of pecking order on the management side. Years later, when I was lobbying with Congress for the Department and found that our support system, then called FAST, the Foreign Affairs Administrative System, a shared budgeting system with other agencies, had totally fallen apart because the other agencies universally felt that if the embassy got new refrigerators that they went to the ambassador, the DCM, and the administrative counselor and then maybe to the club or something and then there weren't anymore, that that kind of reputation had spread so wide that we weren't trusted to manage the system fairly for everybody. And I think it went back to the kind of system that had evolved in a place like Rome.

The one other administrative issue that was fascinating in Rome and clearly had an impact on many people in many places was housing. Once you got your assignment, you sent a letter to the admin counselor and you described your family situation and you were encouraged to tell them what kind of housing you wanted. This was in the period where there were mostly housing allowances. There were government-leased and owned places for the most senior people and a fairly nice big apartment building for "staff." Everybody in between got a housing allowance and went out on the economy to find their own. The Italian economy had gotten strong enough in the mid-'70s that it meant we were competing in certain neighborhoods with the rest of the international community and with successful Italians.

If you had a family, it was really surprising; there were not that many places to live a family style life. We arrived in July. We had to move quickly or we would hit the August vacation period and not be able to do anything. The embassy was very nice. They gave us time to get out on the streets to look for places; my wife, who had a little Italian, spent the first week just going everywhere and tracking down every lead. We went to one very nice apartment in a neighborhood called Parioli that was near where the ambassador lived and relatively convenient to the embassy; a nice apartment; just the right size. It seemed just right. It had a park and a tennis court and we were asking the sort of caretaker doorman, "Well, where do our kids play? Can they play in this park?" "Kids? You have kids? No, you keep your kids in your apartment. We don't want kids out bothering other people. The tennis courts are for adults." It was interesting for all of the perceptions of the importance of children in Italian family life, that in some ways they were to be seen and not heard. The sort of comfortable outdoor rambunctious suburban life – it was fine, but you can't take that with you and it was hard to find. We ended up finding, after a few

tearful nights, a place that other Americans had lived at. It was in a complex that had eleven buildings and a really wonderful mix of people. The Italian landlord of the condominium (he had two or three places there) offered us a pretty good deal, but then said that I would have to sign multiple contracts; one I could use with the embassy, and one he would use with Italian tax authorities. I knew we couldn't do that and I told him that "I can only sign one contract. I'd like to sign the low one, but I can really only sign one." He said, "Well then if you're going to sign it and I know you're government will give it to somebody, you have to sign the high one," and the rent was significantly more than the allowance, but I'd been told that it would catch up and everybody was having this problem.

Q: The allowance would go up?

HOPPER: The allowance would go up. So it was $200 a month out-of-pocket, which in 1974 at entry-level was quite a bit of money; but, I took it on faith that it would catch up, signed the thing, turned it in, and the embassy housing committee sent me a snide note saying that I'd signed an unacceptable contract and that they recommended that I get out of it and start over again, adding that if I had signed it and had any problems, it would be on me. I looked around and it was clear (I'd been there long enough) that there wasn't going to be any better place; and my family would've gone nuts if we would've had to start the process over again. So I just signed it and agreed that I would accept whatever the costs were.

To pay the rent, my wife, or one of us - and at that point in time it was just assumed it would be your wife – (and bless my wife. She did it with great aplomb) would go down to a bank near the Ponte Milviau – a very crowded section fairly near our house – once a month, get in the nonexistent queue and pay the rent in cash into an account that this landlord had set up. She would do that and found that in an Italian bank you couldn't even find the queue and people would be knocking you down, and cutting in front. She had to find a way to get up and pay her money. There were multiple exchange rates in Italy at the time; there were official ones and ones that certain banks charged; the one that you could get at the embassy and the one that you could get at a couple of little shops two blocks away from the embassy; it was fascinating. Let's just say that the official rate was 600 lira to the dollar and the little shop around the corner gave you 800 lira to the dollar. If you're $200 a month out-of-pocket, that spread between 800 and 600 is important. You were supposed to use the official rate, but after a while you find out that everybody is doing it. You sort of go over with four or five people in a group. I'm not really proud of it, but I'd go once or twice a month and get enough to pay the rent. One never knows how those things work. No one ever got caught for it. There were no problems. It was just a strange little system.

Q: Life in Rome. Your talk about housing and the difficulty of finding housing, as well as your experience with high-level visits reminds me of some of my experiences in Rome from 1970 to '73; just a few years before. But I'll resist telling my stories.

Let me ask you a couple things about going back to the political reporting – political section. I think the other day you mentioned that Ambassador Volpe, after the fact, had called you in and been unhappy that you had referred to the Italian mafia, and also, I think, to Watergate, therefore, you couldn't refer to those as long as he was there and was in charge of the embassy. Was that something that affected the reporting or would you not have been reporting very much about the mafia or Watergate and the Italian reaction? Did this have a larger effect as well?

HOPPER: I'm not sure. In some ways, the sort of clear bottom line was that we not use words like the mafia and Watergate as explicit metaphors for anything, and if you interpreted the rule to mean that, you could find many ways around it. Where I also found it hard, was the year when I was the secretary of the committee on Italian democracy, and we had a plan to write a series of cables on social issues that affected Italian life. I was going to do one on abortion and crime and a range of things; I actually did it without being able to very explicitly deal with mafia or religious issues in a way that called into question the powers that be and the traditional desired, but not always practiced, moral codes. It made it hard to do.

I found a lot of these big projects were really fun to write and to research, but it's where I faulted the leadership of the embassy in that there's only so much time even a fairly junior person has. I would get sent off doing interesting, and actually important, complex projects that we couldn't complete. I felt after a while that if you really followed the evidence and did it the way that most of us felt the evidence pointed, you couldn't get it out. So you had to do it in a convoluted fashion. I had a couple of cables I actually managed to clear with twenty people in the embassy and not ruin them. I found after a while that the clearance process was okay; that it would get rid of things - or maybe I'd only heard it from one place and it wasn't that solid - and people had good contacts and you'd get other things.

I had a knack for enveloping the material other people gave me and yet keeping what I thought was the big picture and the point of view. I did one of these on social issues, got it cleared by the entire leadership of the embassy – every major section, every section head – got it in to the DCM, and he sort of liked it. He then met with the ambassador and he called and said, "Bob, we can't say this. This embassy, at this point, just can't say all these things about abortion and divorce…" and so the cable never went out. It was a lot of work and I really could've been doing other things. This is consistent throughout my career – that even on tough cables where maybe at a certain point in time leadership wouldn't want to send them - and sometimes they were even right that the timing just wasn't right - I'd find that three weeks after the cable had been put in an in-box someplace and sat on, that you'd hear the DCM at a lunch with somebody actually make the comments that were in the cable that never went out. Or you'd see another section would start pursuing a policy line that was from the draft cable that never went out. So I learned that there are many purposes to doing the research and writing involved in a major cable, and not all of them are just sending it to Washington.

Q: There were probably also instances where the timing was wrong and it wasn't sent, and then two months went by, six weeks went by, and all of a sudden there was a great need for exactly that kind of research and work that had been done.

HOPPER: Also you could break them up. The other thing I learned was that if it didn't work as a big piece, you could send things as little pieces.

Q: Add it on to other conversations or whatever.

HOPPER: Right.

Q: Let me ask you, and this kind of relates to what you were just talking about, particularly in the area of religion. At that time there was no embassy for the Vatican. There was somebody in Embassy Rome who I think covered Vatican issues. Did you get involved with the Vatican at all, or was it the kind of reporting where the Catholic Church and the Vatican had a lot of influence in Italy, where religion was pertinent, as far as you were concerned?

HOPPER: When I arrived, the U.S. representative to the Vatican was Henry Cabot Lodge; and, having been a vice presidential candidate to President Nixon in 1960, he did have some connections, and was wonderful, smooth and sophisticated.

There was one person, an experienced then O-5 which I guess would be a 3 now, Bob Illing, who spoke wonderful Italian and was very experienced - or seemed so to me, being less experienced- who on a week, month, year-in basis did the Vatican. He had wonderful relations with the Vatican's equivalent of a foreign ministry. He had an office and a desk in the political section. He also had an office outside of the embassy that was closer to the Vatican. In this sometimes stifling bureaucratic palace in Rome, he could hide out a bit and do his own thing. Bob left a couple of months after I arrived, and was replaced by Peter Sarros, a wonderful fellow. Out of a year, either Bob or Peter would have maybe two months when the Vatican representative was present and they were a bag person and a gopher and an assistant. And ten months when they were there, and were in charge of an operation that had one senior Foreign Service secretary, and a couple of locals. I think they actually had a car that they could use. It was pretty wonderful. After a while you realized it was one of the most coveted jobs in the Foreign Service. That one person and a little staff did most of the work with the Vatican. Somehow they also had a protocol local employee, because part of the job was getting audiences and getting visitors in to different things. But on the substance of relations with the Vatican, we treated it as fairly straight-forward with their foreign ministry. At that point we pretty much stayed out of broader big church politics; very definitely did not try to track or get involved in important U.S. Catholic leaders coming. We just did the Vatican as a foreign ministry. Later on, when we upped our representation and created an ambassador, the whole thing changed quite a bit. But at that time, it was fairly simple, and if the rest of us in the political section had some ideas on structural church issues and how they affected Italy, we would ask; we would clear them with the day to day person and ask them for ideas.

But we didn't go over to the Vatican. There was a pretty firm dividing line.

Q: Okay, anything else we should say about your assignment in Rome?

HOPPER: Maybe talk a little bit about how I got out of Rome and went back to the Department to my next assignment.

Q: This was in 1976?

HOPPER: I just spent two years. I came in the summer of '74 and I left in the summer of '76. It would've been possible to extend to get a third year – as a junior officer you're supposed to sort of do two two-year assignments, but it would've been easy to get a third year. I decided I found the bureaucracy and the atmosphere within the embassy kind of gut-wrenching, and I decided that I'd rather go learn something else and do something else. My family was very disappointed. After we'd gotten established, they really loved Rome and would've been happy to stay for another year. So I took a lot of grief at meals for years because we pulled out and we didn't stay another year.

I had enjoyed the POL/MIL work and I had enjoyed those discussions of arms control and things like MBFR. I had this understanding that the Political Military Bureau was small enough that even on a third tour, having been the "deputy" of a POL/MIL section, knowing a lot of people, that maybe I could get a deputy office director job in PM (Bureau of Political Military-Affairs). So I worked through people and that's what I was bidding on - and I thought I was in the running for one of them - and then out of the blue, the embassy got a call from whoever was running SS/EX at the time, saying that the counselor of the Department, Hal Sonnenfeldt, had heard about me from various visitors and was interested in considering me to be the special assistant on his staff who did western Europe and related issues, and would I give the office a call. So I called and the person who I was going to be replacing was Jim Dobbins. I talked to Jim a little bit and I had a very, very brief conversation with Sonnenfeldt, and snap, I was assigned to that Seventh Floor special assistant job. I didn't know very much about what that really meant. I went on home leave - I had an awful long flight from Rome to Los Angeles in the middle of the summer with two little kids - but par for the course, get back to the Department and took the spot of special assistant for western Europe and Euro-communism, and some other issues, but mostly NATO and western Europe.

Q: Now this was just before the 1976 election?

HOPPER: I arrived, probably reported for work in early August; it was summertime and Jim Dobbins had been gone for a couple of weeks so there had been a little gap. At that time, the suite that the counselor had was down at the far end of the two corridors on the Seventh Floor, in the area that the undersecretary for economic affairs has, almost down to H. It was very cramped; there were two secretaries, a staff assistant, and three special assistants – one doing western Europe and some high-level talks, one doing the Soviet Union and eastern Europe, and one doing big-time technical arms control issues. So I was

the one doing western Europe - high-level negotiations - and there was this office that had the staff assistant and me; we shared one fairly good sized office, but in corners of this office.

As I went around to meet people and looked into doing this job, and we were going back over the records, I found that one person, who eventually became a good friend of mine, Vlad Lehovich, had had the job for maybe three months and found it not his cup of tea and moved on; and then Jim Dobbins had taken it and done it for maybe a year and a half, and been incredibly successful at doing it. People who know Jim know how hard-working and tough he is at doing a job. Well, when I started going around introducing myself, I found people just almost getting on their hands and knees and welcoming me, "Oh, it's so good to have you," and it turned out that Jim had actually understood better than anyone what Sonnenfeldt wanted, and had really very forcefully employed the authority and power of Sonnenfeldt, and had done it so forcefully, and successfully, that people were really happy to see him go, and happy to see a more inexperienced person who wanted to do it very much in a nice guy mode if at all possible. It was fascinating, that transition from somebody who did well then, and has done well since, following a heavy-hitter like Jim, but who had a pretty abrasive style, even then.

Q: Certainly in those days. Maybe still.

HOPPER: Yes. So I started that job and within a couple of weeks, Sonnenfeldt was pretty accessible and had the work habits of a Seventh Floor principal in the Kissinger period. Kissinger was now the Secretary. The counselors of the Department have always had an amorphous job description, viewed themselves as a Seventh Floor principal, always thought they were the equivalent of an undersecretary, but in a formal legalistic sense were the equivalent of an assistant secretary. Most of the time nobody cares what some legalistic pecking order is except on Christmas card lists and who gets things from the president, but it was always a big fight and Sonnenfeldt would succeed at being treated as part of the inner circle, as one of the under secretaries while he didn't have the same line responsibilities as Phil Habib, the undersecretary for political affairs, Sonnenfeldt was in many ways supervising the European Bureau. He was on SALT (Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty) negotiations; played a deep role for Kissinger. And watching him try to get involved in an issue was just fascinating. I still, in awe, remember one day when there was a crisis on the Korean border and Sonnenfeldt heard about it and he felt there was a Soviet angle. There was a crisis meeting, he went down and he tried to get the lead role on it. He was told in no uncertain terms by Habib, and then by the Secretary, that "No, this is a Korea issue; this is not a Soviet issue. Phil is in charge. EA is in charge. Stay out of it. This is not your issue. Do not go giving people instructions." "Yes I understand that, but how the Soviets react to this, and the impact it can have on our issues is very important." So he sat there and he knew that he couldn't go against such a direct mandate, but he couldn't stand to have this issue play out without him having a lead role. He sat there and then he got one call from a journalist, and for some reason I was brought in, and these were in days when you could actually still monitor calls.

Q: Take notes?

HOPPER: There was a call button on the phone where you could hit that button and you could listen. You couldn't talk and they couldn't hear you, but you could take notes. It was totally known that that's what people did, but nobody said, "Bernie, do you mind? My assistant is taking notes." You just took notes. That was a practice that was, within a year, found wanting, and changed. So I took notes and I watched. Sonnenfeldt didn't volunteer anything. He answered one question and he actually got the journalist to spin out a few speculations with him. Within ten minutes, Sonnenfeldt then called somebody who was a marginally important player, shared what he'd heard from the journalist, shared the speculations, speculated a step further, got one of them confirmed, got another idea from that person, hung up, thought about it, waited ten minutes, called somebody a little closer to the center of it, tried out those points, shared some speculations, got a little bit more. He made about five calls like that, always planting a few seeds, getting a little more information, and then within an hour and a half EU is at the center of the issue. He called Habib and said, "I know I'm not supposed to, but you need to know," and he went down and had another meeting with him; played out these pieces of news that he had gotten from other people, and was involved in working the issue. I watched and he regularly did that.

Then I had a call from the same journalist wanting to track an issue with me, and I went in to Sonnenfeldt and said, "What should I do? I know a bit about this. Do you want me to call this guy back?" and he said, "Bob, I think you're going to be wonderful. You're really bright, but this guy is really good. This journalist knows how we work. He'll eat you for lunch. So have him call me, listen to how I handle it, and my guidance to you is for the first six months here, pass the media calls to me. We'll do it together. And then within six months you'll be able to do it." I watched. He did this technique with other people, it was also the technique you could watch the really good journalists use: they would call, they would have one piece of information that was just incontrovertible and you'd talk about that, and it was so obvious, so clear, so unclassified, so unsensitive, that anybody would confirm that. And then they'd have another one that was a little more out there; a little more speculative, a little more sensitive. The good journalists would then play that one out and they would get somebody, including Sonnenfeldt, to confirm that one. And since they knew so much, it was never a big step to confirm that one more piece. Then they'd share something a little beyond, and inevitably the senior State Department people would share one thing on a deep background, and then you just knew the journalist would call the next person, and get the two pieces confirmed, thereby getting the speculative background one confirmed as well. If you were any good at that, in ninety minutes of phoning, you could have a story where things that were meant to be background or not used, were actually confirmed by somebody else. It was just a wonderful process. They got lots of information out and drove everybody crazy, and sort of, "What if that's a leak?" and "Who is responsible?" and you'd watch everybody that Kissinger called. It was what everybody did trying to get their news out and they would all blame everybody else for planting these leaks when they were all doing it.

Q: Why don't you talk a little bit about the relationship that you had with the secretary's office and Sonnenfeldt with Doctor Kissinger, in these early months that you were in that office.

HOPPER: It was a strange period because I arrived in August of '76. Very quickly, the Republican Convention took place, and President Ford was a little bit insecure as to whether he was going to make it, but he did; and he was nominated. It was my first campaign in transition from at a spot where I could watch it.

It was fascinating. The Republicans had been in for two terms; very difficult ones with the pain of the whole Watergate and the transition. Secretary Kissinger had been doing foreign policy on the road with his heavily directed, involved traveling, "I'm doing it every minute" style, and it became pretty clear that these people were tired. There was a sort of tired pessimism that Ford wasn't an energized candidate and that the administration was going to lose. There wasn't very much energy on the part of senior State Department people to campaign or to help the campaign. They weren't against it; they just weren't engaged.

And then there was the episode of the Sonnenfeldt Doctrine, when at a EUR chief's of missions conference held, I think in Belgrade, there had been a discussion of eastern Europe and a very progressive, ahead of its time, look at where things were going. Sonnenfeldt had led the discussion, and had been very spirited and a very able diplomat who, I think, was on the policy planning staff at the time. The conversation was written up in an almost verbatim way and it was done as a cable and it leaked. It leaked and then was misinterpreted as somehow Sonnenfeldt - and through him Kissinger and the Department - sort of acceding to a division of the world and a division of spoils with the Soviet Union. This got called the Sonnenfeldt Doctrine.

In the campaign, in one of the debates, President Ford got asked a question basically about the Sonnenfeldt Doctrine and Poland. He gave an answer that I don't remember very well, but it was a wishy-washy answer that could be interpreted as, "Well you know, Poland has to make its peace with being Poland under the Soviet Union." It was seen as very defeatist and not in keeping with our captain nation's "we'll never accept this" approach. When questioned about it, Ford got kind of tongue-tied and it sort of looked like he wasn't in command. The spin-off back in the Department of the White House blaming, "Well there was that stupid State Department policy that got stupidly leaked and ended up hurting the president," and that led to some rough, discouraging moments.

Then, amazingly, as the campaign went on, Governor Carter's lead started to narrow and there was some real excitement in the last couple of weeks. The senior staff got more engaged and were trying to help, but then the election was over and Carter had won and you had this transition, and it was clear pretty early on that Zbigniew Brzezinski was going to have a major role and he came around one evening to meet with my boss, Mr. Sonnenfeldt. It was fascinating.

They were both European émigrés from about the same period. They had very, very similar views on the Soviet Union and the need for an American policy of steel, but they had them from different starting points. The role of ethnicity and historical background and historical underpinnings of policy played a role with Doctor Sonnenfeldt. His family had left Germany when he was a young boy in the '30s; his guiding principles were the Munich events and the Holocaust, in a very sophisticated way. Brzezinski was in some ways the product of the same tragic set of experiences, but as a Polish Catholic from the right side of the tracks in Poland, he watched it go bad and saw the Soviets as part of all the tragedies of Poland. He saw a different Munich and a different Holocaust and a different set of causes of the problems. Where the Sonnenfeldt set - actually the Kissinger set of guide stars - were based on the lessons of appeasement and dealing with Hitler, Brzezinski's, at times, were more positive and romantic on that places like Poland really deserved a chance to try it on their own and were being tragically hemmed in and not allowed their identity. His style was one of wanting to confront the Soviet Union, knowing you had to have steel, but a little bit of wanting to take a chance to give the eastern Europeans their shot. So they have their meeting. As in the campaign Kissinger and his style at times was an issue – not a really important issue, but was an issue nonetheless – I expected some signals that things would really be dramatically different. But from what I could see when Sonnenfeldt and Brzezinski met, they were part of a council on foreign relations group, they talked about how to run things; it was very gentlemanly guidance about "who should we pick, and how do we run the transition." I was surprised at how smooth that part of it seemed.

Q: Was that a meeting you sat in on?

HOPPER: Yes, I sat in on part of it. It was late at night; they came over. I saw little bits of it; I then left and it was private. It probably took place after hours. Back at that point in time, the whole question of, "What were the hours?" was an interesting one. People like Sonnenfeldt really believed you just had to be there, that things happened at strange hours and if the Secretary was around, they needed to be around. And Kissinger never went home; so I mean the hours were just awesome in this office. I would often be there until eight-thirty or nine at night just sort of loitering.

Q: Waiting for something to happen? In case something happened?

HOPPER: Yes. What it meant though was that I really could read a lot of cables. I could call people. And what was unfair for the regular bureaucratic structure was if things would come out of Doctor Sonnenfeldt's office at eight pm, you'd call the front office of a bureau; if they weren't there, we'd say, "Well yes, they didn't care enough about this to be around," and you'd just move something forward. It was just sort of that sense that if you really care about the fate of the nation, you'll be there, and if you're not there, you don't have a say. It was fascinating.

Q: Was it one of your responsibilities, and that of the others in the office, to try to establish when Doctor Kissinger left the State Department at the end of the day?

HOPPER: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Q: So that others could go home and you could go home?

HOPPER: Yes. Yes. Yes. But I mean the main thing is Sonnenfeldt was an incredible intelligence operative and he knew things. Even though there were four of us trying to find things out, he would invariably find things out most of the time before we did. He was incredible. He'd know and he'd start, "Oh, no, they're gone." And Kissinger was so busy. Kissinger sometimes just stayed. He would sometimes take catnaps; and for a while, until he got married, he almost lived in the office. They went on twenty-four hour shifts, and they had people in and he dictated. But even somebody like Sonnenfeldt realized, no, you just had to go home. Nobody stayed just because Kissinger was there. There was some way to know that a critical mass had gone. I can't remember whether the executive secretary's office would even finally say, "We're shut," but there was some process where you finally knew it was over.

After a while, I really couldn't stand just sitting there waiting. It was hard to do anything useful and usually you were even reading things for the second time. This was before E-mail and in this period there were no computers in the office. We had somebody who could do special typing. There was one machine, but basically it was all typing and paper. And we would do, on little pieces of five-by-eight pads, with some of them that said Department of State on the top, mostly just blank five-by-eight tabs on our Selectric typewriters. We would read things and the special assistants would do notes. If we found a cable that was interesting, we'd quickly read it and then do a little note; staple it on and send it in. Every memo that the European Bureau or the POL/MIL Bureau or NEA (Near East Bureau) or somebody was sending, if it came through us for clearance, the special assistants would summarize and make their recommendations on the memo, on a five-by-eight pad – and you could only do one; it was bad form to take more than one to summarize something — and then the boss would agree, disagree, or have some other ideas. This process was a little bit shocking to me, but every office on the Seventh Floor was doing this - it was not just ours.

Some of us who weren't really that experienced – I will say that the special assistants did seem to be fairly talented, but they weren't all that experienced – would take these massive amounts of work done by the bureaus and boil them down into these summaries. Sometimes we didn't agree with the bureaus, or we knew oftentimes the political and bureaucratic procedures that enforced some of the compromises in the papers. Kissinger used to complain that the choices would be nuke the Soviet Union, pay them a billion dollars in reparations, or do option 'b'. But that option 'b' would oftentimes be so wishy-washy, so compromised, and so clearly set up with no legitimate range of options for the principals, so we never knew what the options were. But people would've talked to us. So, on our little chits, we would often put the real options back and describe them so that the Seventh Floor did have an informal chance to think about the things that had been left on the cutting room floor in the clearance process. I never felt bad about that; I felt that

was actually a useful function to play. Usually, all of those tough bureaucratic reasons that led to option 'b' being such a compromise would prevail. The great minds might think about those more dramatic range of options and then still find that no, they couldn't do that either. But through all of that work in doing those little chits, we would save them.

In the middle of that period, you also had the studies of freedom of information, and the sunshine on post-Watergate issues. One of the interesting issues was what status did those one page little sheets of paper have? Essentially, they were just thrown away or kept by the staff person that finally initialed the things or sent them forward, or sent the stuff back to the bureaus with, usually, oral guidance on what to do. We never sent those chits back to them. When you were sitting in EUR, did you ever get any of them?

Q: I don't recall seeing them.

HOPPER: But we'd keep them. And, later, as the era of freedom of information requests became more prevalent, one of the big questions was, were those official documents. The general operating assumption was no; those were informal, deliberative pieces of paper. For people wanting to know how things happened, I felt that the poor historians were missing a piece of the process, but that it would've been too hard to explain.

Q: Before we go into maybe a little bit more substance, let me ask you about – you talked about hours at the end of the day – what about in the morning? Did you arrive at nine o'clock, or…

HOPPER: *(laughs)* No, at the beginning with Sonnenfeldt and Kissinger, I think we arrived at around seven-thirty or seven forty-five to get going, and I think the first meetings under Kissinger were maybe eight, eight-fifteen. They weren't as early as they later became. And you'd just get in and take a look at the cables. The morning stuff wasn't as intense as it later became, but still it was an early start to the day. When the late Secretary Vance came over - he had been at the Pentagon, and the Pentagon always started earlier – he had this idea that we could start earlier and match those times. They started having the early morning meeting. The theory was that we were actually going to go home earlier; but down in the trenches you found out that the NSC expected you to clear papers and there was no way to go home earlier. All it did by starting an hour earlier, was it just expanded the intensity of the day down into the early parts. I think under the Vance and Muskie people, the day ended a little earlier. It didn't last as long.

Q: And what about weekends?

HOPPER: Weekends, when I was on the Seventh Floor in the counselor's office, we basically worked just about every Saturday. We would rotate. Formally, one of the special assistants would be the duty person. Maybe it was every other week, but we came in most Saturdays. Saturdays were fascinating; when I was in EUR with Assistant Secretary Stoessel, we rotated and the staff assistants worked every other Saturday. Since we were

just staff and didn't have policy to do, it was a very easy distinction. The EUR Bureau's version of informality under Walter Stoessel, who was a wonderful man, was that on Saturday you could wear a sport coat. And he'd come in – I can remember he had these camel colored and sort of beige sport coats - and for him not to be wearing dark blue or gray, it was like wow, he was really being informal, but he still had a tie.

Then with Sonnenfeldt, he, too, wore a sport coat, but it was like ready to go on television or meet a European visitor; if the German ambassador came in on a Saturday, the German ambassador would have a suit on, so you could understand. When the Carter people came in, one of the changes on Saturdays was they really did make it clear that Saturdays were informal. They worked just as much. They came in, but they were really ready to run and go push their kids in the park. That was a big change. Even the senior people in the Carter administration – I don't know about the secretary, but the under secretaries and the senior staff – viewed those weekend hours as an imposition. They came in and did them, but they had their eye on the door and were ready to go lead their lives. Bless them.

Q: Let's talk just a little bit more about this early period in the office with Hal Sonnenfeldt. The Republicans are still in the White House. I want to talk just a little bit more about your relations with the European Bureau; you had worked as a staff assistant in EUR just two years or so earlier, just before going to Rome. Was that a big part of your responsibility? You talked about the perception change for you as a replacement for Jim Dobbins. How did that work?

HOPPER: When I came back, the big policy issue was dealing with Euro-communism and the fears of the historic compromise in Italy, and what was happening in Spain and Portugal, and worries about the British Labour Party. These were economic, moral, political issues and there was a real fear in '76 that the European Communists and the Left in Europe had the momentum and that the more conservative forces were kind of tired and we needed some better answers. And there was a recognition that economically these areas like the Iberian Peninsula, southern Europe, hadn't benefited enough from the economic changes, and also a sense that the British were a bit worn out; that the exchange rates, the pound, and the Labour government, that it generally just wasn't working very well. There was a lot of concern about the role of the IMF (International Monetary Fund).

Sonnenfeldt had decided – and I give him great credit – that the moment had come when these economic issues, as well as what the IMF and the World Bank would do were really important political decisions. He worked closely with his neighbor, the undersecretary for economic affairs. There were a couple of groups where the negotiations of IMF stand-by loans and things were, oh God, a gruesome process, because officially, and in many ways really, the IMF and the Treasury sort of did it on their own, but Kissinger prevailed upon the Treasury that no, they had to be informed by what was going on.

Q: This would be with countries like Portugal?

HOPPER: Portugal, Italy, Spain, Turkey, and Great Britain.

Q: Bob, when we were talking a week ago, I think we were talking about the period beginning in the summer of 1976 when you were special assistant to the counselor of the Department of State, and that counselor was Hal Sonnenfeldt. This is the end of the Ford administration, during the election period. And I think we talked about some of the election dimensions and the Sonnenfeldt Doctrine the other day.

I think we want to start today talking particularly about the role that Mr. Sonnenfeldt played with regard to some IMF negotiations – International Monetary Fund. What was that all about? Was that mostly in Europe, or in other parts of the world?

HOPPER: The talks that our office got involved in were all in Europe. They were related to the fears of the rise of Euro-communism, and the countries that were in trouble were Portugal, Turkey, Italy, and, to a certain extent, Great Britain. We did not get involved in the great talks with the UK (United Kingdom). Those were done at much higher levels and were considered part of the special relationship. The chancellor or the minister for the exchequer would come over and would see very senior people. And I think those had similar substantive thrusts, but we didn't get involved in them. And there wasn't the fear of what would happen politically; those really were economic talks. The others our office got involved in were impeded by the fear of the rise of communism in Europe, and the impact of instability. So I was asked, as the person in Counselor Sonnenfeldt's office who did Western Europe, to monitor the talks. It's interesting; I'm not sure I ever got terribly explicit instructions as to what to do, but it was clear to me that my goal was to give him an early warning if it looked like economic orthodoxy would be invoked in a way that would put continued functioning of the architecture of Europe at risk. So I would go to the staff talks prepared for the negotiations, and I worked closely with a special assistant in the under-secretary for economics office, who was, for the State Department, the staff person preparing the talks and working with Treasury. She was an incredibly bright person and was happy to have me help because interestingly I think the view of her office was very similar – that while economics was important, there was a fear that the Treasury would go so hard for traditional economic indicators that it wouldn't take the plunk of realities into effect. So Ms. Einhart and I would help plan the agendas; we'd go and talk to the bureaus and we'd get the Department to send up as much as we could, and then we'd do info-mails on high to more senior people in the State Department on what was happening. About the talks themselves: I never went to any of the actual negotiations with the Europeans; Jessica did from time to time.

Q: That's Jessica Einhart?

HOPPER: Jessica Einhart, yes. I'm not sure what her career status was at the time. She might have been a Foreign Service Officer; she might have been a civil servant. She wasn't a political appointee, because she stayed on like I did, with the transition, and she eventually went to the Treasury Department and became a fairly senior official there. And as a sidebar, her husband was a State Department official, Bob Einhart. He was a senior political military official and now is an assistant secretary, I believe. But she would go to

meetings, come and report back.

The really fun meetings for me would be the planning sessions. I can't remember what the title was, but it's now the Undersecretary of Treasury for International Economic Affairs. The fellow was Ed Yeo, who was a really impressive, dynamic, strong figure and a bully. He had the personality of a bully: in coming to the State Department he was running up against people who had grown used to dealing with such personalities, or had been them themselves, and I think he was often surprised that he didn't just get his way. Clearly, he was used to getting whatever he wanted at Treasury. And we just kept pushing him to remember that the Portuguese could only do so much - that they didn't have very much of a stable government. They didn't have a lot of people with experience. You couldn't just expect them to do everything right away. And, at the time, Turkey and Italy had different excuses, but similar problems. It was just an effort trying to keep some of what we viewed as political reality. And it worked quite well, you ended up having a hard and soft face, and I think the policies went okay.

Q: If you or Jessica Einhart felt that higher level interest on the part of the State Department was required, who sort of did that; the undersecretary for economic affairs; the counselor; the secretary; or all of the above, sometimes?

HOPPER: We would talk to our bosses, who would then elevate it, or they each had friends in the White House and the NSC and at the Treasury; they could call Yeo and do other things and say, you know, "Have you thought about what would happen if this happened or that happened?" It was a pretty inchoate process, and one of the things I sort of had to figure out – it took a while. I mean, I would only see bits and pieces of it. I would make recommendations and Jessica would make recommendations, and things would happen. One of the interesting features of being that kind of a staffer is you never knew for sure which inputs led to which outputs. You just kept doing your best. It only went on so long. The other reason that I was involved and that our office was involved, is that there was something called (this was really an important part of my job for Sonnenfeldt) the "four power talks," since the end of World War II, when there had been no official document, nothing the equivalent of the Versailles agreement formally ending World War II; no treaty of peace…

Q: With Germany?

HOPPER: With Germany.

Q: Whereas there was a peace treaty with Japan in 1950 to '52.

HOPPER: Right. Nothing with Germany. And a process was established for the four major (this is sort of complicated) victors, which were considered to be us, the British, the French (somewhat ironically perhaps) and the Russians, to meet frequently and constantly on the ground in Berlin to work on the German problem. As part of that process, the foreign ministers met frequently and as Germany evolved and the Federal Republic of

Germany and the de facto split of the two Germanys evolved, over time on the western side, the four power talks instead of being the Soviet Union and the three of us, actually included the West Germans. So Britain, France, the U.S., and West Germany would meet at the ministerial level twice a year in conjunction with the NATO ministerial meetings to formally compare notes on the German flashpoints which were at the heart of the alliance.

Q: And Berlin.

HOPPER: And the Berlin arrangements. And then there were constant meetings in Berlin of the officials of the four countries.

Q: And also in Bonn.

HOPPER: And in Bonn. These talks made the rest of the alliance nervous. The smaller countries recognized that there were special obligations related to Germany and Berlin, but they were very nervous that these four countries would get together and would talk about other things, and that it would be a way for the bigger NATO members to coordinate and leave them out. As in any human endeavor, where you might get together to talk to somebody about your mortgage, you talk about something else as well; so, no matter what the initial concerns or fears or hopes or plans were, in fact most of the time, couldn't resist these twice a year, four-power Berlin negotiations comparing notes, would talk about other things. So it became an issue of how one deal with it.

To make those talks productive, it was felt there needed to be a mechanism to have a slightly lower range of officials meet in between the ministerial talks, just to keep them going smoothly and to prepare agendas. When I worked for Counselor Sonnenfeldt, he was the U.S. official who took the lead in those meetings that took place on an irregular schedule in between the ministerial meetings. My job was to help prepare the agenda for the meetings (the U.S. had a major role in what the agenda would be) and to work within the U.S. structure, including the NSC and the interested bureaus, to prepare papers for them.

The most interesting arrangement, from my perspective, was that over time a process had developed where the assistant to the U.S. representative took notes for everyone, in line with the concerns of the other NATO allies and the needs to keep this process manageable – an innovation that I never saw anywhere else. The U.S. brought the staffer who took the notes, prepared the notes, and sent the notes around for clearance. They were the only notes. Sometimes, the other people brought equivalent staffers, but they had the luxury at not having to sit there taking notes all the time, though I suspect, knowing how people are, they actually did their own informal notes and memos. This was to keep some control on the process.

Q: So it was acceptable that there were more than five people in the room; the four main representatives plus you as note taker. There were others there sometimes?

HOPPER: Yes, yes. But not always the same ones and we'd have to negotiate. An effort was made to keep the talks pretty controlled. Because I came in in the summer, I actually got to do the preparatory work. But, with Counselor Sonnenfeldt, there was also an interesting arrangement. Secretary Kissinger had worked for a long time with and trusted another very brilliant member of his staff, Peter Rodman, who stayed at the NSC, at the ministerial level talks, Peter was the note taker for the group. So in that six month period at the end of the Kissinger management of foreign affairs, I would do the agenda and the preparatory work for the ministerial meetings, but Peter Rodman did the notes and I did not attend the ministerial level meetings. So for example, during my period with Secretary Kissinger, there were two meetings; one at the UN (United Nations) General Assembly in September of '76 – before the elections – and one in December of '76 at Brussels at the winter NATO ministerial.

I got my introduction to managerial and representation problems issues at the highest levels at this time when it turned out that for some reason during that period the U.S. delegation to the UN used the Waldorf-Astoria Towers as that was where the UN rep. had his permanent apartment. We were able to get lots of apartments there during the general assembly period, and so both the secretary of state and Doctor Sonnenfeldt would stay there. The pressures of was it big enough; did it have a good view; where it was located; would it have enough room for these meetings; would it have enough prestige, was something that I had to worry about a lot and negotiate with.

Q: You'd think that simply the address – the Waldorf-Astoria…

HOPPER: For a kid from San Pedro, California, we could've been in the basement and it would've seemed pretty exotic. I had to learn to worry about and take care of those things. And then there were problems with how we provided for the hospitality. We needed to provide coffee and some sandwiches. It was like, "who was going to pay for them?" That was when you would find out that the NSC really didn't have a budget, and nobody quite had budgets for these things. One of my first decisions was whether I would agree to pay for some caterer for the nibblies - and they were going to be twice what we had thought. And it was clear; it was like the day before and so I found some way and I agreed to do it and then we went on. Later Sonnenfeldt was partly shocked that it cost so much, but then patted me on the head and said of course I was right to do it, and they found some way to pay for it. But that took place.

During that period, I took notes. My job really was to write for Sonnenfeldt a really quick memo to the secretary on what the highlights were, to prepare for his ministerial meetings. It never got into a routine; doing it at that time. I actually don't remember the two rounds of meetings very well at all. All I can remember is that for those who worked with and know Hal Sonnenfeldt, he was both a brusque and charming man who didn't have just a fast ball; didn't have just a curve ball; but had all the pitches, but didn't always have control on all of his pitches. He used fear as a motivator a lot, but he had the charm. He used fear in private and would hold it to very high standards; he was a very talented man. He would ridicule a little bit in private, too, that you weren't living up to

his standards. But he had the good sense and the sort of old school European charm that whenever he was with a staff person in public, he was just so charming, and shared the credit and always made me look as good as I could possibly look with the other people we were working with. It was clear that whatever his actual views were, he understood that since I was his person, it sure didn't do any good to make me look bad in front of him, though I've known people who have not understood that lesson. He was actually in some ways a joy to work for because in the part that mattered, he made it work very well, and then used intimidation sort of inside to motivate – which wasn't very pleasant.

We had an intercom system where he could buzz all of his staff, and he had a way of doing two short buzzes – this was his signature buzz. And I still (whenever anybody questions Pavlov and the bells) I remember those two little buzzes, and if accidentally I'm ever any place and somehow I hear that exact double buzz, I sort of jump up and it's like Sonnenfeldt is still calling me thirty years later.

Q: The idea was you were supposed to run into his office?

HOPPER: Oh, just drop whatever I was doing and come in. And he had an incredible knack – I really saluted him. We would do these little chits that I had talked about earlier, highlighting the key issues or cables, etc. and sending them in, and you'd get that buzz, you'd go in, and it would invariably be on one of the things you were staffing through him. And he could cut through the crap and look at that chit and ask you the one question that you didn't want to raise; that you didn't want to tell him because you'd screwed it up or the bureau was screwing it up, but they couldn't fix it, and there was no sense going. But he always had the question that was really hard to answer – and it was the right question. But we'd go through that.

The other thing in this period that was really fascinating (and it's more tibble-tabble than anything else) was watching Secretary Kissinger on the farewell leg when he went to Brussels for the final NATO ministerial. I mean, here he is - he's one minister of then fifteen, not the most loved man in the world and he had taken a lot of flak for his style. But, actually, he was pretty in tune with the Europeans. At the end of that NATO ministerial in December of '76, he went down and there was a farewell ceremony in the lobby of the really crappy barracks-type buildings that were NATO, and it was incredible how many of the staff from high and low turned out. The expressions of (I'm still not sure what the emotions were) a combination of respect, fear, and some love that was sent out to him were astounding. And he gave a nice little talk. But I was standing very close to him while he did it, and I had seen him off and on through his period of office, and when people talk about big heads, there are so many physical features that get in our language that I've come to realize there's truth to them, and that if you're pampered and catered to for long enough, there is a certain extent to which it can at least appear that the human head grows bigger. And in December of 1976, Dr. Kissinger was walking around, physically with a mane and head that I swear was physically - if they'd have measured it or some of these head specialists of the turn of the previous century had measured it - it was twice as big as when he started out. That was an amazing feature. But then he went

away, and as we were talking about before, the sort of Brzezinski-Vance-Carter…

Q: Let me ask you, before we gone on to that, just a couple of questions just to finish this off – partly due to my own curiosity. Your only travel in this early period in the job was to New York and to Brussels?

HOPPER: Yes.

Q: And to come back to the IMF kind of talks, you mentioned the countries that were of particular political concern or sensitivity. Let me ask you about two others; Spain, Greece. They had also gone through transitions recently.

HOPPER: We were not doing the same kinds of negotiations with either one of them at that moment. The process would've been the same, and the concerns would've been the same, but I'm not sure – in 1976, was Spain actually in NATO yet? I don't think so.

Q: No, not yet. NATO membership came just a little later.

HOPPER: Right.

Q: In terms of the quadripartite talks that you described, you mentioned that there were other countries in Europe that were concerned that these not take on too institutional or too substantive a character. I assume those countries that have particular concerns were Italy and Canada and maybe some others as well, but those two sort of jump out at me from my recollection and I'm wondering how you dealt with it?. I guess you just tried to deal with it the best you could.

HOPPER: It was interesting. As I can remember, the Italians cared a lot and they felt that it was an insult, and their view was that they should be included. The Dutch cared a lot. The Dutch were incredibly stalwart, wonderful and creative NATO allies who worried that the small countries weren't paid enough attention to. They knew about this process; they have good diplomats and they know all of this was going on. They'd help keep the friction under control, but they would complain a lot that the small allies weren't consulted enough. The Norwegians cared and would complain, but the Canadians didn't.

Q: Did not?

HOPPER: Yes. To my recollection, the thing the Canadians were worried about was that the Europeans would forget the North American angle to the alliance. And I think the Canadians knew that by having us there, that compared to the EC consultations, where the fear is is that the Europeans would go off and do things on their own, actually kept the Canadian's part of the concerns in play. You had the inside, the outside, the small NATO allies, big NATO allies.

I admired the U.S. approach, which would be kind of paranoid and sometimes over-worry

things; we actually, over a long period, had a very consistent approach to all of these things. And that was it. In fact, NATO was the most important place to talk about any of the issues and you had to preserve the strength of NATO as a deliberative body. But to do that, the U.S. needed to talk to countries; bilaterally any groups that could be used, those groups needed to be used, and the multilateral structures needed to be used. All of the sort of other NATO allies, at any one period, would want to concentrate on just one of whichever group they were best at, or served their needs best. They would push and push and push us to not do other things, and we said, "No. We're a sovereign country and the way things work we'll talk about it in the four power talks; we'll talk about it in the NATO council; we'll talk about it at the UN if that makes sense; we'll talk about its people bilaterally; and in no way, at no time, will we agree that we're only talking about it in…" and that was our defense to people who complained. We'd go to the Dutch and talked to them. It worked alright.

Q: Let me just make clear just for the record, that you were the special assistant to counselor, particularly focusing on Western Europe, as you said, but there were other special assistants at the time, and certainly Doctor Sonnenfeldt had a very strong interest in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, arms control. So there were how many other special assistants?

HOPPER: He had one special assistant focusing primarily on arms control issues; he had one special assistant focusing primarily on the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact; and then the one focusing on Western Europe. Even though the things that the other people worked on all had key aspects of dealing with NATO, the person doing Western Europe would do those four power talks, though frequently while I was there, there was a transition; John Kelly had been the person doing the arms control talks, and left, and was replaced maybe six months before I got there by Leon Furth. I think Kelly had gone to Paris. At the Brussels winter ministerial there was a SALT issue and Sonnenfeldt got orders issued to Kelly to come up from Paris to Brussels to help him on a SALT issue. So he even kept his team working from afar.

Q: He probably still took an interest in Jim Dobbins at the time that you were there?

HOPPER: Ah, I don't know. He may have.

Q: You mentioned relations with the White House and the NSC a couple of times. Do you want to say anything more about that as you experienced it? And also, I'd like you to say something about the European Bureau; I mean, that was obviously the area that you were concentrating on. How did you work with them?

HOPPER: My style was to try to keep as much of the responsibility for actually doing things with the European Bureau, and to not, even though I was told constantly that my job was to use the authority and power that Sonnenfeldt had, to get things done; he was right and I took that to heart. I also believed that over the long haul, the bureaus have the responsibility to actually do things. They had direct access to the posts. I felt there was a

risk in trying to have me do too much of it, and I think one of my shortcomings was that I wasn't supremely confident enough to take on all of Europe all by myself, and so I was more comfortable being a conduit in trying to keep the bureau involved, and I know that the European Bureau appreciated that a lot. There were different ways of doing it and that was how I chose to do it.

What I found interesting when the new Carter team came in was that it was clear pretty quick that they were going to be looking for some signs that there would be changes from how Kissinger had done things. And there were consultations and there were some concerns about who was going to take Sonnenfeldt's place, and what were they going to do. After I met with the new counselor, he made it clear to me in a direct way that he was not going to be doing the Soviet Union and arms control talks. As I briefed him on how the four power talks had worked, he decided right away that it would make more sense to actually give the day to day management of those to EUR. And so, from the beginning of the Carter administration, those went back to EUR and it was actually the NATO Desk that provided the support for the ministerial process. Ironically – and we can get to this later – I ended up, two and a half years later, going to the EUR bureau to take on that job; so I ended up doing this again later on.

Q: Why don't you say the name of the new counselor of the department, and a little bit about his background, and how you came to know him. And if he didn't do the things you just mentioned, what did he do?

HOPPER: The new counselor was a fellow named Matthew Nimetz, who is still actively involved in foreign affairs. There were many people who thought he was the son of Admiral Nimetz; we got as much mail addressed to N-I-M-I-T-Z as we did to E-T-Z, and he was very gracious about it. Lots of people don't have their name spelled correctly.

We talked and he made it clear that he had worked in the same law firm as Secretary Vance in New York, and he had been a clerk on a Supreme Court earlier in his career and had gotten to know Warren Christopher at that time. Then, during the painful and horrible urban riots in the late '60s, people figured Warren Christopher and Vance both were brought in to work on dealing with the riots and figuring out what had gone wrong. I can't exactly remember how, but Nimetz had been sort of day to day director working for Christopher; had done some work on that process, got to know him well, and they'd all stayed in touch. And so this team came back, with Vance as secretary, and Warren Christopher as deputy secretary, Nimetz surfaced as the counselor.

As I'd mentioned before, the counselor has no statutory basis, has no mandatory functions, but is in fact a political senior adviser to the secretary; but could do whatever the secretary wants. And Nimetz made it clear that he was going to be working on a different range of issues, and he knew more at first what he wasn't going to be working on than what he was going to be working on. But essentially he was going to be doing politically important issues for the secretary and the deputy secretary that the bureaus weren't comfortable dealing with, even if the bureaus didn't know that they weren't

dealing with them. At first, it was clear that those issues were going to be the Micronesian Status Negotiations, where we were accused of being bad colonialists and the process was starting to be corrosive both there and at the UN; and that Nimetz was going to be working on the high politics of human rights and how that impacted the East-West agenda; and then we'd see.

And so, at first, as he looked at this staff that he inherited from Mr. Sonnenfeldt, he realized that it was brilliant people, but that there were people who were working on issues that he wasn't going to be dealing with. He had no need for one of the top people in the U.S. government on the SALT negotiations. He didn't really need a very senior Soviet specialist. And so after about a week, he came to me and said, "Bob, I think we need to restructure the office," and one night he asked me to stay late after everybody left and said, "I want you to stay. I'm going to keep working on some of the issues that you're dealing with and I want our office to be more cooperative and to work with people in a way that I think you can do, so I want you to help me put together a staff; I want them to be people more with your types of experience and level and range." Part of it was that he didn't want sort of fifty-year-old people who were ready to be ambassadors. He was thirty-seven at the time and I was thirty-five. So we started scouting around for other people. It was really fun sort of helping him build a new staff. One of the wonderful things about the State Department is that when those kinds of changes take place, it's not like blood on the floor. The system worked. The people who had worked there were held in high regard and they all became DASes and office directors, or went to the NSC; everybody moved up from their positions.

So I worked with PER (personnel) and got files on people, and we interviewed a range of people, and then hired a fellow named Ira Wolf (who was a delightful character) to sort of be in charge of the day to day doings on the Micronesia talks. People forget this, but we hired Randy Biers to work on sort of this and that. There was a concern from early on that international crime and terrorism and those kinds of issues weren't getting enough attention at eye levels, and so Randy worked a bit on that. And then, later on, Nimetz hired a fellow named Paul Bungee, a bright young guy who was in political and did things like looking at outreach and opinion polls. We had trouble finding just the right person to be the sort of staff assistant. We went through one person and it didn't work out well. And then one of the things I'm really proud of is that I found Charlie Reese and hired him to be the special assistant; he was just so wonderful. We had a slightly quirky, but very talented staff, that were all younger than thirty-five; none of them had Cold War, super-power backgrounds, and so we were ready to take on new issues.

We also worked a bit on the interconnections between trade and relations; a number of us found trying to do that and bring EB (Economic bureau) in a little more, was useful. The other thing that happened quite quickly is that Mr. Nimetz made it clear that the Greece-Turkey-Cyprus problems were something that bothered the secretary and Mr. Christopher a lot, and they felt that something had to be done to jump-start that and get it going. The Turks were the ones who made it clear that Cyprus… [Tape 4, Side B]

Q: Before we get too much into Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus, let me just ask you a couple of questions right at this very outset. Did Matthew Nimetz have any foreign affairs background before, particularly? He was clearly very close to both Mr. Vance and Warren Christopher. But in the foreign affairs field he had not really worked before had he?

HOPPER: Nimetz was on the Council of Foreign Relations in New York and it was something that he'd cared about a lot, but without having had an official job. He'd been on Council task forces. He knew people like Les Gelm. He had stayed involved, but I had never heard of him before.

Q: Certainly the law practice that he was engaged in, in New York, had international dimensions, I'm sure.

HOPPER: Being a New Yorker, he had actually been involved in UN things and that was one of the ways he stayed involved.

Q: You mention these early discussions that you had. All this was after Carter's inauguration on January 20th, or was there a transition period even before the new administration got started – as far as you were concerned? Do you remember at what point you knew the name Matthew Nimetz?

HOPPER: No. It was before the inauguration, but not much. I mean, I think the meeting I talked about before, between Brzezinski and Sonnenfeldt, was, at the earliest, in December of '76. I don't remember there being a huge rush. I think he showed up in January. You know, there's a time for these things and you don't want to really start before – I don't remember the transition team concept as much then, as later. Can you remember who was running the transition team? I don't know if we had a transition team.

Q: I don't recall. I remember we wrote papers; some papers that were written no matter who won the election were done in advance. I don't remember particular people coming in and that you had to meet with them and so on. Okay, do you want to go on and talk first about Greece, Turkey, Cyprus?

HOPPER: Yes. As the person who had done the sort of Western Europe and the NATO alliance issues, I had been concerned that one of the great stories was that when it became clear that Governor Carter had won the elections, the church bells had rung throughout Greece, Cyprus, and in every Greek-Orthodox church in the United States. There was this expectation that, miraculously, the new administration would finally have the wisdom to use the massive powers of influence and leverage that the U.S. held to make Turkey see reason and set every problem right, and that the friends of Greece and Cyprus in the United States had worked hard for the Carter campaign. There was a sense of – I don't know what word to use: entitlement, obligation, hope – all of those things. By January or February, it was becoming clear within the administration that these expectations were so high that actually dealing with those expectations was going to be difficult, and clearly

there were signals from the Turks.

I had never known them to complain very frontally and directly, but there were clearly concerns that they were going to be pressed. One of the issues where Secretary Kissinger had not succeeded with the Congress on getting them to work with Turkey. The way Turkey acted was because Congress had mandated prohibitions on aide, military sales and different kinds of relations with them. So the Turks closed our military bases, and it was a very frosty relationship. As I recall, the Turks, in one way or another, gave us pretty close to an ultimatum that things had to sort out or they … I believe that however the prohibition on their side was, that it was sort of a freeze on things, but that these agreements were running out and there was a certain time when it could be made permanent, and we were very worried that we were going to lose access to all of the facilities permanently in Turkey. That whole concept of southern flank and the southeastern flank was that you couldn't do it with just Turkey, or just Greece. The painful irony was that you had to, in some way or another, have them both cooperating to some extent, and that was always an incredible challenge.

So you had the administration with these high expectations on the Greek side, and sort of fears on the Turkish side, and a sense that something had to be done. And so while that was one of the issues, it was actually the key issue that I first worked on with Matt Nimetz. That was when I got to know you and Nelson Ledsky. The EUR/SE (Southern European Affairs Office) had not been one of the offices I worked with terribly closely; I mean I worked with you all, but it wasn't a key aspect of what Sonnenfeldt cared about, although it quickly became a key issue. And I know when we talked about the style of sort of giving things back to the bureau – it was interesting to see; it didn't always pan out. On Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus, Nimetz pretty quickly wanted to play a pretty hands-on, direct role; and he wanted to work with and use EUR-SE basically as if it were his office. Figuring out how to make that happen was the first intellectual and managerial challenge that we faced.

Q: Let me just interject at this point. I'd be interested in your reaction and your recollection. But my recollection is that Arthur Hartman and later George Vest, who replaced him fairly quickly, were both basically comfortable with the Southern European Affairs Office working directly with the counselor's office: taking direct instruction, even providing material. They wanted to be kept informed, and they were kept informed. That was one of our responsibilities. But they didn't feel like everything needed to go through them. They didn't want to see themselves as a bottle-neck; and they realized, kind of at a political level, that, in terms of within the State Department, there were some advantages in having the counselor involved in those issues as in effect it took a little bit of the burden off of them. The deputy assistant secretary was a little bit more a problem for you, perhaps, and certainly was for us because that individual did expect to be more in the loop and it was hard sometimes to satisfy them on the day to day business.

I found your reaction to what I just said interesting, but I'd also like to note that Cy Vance had been very much involved with Cyprus back in the 1960s and had taken a

mission for Lyndon Johnson and was therefore very familiar with the details of the Cyprus issue. This I think, was perhaps one of the reasons why he was keen to have somebody he trusted and felt confident in like Matthew Nimetz be very involved. Otherwise everybody would be coming to him because they knew he had the background and the expertise, and the secretary of state had lots of other things to do besides Cyprus.

HOPPER: When I had been the staff assistant in the Bureau of European Affairs in the early '70s, and he watched the relationship between deputy assistant secretaries and the offices, I got one perspective on it. You're absolutely right, and it's been a recurring theme: how you manage something like the State Department and its relations with the embassies and its management of the field; and where you have these branch offices where the embassies do have a lot of say. But, you have to keep information flowing. It's sort of what is the role of the office director; what is the role of the deputy assistant secretary for that region. There's always a tension, and there's a change depending on the personalities, on the styles. You described working on Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus very accurately. But for the assistant secretary for European Affairs, there was a huge trade-off in terms of workload. I mean that while picking up the four power talks and the true management of the NATO relationship and all of the diplomacy and politics that went with that was a major gain and a big plum, it was also a lot of work. And so I'm sure that for the assistant secretary, Europe was huge, and managing all of the countries was always more than the assistant secretary could in fact do, but they never want to let anything go.

And so I think you're right that having somebody on the Seventh Floor willing to take on an issue like Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus was a good idea. With its intense domestic, political factor, it wasn't clear at all how a career assistant secretary could do anything but get caught in the middle, although I think a smart assistant secretary would have managed to stay clear. The two gentlemen you mentioned did see it as a blessing to have someone else do it, so long as they had people who would make sure they weren't surprised. But for the deputy assistant secretary, for whom Southern Europe was one of maybe three big offices that they had, it was a conundrum. The fellow who was the DAS was just a blue pencil editor type who really worried everything intensely and just wanted to be involved in everything, but there wasn't room. So for all of us that was a difficult issue. My having then later been a deputy office director, I can imagine that you were the one who was hit with a lot of the challenges of making that work. We decided pretty early on that it wasn't our problem; that Nelson Ledsky was brilliant, very strong, and was committed to working with us and felt that he had a way to get his ideas on the table through us that he was quite comfortable with. I presume he found he actually had more scope for doing what he wanted with us, than he would have in a traditional way. So everybody was happy except the DAS.

Q: Yes. The first DAS was Bruce Laingen, who was, as I recall, perhaps as you describe him. But he was a nice person.

HOPPER: And he was leaving.

Q: And the fact that he was leaving made a difference. The person who replaced him was in some ways more a problem because he did not have the same background, and it was difficult for him and therefore, for us in the long run, but we dealt with it.

HOPPER: Right.

Q: Okay. Well maybe we should go on and talk a little bit more about what happened.

HOPPER: Yes. So you have all of these expectations, and a high priority where something has to happen, and one day Nimetz had to come in and say, "I'm sure you've heard of Clark Clifford. The president and the secretary have decided that to try to get a sense of what can be done in the Greece, Turkey, Cyprus issue, and to move things off-center, and to maintain some control of this process, we've all decided that Clark Clifford is to be named a presidential special emissary and is going to take at least one trip to the field and will visit all of the countries and visit the UN and will figure out what can be done and will make some recommendations to the secretary and the president."

Q: Now this conversation that you had with Matthew Nimetz was probably in January, or at the latest February of 1977.

HOPPER: Yes, it was early. I guess we put the trip together very quickly.

Q: And it took place before the end of February, as I recall.

HOPPER: Yes. Looking back on it, and thinking about it, it's still not totally clear to me whose idea it was to have Clark Clifford do this; who was happy with it and who wasn't. Actually, Nimetz was delighted with it. While he had this issue to deal with, I think he pretty quickly saw that, as you had described it, Secretary Vance really didn't, and didn't want to have to do very much on Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus. He had done it, knew how hard it was, and didn't want to be encumbered with it.

Q: He had also taken some public positions in the period that he was outside of government, certainly during the Republican administrations. I don't know to what extent that influenced his thinking as well.

HOPPER: Warren Christopher was very close to Matt Nimetz and they talked a lot. It was clear he was going to have a role in this, and one has to recall that at this time, Christopher was the point man on a number of highly charged new policy issues. Christopher was forming a committee to try and bring sense to a new human rights policy. The Carter administration was actually trying to do more on non-proliferation in a structured way, and Christopher was going out on his own mission at the same time that Clifford was going out on a mission. Christopher was doing a mission on non-proliferation that partly involved going to Brazil and shutting down the Brazilian and Argentine nuclear programs. He was going somewhere else as well and doing the same

thing, and that was not an easy mission. If he weren't doing that, it might've been that Christopher would've done the Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus things, but he had too much on his plate and he didn't have the political cover that Clifford had. Clifford was close to everybody, and so he was doing it. So once he was picked, we started briefing him, and bringing him up to speed on the issue; there would be teams of us that would go over to his law office. I forget how often we met; at least once a week.

Q: And he'd come to the State Department some.

HOPPER: He'd come to the State Department some, but we would also go to his office and brief him. And for me, it was sort of my first exposure to that sort of never-never world of the political operative – of the lobbyist-lawyer type person with a lot of influence – and to watching them work. He was just an amazing, beguiling, charming man whose mind you could just watch working. You know, he would size up what it was that would help him work with you; it was very tricky, but he would treat you very nicely. Everyone got their individual respect and questions, and he was able to inspire people to do a lot of work. He had a secretary who was so good, so talented, and so loyal to him that I think now she'd be an assistant secretary someplace. But she was just incredibly skilled. You could give her a complex message and you could be sure that it got through to him with just the right nuances.

He had this office in a law building at the foot of Connecticut Avenue, right below the Army/Navy Club. They were on the top floor, and from his office you could look down over Lafayette Park and the White House. And you just sat there and looked down and you said, "Oh Yes. This is where some influence lies." And we'd brief him and he had this wonderful big, dark wooden table that was an odd combination of clean and clutter. He had these stacks of cards and chits of paper that each had a medallion, or a political coin, or a commemorative thing sitting on them. I thought, "That's a new way to do it," and clearly when an issue would move away, that sort of pile of things would go away. But he had these different piles and after a while I knew which pile on his desk we were.

Q: I always wondered what would happen if the cleaning crew opened, or the window got opened at the right time, and stuff blew away.

HOPPER: You also realized that there were issues of national security in all of this. We might have a paper that had a very high classification and we'd be very careful and scrupulous as we would be briefing him on things, and he was fully cleared. But, he might make little notes or he might dictate things later to his secretary, or some little thoughts, and they'd just be sitting on this pile on his desk. And he didn't have seven cipher locks for getting into it. But he was working for us and we were working for him, and it was very interesting, and he was very skillful.

He also knew that he needed to be in touch politically with both the friends of Greece and with people who cared about NATO, so he had some meetings beforehand. I'm sure he had more meetings than we knew about because he was a person whose phone rang a lot.

He also made phone calls and visited people. That was what he did. He was very discreet; he didn't share everything. He kept a lot of his own counsel, but he knew what he was doing. He also empowered Nimetz to go meet with the people who he couldn't see. Help me here, but as I recall he was fairly careful not to do anything formally with what might have been known as the Greek lobby, or go meet with Brademas or Sarbanes. He actually had Nimetz go meet with them. I know that Clifford met with Vice President Mondale, without us around. I know that, interestingly, he was in correspondence with, and talked to Senator Ted Kennedy, who wasn't necessarily one of the biggest players for the working level, but had a very talented and ambitious staff and it was important to actually keep sweek on the issue. But Nimetz went around and met with Congressman Dodd who was part of the group; Nimetz went and met with Sarbanes. Just keeping everybody in line.

And we prepared for the trip, and you're right; it was put together pretty quickly. And one of the fascinating things was sort of the team and that for the White House the NSC was going to be involved and we were told that a fellow named Greg Treverton, a brand new staffer down from Harvard, was going to be on the team and was going to go. He sort of married up with our team and we would meet.

One of my jobs was just to help you all with the logistics; just working out the schedule and making sure everybody had their passports and that we had fund sites and ways to do everything, and how to do it and who needed to be met with. It was a very early big trip.

I recall that we knew that we had to find some way to work with the UN. The secretary general was [Kurt] Waldheim at that time, and he was pretty hard to nail down. I almost have this feeling that compared to now, it wasn't sort of the full-time New York job that it is now. He spent more time in Austria; more time out of New York. But it was a down time; it was the winter and in between the sessions; and it actually was the time of one of the big opera balls or something in Vienna and he wasn't going to be around, and so we ended up scheduling a stop in Vienna on the way out, to meet with Waldheim, and that was sort of fascinating; the sort of stage management of it all.

Q: Now, you went on this trip. I think some of these consultations that Clark Clifford had were probably after this trip. I'm sure he did some before; I guess he met with the president and the vice president.

HOPPER: We got a letter from the president sort of authorizing the trip and setting some broad goals. That was sort of a negotiated process that pretty much everybody worked on.

Q: But a lot happened afterwards as well.

HOPPER: Yes. But just getting ready to go out, and getting a plane was a real effort. There were concerns about security, so we actually had Diplomatic Security (DS) representatives who went along with us. I think we flew commercially to Europe and then had a plane within Europe taking us around. So we started out in Austria…

Q: And again, the members were Clark Clifford, Matt Nimetz, Nelson Ledsky, director of the Office of Southern European Affairs, Greg Treverton, a couple of security officers, and you.

HOPPER: And me. Yes. One of the painful, painful parts of the process was negotiating the schedules with the U.S. embassies. They all had strong views on what should be said and how you dealt with the fears and hopes and sensitivities of their country. There were very strong ambassadors in Athens and Ankara who were hold-over ambassadors, but very strong. Jack Kubisch was still in Athens, who in his own way was kind of Cliffordesque, in that smooth, didn't-confront-anything-directly way. He had a lot of contacts and ways of exerting his influence. And then Ambassador Macomber in Ankara was exactly the opposite; never met a problem, big or small, that wasn't worth having a fight over, and all of it confrontational and direct. And, Mr. Clifford wanted some of the key meetings, and he wanted to have the right to decide to do things one-on-one if he judged it best. One of the things he insisted on was it was going to be his call how to do such meetings, and that he'd consult when he got out there and maybe it would make sense to have the ambassador, or maybe it wouldn't, but it was going to be his call. Macomber just wasn't going to have that. He said, "No, I'm the president's…" He threatened to quit several times, and there were cables written that probably shouldn't have been written, but in the end Mr. Clifford did what he wanted to do, and did it charmingly. I can't remember how they finessed it - whether the ambassador was out of town that day or what. It all worked out, but it was a great deal of pain that wasn't necessary.

Q: So you stopped first in Vienna. Anything more about that? You met with Secretary General Waldheim.

HOPPER: Right. Once again, it was this level where I was setting things up, but I wasn't necessarily going to all of the meetings. It was an interesting process. I was essentially the facilitator. There were meetings to which only Clifford and Nimetz went; there were actually some that only Clifford went to - not very many, but we tried to keep them small enough. One of the challenges would be that the NSC representative, sort of like Macomber, felt that he was representing the president and needed to be in on everything, and that was a bit of a challenge. One of the ways that we managed that from time to time was to agree that just Nimetz and Clifford would go, and it was clear that no staff were going and so why should the NSC staff go. Some of these internal "who was on top" issues were just so difficult, and remain so to this day. And they all have a reason because everybody does have issues at stake. And you want to know what's going on. This was very early in the administration; people were sorting out who does what and not wanting to give away precedence. That would be driving them for four or eight years, and so these things mattered.

We met with the team; most of them met with Waldheim. It was a pro-forma meeting. He sort of wished Clifford well, and sort of said, "Keep me informed." Nothing earth-

shaking that I can remember. He might've had some advice on how to deal with Karamanlis, which we'll get to later. I believe the order of the trip was we went from Vienna to Athens.

Q: And then to Ankara, and then to Cyprus?

HOPPER: Yes.

Q: Another reason for meeting with the secretary general was because of the special United Nations role and the secretary general's role with regard to Cyprus.

HOPPER: You had to have the UN involved and they had players who were working on it. And we would need their help in Cyprus, on the ground, to help make things work. In Athens, dealing with the sort of high expectations of Prime Minister Karamanlis, who was a very regal, austere, distant figure, was a challenge. As far as I could tell, Mr. Clifford was very good at very nicely explaining the realities of life to them; that this all had to work out in a way that had Turkey positively engaged in NATO. I cannot remember how he did it, but he delivered the administration's message.

In Athens, we had a wonderful country team dinner the first night and that was a very charming and nice way to have the embassy involved. As I had mentioned before, Ambassador Kubisch had this way of just enveloping people. "You're welcome. I'm so glad you're doing this," and he explained the sensitivities that we would see on the Greek side, but managed to get across that it wasn't clientitis; he was just explaining the sensitivities.

One of the things that was fascinating, just as a sidebar, was that John Negroponte, at that moment in time, was consul general in Thessalonica and had come down to the dinner and sat next to me that night. I got to know him. We had had a common friend that I had replaced in Rome. He had been with Negroponte on the Kissinger Vietnam talks, so it was fun talking to John about that. And John had very intelligent insights on the area and on how high-level U.S. negotiations worked. I came away from that three hours at the dinner table with incredible respect for Negroponte, and a sense that because of his association with Kissinger and the Vietnam talks, he was sort of on ice and hiding out in Thessalonica for a while; that he was somebody who would be back at the front of the political stage.

Q: Good prediction.

HOPPER: I think that was a fairly good assessment on my part. *(laughs)* So then we went on. The main thing was that Clifford established a relationship with Karamanlis that seemed to deal with their concerns and brought home that "yes, this mattered." The fact that somebody as senior and dignified as Clifford was sent out so quickly, (although it wasn't President Carter coming to part the waters) was a sign that we cared. So things were okay there.

Q: Did Clifford meet with others in Athens or primarily just with Prime Minister Karamanlis?

HOPPER: He met with the foreign minister and with the defense minister, but the main thing was to…

Q: Not with Andreas Papandreou, the opposition leader?

HOPPER: No. And then I guess we did go to Cyprus next. Do you remember the order?

Q: I thought it was Ankara next, but I don't really remember. I was not on the trip.

HOPPER: Right. Let's leave Cyprus for last. In Ankara, the key was to explain how much we valued the NATO relationship. All of the senior people met with the president and the foreign minister. What was fascinating for me was that the Turkish military were everywhere; at every meeting. The chief of the Turkish general staff hosted one of the lunches. And to me it was fascinating to watch that - whether it was from some Germanic staffing traditions and influence - both the general staff and the senior career people at the Foreign Ministry both clearly had a lot of influence in Turkey, and that while it was important to build relationships with the senior political people, it was very clear that the professional military and the professional bureaucrats in the Foreign Ministry each were going to have a role in these talks. As a result, a solution couldn't be just finessed at some grand political level, especially as the Turks did all talk to one another and that was going to be complicated. Whatever we did, the Turkish military had to be happy and they were going to have a big say in it. And they were competent professionals.

While there were tensions working with the embassy, once we actually got on the ground, the things with the embassy worked really well and it was fine. You also gained a great deal of respect for the American officials working in Ankara, in that it is a strange city. In some ways, out on the steps in the middle of nowhere, and I can now see that it's a lot like the "stans" (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Afghanistan) and the geography; it's as much like being in Almaty as it is being in a Western European capital. And at that time, the economy was reeling from those talks we had talked about before. The power was off a lot of the time. The embassy staff actually had to come to the embassy to take a shower sometimes. Life was not real pleasant for anyone in Ankara.

Q: You were there in what was still winter and they burned the brown coal so the air was dirty, and it reminded you of Southern California; smog. (laughs)

HOPPER: *(laughs)* Then, whatever the order, the key part of the trip was actually in Cyprus. There one felt the hand of security and fear; there had been a war in 1974 which wasn't that far back and was still fresh in people's minds. The U.S. ambassador had been killed, basically in his office, within the previous six months or a year before we had

gotten there.

Q: That was in 1974.

HOPPER: Alright. They made some adjustments, but you could sense much more high-alert, fear, and concern in Cyprus. When you went into the ambassador's office there was a little plaque and you could see the residue of the shot that had killed the previous ambassador. The ambassador who met us was Bill Crawford, and he put together a team. Ed Dillery was the DCM right then, and he clearly knew a lot about the issues and impressed everyone as a calm figure who knew what was going on. One of the things that happened was that after we met with the embassy team the first night and while we were having a post-mortem in the hotel just with our team, Mr. Clifford said, "What did this guy do wrong to be here?" I said, "What do you mean?" "This guy Crawford; why is he being punished by being here?" I said, "What do you mean?" and he said, "Well, I mean this is a…[Tape 5, Side A]

Q: Okay, we're talking about Clark Clifford's reaction to Ambassador Bill Crawford.

HOPPER: I offer this story because it's important to realize that the concepts that we all carry around of what are career ambassadors, what are political appointees, all depend upon the eye of the beholder. Sometimes in the Foreign Service, we so much judge our success by whether we're ambassadors, and we see being an ambassador as such an august thing that we aren't aware that there may be outsiders who recognize that there are small countries and more significant and less significant countries, and that being an ambassador is different, depending upon where you are and how you do it. I can remember Nelson Ledsky explaining to Mr. Clifford that for a career Foreign Service Officer, being an ambassador to Cyprus is a major accomplishment; and that Ambassador Crawford, while his team was small, had a task which was just as complicated and central to what we were doing.

But it is interesting, in comparing the three places and the teams and the way it worked. There was some truth to Mr. Clifford's assessment. There was a difference between Kubisch, Macomber, and Crawford: they were playing in different leagues.

Q: Let me just say a couple of words about Bill Crawford's background; just to add to what you said. In 1974, after Roger Davies was killed, Bill Crawford at the time, I believe, was in Yemen. I think Secretary Kissinger felt that we needed a very senior person quickly in Cyprus. Bill Crawford had served there before as DCM in the period not much earlier, so he knew everybody; and he was also able to come very quickly. I don't know whether he may even have had an interim or recess appointment in order to get there as quickly as possible in '74. So at the time that you're talking about, he had been their ambassador for – he was in his third year. So he had a lot of background on the intricacies and the personalities of the Cyprus issue.

So, what happened then after that; the next day?

HOPPER: There was the normal range of meetings. There was one meeting with Archbishop Makarios III, the president of Cyprus. There were meetings with Mr. Denktash, the head of the Turkish community.

The initial meeting with Makarios had been kind of pro-forma, and hadn't really moved anywhere. Clifford concluded that it was important to have one more small meeting with Makarios and the team came back very thrilled with how that meeting had gone. Clifford had concluded that President Makarios understood that the time had come to make some difficult compromises and that some kind of a federation was the most that could be gained. And there was a sense that Makarios and some of the people close to him understood that in the right way, time would be on their side, and that they could, in essence, buy the island back if any kind of a structure was put in place that allowed regular contact, but that there would be immediate losers on their side, in the process. Clifford felt that he had a commitment from Makarios that the president/archbishop would use his stature and influence to take the pain; take the hits and get it done. That sense kind of emanated through the island, too, and while there were no statements, no promises, we left Cyprus with a sense that there was a real commitment from Makarios just to do what had to be done.

Q: That undertaking later led, that year, to at least two things. One was a new set of high-level understandings; the principles agreed to between the two community leaders: Makarios and Denktash – 1977, and a resumption of the actual inter-communal negotiations in Vienna, as I recall.

HOPPER: There was progress made.

Q: Before we leave Cyprus, let me ask you two other small questions. Do you recall whether there was a meeting with Glafkos Clerides?

HOPPER: Yes, I think there was.

Q: How about with Foreign Minister Spyros Kyprianou, who later was the successor to Archbishop Makarios?

HOPPER: Kyprianou had been at some meetings, but whether there had been a separate meeting with him I am not sure, though probably there was. But in any event, he had been at one of the meetings or at a dinner, or at an event, and they spoke.

One of the other things that's really important to stress: is that at each stop, in Athens, Ankara, and on the Greek side of Nicosia, there was one big reception by the ambassador in honor of the team. Mr. Clifford told the same story at each one of these. He basically found a way to let himself be asked, "Well what's your role? Why are you here? What are you doing? What's this all about?" and Clifford told the same story at each place on how you become a trusted political adviser, and how you get to the position that he was in.

He'd thought a lot about this and it was purposely aimed at each of the countries, and the story was you become a trusted political adviser by working hard, by talking to people, by learning what you can learn, but the only way you can become a good decision maker is by making decisions, and that the only way you actually learn to make tough decisions is to make them. And the only way you really get to where you can make really hard decisions, is to make wrong decisions and learn from them. And it was his punch-line in the end that basically to make good decisions you have to have the courage to make them, you have to have the courage to make ones that are uncomfortable and painful, he would work in sort of telling LBJ (Lyndon B. Johnson) that he had to get out of Vietnam, but it was, "To make good decisions you have to take a chance. Sometimes you're going to be wrong." And he always told it about himself, but it was utterly clear that he was telling each of the three people, "You're going to have to take some chances. Everybody is not going to like you. Otherwise you're not going to get there." It was a wonderful story and it was something I later saw from politicians of all stripes; that you have a couple of good stories and you tell them wherever you go, and you learn how to make them fit for wherever you are, and he did that.

Our last stop was going to be London to fill the British in on where we were going; we really viewed them as key partners in all of this. While we were out on the trip, before arriving in Britain, the foreign secretary – Anthony Crosland – had a massive cerebral hemorrhage and died. We didn't know what was going to happen. Two days or three days before we arrived, Owens was appointed foreign minister and we were the first foreigners to meet with him as foreign secretary. I went to that meeting and you would never have guessed that he had only been foreign secretary for a day and a half, or two days. I later then went to London to deal with some of the residue of his abrasive style. But boy, it was clear that he was foreign secretary and he knew what he wanted. He was a bright guy, wanted to be involved, and to be a positive player. It was fine. It was clear the British were going to work with us, as well as do what they wanted; but here was somebody who was going to have his own ideas and be a player. That was interesting to see.

Q: David Owens?

HOPPER: David Owens, yes. And so then we got back to Washington. Clifford first met with Vance and Christopher and then we wrote a report to the president. The big thing was that Clifford's recommendation was that we just had to end the embargo of the Turks, that it was so counterproductive and getting us nothing, and that we just had to move forward. And so he had this plan with the steps of how to do it. It was quite complicated, but basically we had to end the embargo and things would happen and there would be talks and we'd be engaged. It was just crystal clear that Cyrus Vance hated it. He agreed with it, and he hated it. He signed off on it. Carter signed off on it. No one was happy. I don't know what they had expected, but somehow having Clifford come back and the great accomplishment being to end the Turkish arms embargo was not exactly what everybody had had in mind.

Q: Or to put it a different way, what Clifford was saying was what was vitally important

was to restore a strong and solid relationship with Turkey first, and then hopefully there could be progress on Cyprus, rather than perhaps, as Carter and Vance had hoped coming out of the election, that you could have progress on Cyprus first and then take care of other issues afterwards.

HOPPER: Even more, the thing that Clifford saw and got across was that the Greek-Turkish relationship -- the southern flank of NATO, was the issue, and that Cyprus was a problem in that, and that it wasn't where somehow Cyprus was the key. But the thing that Clifford had to make it all hold together, was that he had built up a relationship with Makarios and that there would be a chance to do it.

We then had to brief the Congress and there were a series of meetings. And it also played out that Secretary Vance had to hold a range of hearings. Finally, he had to go up and appear before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and unveil this process. It was really interesting. We worked on crafting his statement, and I don't know if you remember this, but we did at least four drafts. There was only so much you could say. Nimetz would go over and meet with him; and Nimetz and Christopher would meet with him, and finally said, "No, he hates that." And we kept trying to write it a different way, and write it a different way, and finally, whatever we did, the morning of the hearing, he grudgingly accepted it and he read it painfully and dutifully.

As I worked more and more with the Congress and saw policy-making at work, I realized that even when you're the secretary of state, you don't win them all. The world doesn't turn out the way you want, but you have obligations and of the foreign policy that gets associated with you, key parts of it are things you don't want but you've got to dutifully do it. I finally realized that it didn't matter with those drafts; the reasons Vance kept sending them back was he didn't like the way the policy had turned out. Deep down, I think he wanted to punish the Turks a little bit, and wanted a little more justice for the Greeks and couldn't get there. So, finally, he went along and read the statement, and then was pretty clear that he really wanted Christopher, Nimetz, and Clifford to carry it out. "Thank you. You do it." He wasn't all that involved in it after that.

In this package we were ending the embargo. We were going to provide some new aircraft for Turkey. There were going to be negotiations between Turkey and Greece and we were going to negotiate a new base arrangement. And there would be progress on Cyprus as well as progress between Greece and Turkey on rebuilding their links with NATO. Everybody got something. There were three different processes and, boy, that was enough. There was enough work for everybody in doing that.

At that point the head of the NATO military side was Al Haig, who had transitioned and stayed on. We worked with him and he was quite skillful. He didn't stay that long though. He left and was replaced by General Rogers who negotiated bits and pieces of it, but we just had all of these pieces. Within the next six or seven months, Archbishop Makarios had a heart attack and died.

Q: Yes, that was in about June of '77; four or five months after you saw him.

HOPPER: Yes. And he was replaced by Mr. Kyprianou, who had been, I guess, speaker of the Parliament, and was an exceedingly careful person. I can just imagine the difficulties of succeeding someone as big as Archbishop Makarios, if one was as small as Mr. Kyprianou. It was almost an impossible job that he had, and he was the perfect person to make it totally impossible. It was painful.

Cyprus is one of those places that seem to have exactly the wrong thing happen at exactly the wrong time, to keep things from being resolved. It may be because nobody really wants them to be resolved. Or some places are unlucky. It's like how in life there'll be families that have more than their share of bad things happen to them. In the human family, Cyprus may be one of those places that takes more than its share of hits so the rest of us can have fate smile on us. I don't know.

Q: I asked if Clark Clifford in this first mission had met with Kyprianou – and I don't recall whether he was already the president of the house of representatives or still foreign minister at the time – because I seem to recall that I think it was Bill Crawford had recommended that there not be a special meeting with Kyprianou; that he was not that important. He had caused a lot of problems for us in the past. He may well have been at the reception and some other meetings, but I'm not sure that there was a separate meeting. I don't think there was a relationship established between Clifford and Kyprianou at that point. Later on they did meet various times.

HOPPER: Ironically, the president then designated Mr. Clifford to go out – and be the president's special representative at the funeral of Makarios. In that context, Clifford met with the incoming team, and it was so fascinating that there were the Greek-Cypriot media and a lot of people just in their anxiety over the loss of a truly great man, and a very big player. A number of them actually blamed Clifford for having killed Makarios. The scenario was that Clifford broke Makarios' heart by making it clear to him that there was only one possible deal, and that after Makarios was persuaded to make this deal, he later saw how bad it was and it killed him. Romantic drivel, but it's the kind of way the table gets set sometimes in dealing with this issue.

Q: I don't think there's anything to that myself. But the perception…Yes.

HOPPER: Oh no, but if you're the next level of leaders and you're not as confident, and you're not as big, and the U.S. comes and says, "You know, you need to do this, and you need to do that," to have the courage to go ahead.

Q: What I recall, and I may be off on this, is that Archbishop Makarios had a heart attack sometime in the spring and went for medical attention – I think to London – and had a telephone conversation with Clifford from Washington, and then went back to the island and died about the first of August. And I'm quite sure of that date, for other reasons that I remember. Clifford did go to the funeral, not with Vice President Mondale. Chief Justice

Berger was part of the team and a number of senators and congressmen went. Did Matthew Nimetz go? I think so.

HOPPER: Yes, I think so.

Q: George Vest was the assistant secretary; he went. You did not go?

HOPPER: No.

Q: They filled up an airplane, I believe, and Nelson Ledsky went. It was right in the middle of the summer heat in Nicosia. But it was an opportunity, as you say, for Clifford to meet with the new president and some of the other figures who came for that event.

HOPPER: In no way do I mean to … Clark Clifford had nothing to do with the passing of the archbishop. But it was just the kind of emotional response that happened frequently. But still, we all pressed ahead and kept working on the Turkish base negotiations, the approach to the nest of Cypriot problems, and the NATO flank issues. Out of the limelight General Haig, and then his successor, were making some progress on the southern flank issues; in fact, there was progress being made on all fronts. Not having experienced enough personal disappointment in that area, I was somewhat hopeful that we would be able to wrap up all three. That didn't come to pass. I worked on all of them, but there were some interesting things on the base negotiations. Nimetz was the lead on that, but actually after a while there was a new ambassador in Ankara, Ron Spiers.

Q: And in Athens.

HOPPER: And in Athens. Who was the new ambassador in Athens?

Q: Bob McCloskey.

HOPPER: Oh Yes. Bob McCloskey was very able.

But the NATO things were being done through a channel where the embassy facilitated, but wasn't a direct player. It was more with the Turks where Ambassador Spiers had a big role to play; we established some really elaborate communications mechanisms to keep him in the loop. I remember it was very complicated. Do you remember how we...

Q: No.

HOPPER: There was some process where we were actually, through the operations center, doing almost real time notice communications with Spiers. And there were some early fax. It was very complicated, but we found a way to keep Ambassador Spiers very directly involved. The secretary general of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Shukru Elickdar, was the prime Turkish negotiator. There were just meetings all over the place. Nimetz and Ledsky would go and have meetings. Progress was being made and it was on a pretty

rapid time table. I don't even remember what the exact steps were, but there were some time pressures on resolving that.

Finally, a team came to Washington to wrap things up and we were in the final stages of doing a five year expansion and renewal of the base negotiations, and one of the things that happened that points out the changes that have taken place between the late '70s and the last ten years, had been that this was a bargain and a haggle, and at the end, the Turks really wanted to get as much as they could. In some ways they really cared about being respected, and liked, and admired, though they had trouble making that clear. They didn't want to ask too directly, but they always actually made it quite clear that they needed to be more appreciated. I think they had figured out that as the "head capitalist" country where money seemed to talk, that one way we could make clear that we really did respect them (and maybe them at least a penny more than somebody else) was on the price we put on the base negotiations. The U.S. had the dilemma that we had a range of base negotiations that we had to do; they were all kind of coming up, and we had established in principle that we don't pay rent to allies for bases; that we're in this together; it's mutual defense. So, it's like, how does the rich country pay when it's established a principle that these are mutually benefiting and you don't pay?

There was going to be a military assistance relationship and whatever the number was, (I think we were actually at a figure of about $250 million over five years) it was a pretty big number and it would've been hard to tell what was really committed. It wasn't enough. They wanted more. The talks were under way. My perception is from my view, and it may be that there were a hundred other things going on and it's so easy to inflate one's role in these things. But the story that I took away from it that was really fun, was that there was this log jam just over the final number and we knew that we were going to have trouble actually providing anything like the rather dramatic number that we'd already included. I had this idea that maybe we could do a rolling number, so I called David Aaron at the NSC and explored the idea of why didn't we do a five-year rolling number. Then we came up with the idea, okay, let's do a five year rolling number and we'll do a commitment to $500 million dollars over this five years. Every year it will roll out; it will always be dealing with five years; it will always be rolling forward. And it had best faith efforts and what can be appropriated, and so everybody agreed to that. The Turks thought it was wonderful and the deal was signed and we had this sort of five-year rolling commitment and a number. And who knows what it meant? You know, we did what we could.

But then, always in my mind I rolled the camera forward to when President Clinton was in office and you had the really important issue of trying to build a new relationship with Yeltsin and the Soviet Union. He has the summit meeting in Vancouver with Yeltsin and he and Yeltsin agree to an $860 million, I believe, five-year or ten-year aid package. And it's a lot of smoke and mirrors, too, and it's the president. It's just a really central relationship and comes back and in 1993 Clinton can't get any of it. In the end, he was lucky to keep the seed program and the other things sort of going. There was a little bit added. But the change between 1977 when a relatively junior staffer at the State

Department, and a Western Europe person in the NSC, could, with a couple of calls, on behalf of the president, offer up $500 million dollars to Turkey, and sort of make it play, just showed the changes that took place and how budgetary things became more important, and how for U.S. diplomats is wasn't quite as easy just to throw money on the table to try to resolve problems.

Q: You mentioned David Aaron. I think he was then deputy NSC adviser to Brzezinski. You've talked about the negotiations with Turkey on the bases for the defense cooperation. What about with Greece? They were going on at about the same time. Do you remember the issues involved there, and to what extent were you involved with that?

HOPPER: Much less. However they worked, being that Nimetz would meet with senior Greeks all the time, but he wasn't as involved in making that work. I don't know what your view is, but it was whether you all were doing it, or the ambassador was doing it. I know there was a team and we'd have these meetings. Now that you mention it, there was a wonderful guy, Don Major, at the Pentagon, and there was this inter-agency team. We were parallel and we tried to keep things sort of balanced, but those seemed to be going on their own. And the hard part with those talks was actually making sure that the on-the-ground practical military arrangements between Greece and Turkey and NATO moved forward. That was where our office was more directly involved. Nimetz would be talking to and meeting with Haig, and then Rogers, all the time working to keep them moving forward.

Q: But I think as you describe it, after the Clifford mission there was essentially a package process that involved relations with Greece and Turkey; involved NATO; involved their relations with each other, and certainly Cyprus. But that also meant that to the extent it was an integrated whole package, various parties could keep the whole thing from moving forward and drag their feet. The linkages were apparent to all. So at the end of 1977, going into '78, I think the administration at some point had to decide whether it needed to take its own initiative with the Congress to deal with the arms embargo, or continue to try to balance all of these various considerations until the point where they all came to fruition, which was very difficult.

HOPPER: No, as I recall, while they were all linked in a way, we also kept them all separate so that you could move forward - and that was what was hard for Secretary Vance: that we were going to go forward. I mean, the Cypriot problem; were going to work hard on it, it mattered, but it wasn't going to be allowed to bring down all of the others. So one of the things that I think Mr. Clifford actually did was to de-lengthen. There was never any doctrine; never any speeches. We kept working on everything, but the beauty was (it was sort of like how he described) that we'd work bilaterally, multi-laterally, and regionally.

The U.S. has some fairly clear things that we do. We were responsible for having NATO work well for our own reason. We needed the relationship with Turkey to be reestablished again on solid ground and we were doing what had to be done. We did

move on the arms embargo without there being a package, but we did reports every sixth months to the Congress on the status of negotiations. We did things to keep it going, and in good faith and good conscience, we did offer our own approaches to the Cyprus problem. That was a very stimulating and wonderful process where your office (the Southern Europe office) took the lead; it was a wonderful example of using skilled staff in that the Cyprus desk officer, Jeff Chapman, was a good negotiator, a brilliant drafter, who worked ceaselessly to help put together a package. There would be teams that went out to Cyprus. There were so many meetings.

Q: And that paper which we worked on with the British and the Canadians as well, was presented to the parties. But all that happened right after the Congress did ease, or lift, the embargo restrictions on Turkey. Do you remember much about how that decision was reached; is that something that really stands out? That was earlier in '78. I don't know to what extent Nimetz decided, and went to Mr. Vance, that the time had come to do something like that, and then Clifford went and talked to the Turks in Ankara. I don't know if you went on that trip. I was there.

HOPPER: I only went with Clifford once.

Q: And you didn't go with Christopher to Ankara?

HOPPER: No, no. I always felt that Mr. Christopher got these really difficult missions where he would be expected to go out and just get pretty impossible results. I worked in staffing Nimetz and staffing Christopher to go out there, but I didn't go. And it's funny how if you work on something personally, that event has more sway and resonance than the ones that you don't work on.

Q: That might have as much significance …

HOPPER: Sure. In a real way. Now that you mention it, I do remember how difficult that was and preparing for that. It was important. And things didn't move forward. I always felt the work that was done on the Greek negotiating package and the deal that was worked out, and all the hard work in the meetings and putting everyone together, and trying to both keep the very clever and energetic - and, in some ways, imaginative - Denktash on the Turkey side, and the cautious, looking-over-their-shoulder-worried about everybody, whoever it was on the Greek-Cypriot side (Kyprianou) that was just so hard. We were told in so many ways by everybody that they recognized that to a great extent this package that was put together for a federation with all these safeguards was the best, fair and balanced package if you wanted to solve the problem at that point in time and was probably what needed to be done.

When both sides stepped up to it, they were happier with the status quo, and bitching and moaning and blaming somebody else than with taking responsibility for moving forward. From talking to people, it appears to me that the situation is pretty much about where it was two days after the Harvard Club meetings when that package was turned down in

1978.

When I was in London, Richard Haas used to come by and I'd be his control officer when he was working on the problem. I sort of stayed peripherally involved. I've always felt that one could go back and read the stuff done in 1978, and you'd know as much about what was going on and what could be done, whenever you dipped back into it.

Q: Well, I think that's a fair assessment, and even today in 2002 they are having some talks, and probably whether that paper is in their briefcase or not, they're talking about the same issues that they were back then. As you say, in 1977, '78, some progress was made in establishing some fundamental principles that probably will have to be the principles if they ever do have a settlement.

HOPPER: I've had Greek-Cypriots tell me that we were absolutely right; if they could have undertaken the pain at that time, of that solution, that with the ability it would've provided for cross-island commerce and investment, they would have been able to buy back most of the things in the north that they wanted. But, c'est la vie [French: That's life].

Q: Why don't you be a little more specific on the Harvard Club meetings in 1978 where the package was turned down. Who turned it down? Who was in those meetings? Was there more than one? Or what do you remember?

HOPPER: It's interesting. It was very complicated and yet when the package was finally ready to be unveiled, Nimetz had kept the UN secretary general's staff and the Canadians and the British involved. I'm not sure who was at the meeting in New York, but the package was given to both sides.

Q: Separately.

HOPPER: Separately. And essentially they both rejected it. I always felt that no matter what the formal timeframe was, that when it became clear that the Greek-Cypriots were not going to say yes, that Denktash had no need to say yes. And even though it might've been clever and creative, he actually said no. My recollection is that if one were to go back, that it might actually be that only the Turkish Federation ever actually formally said no. In theory, I've heard Greek-Cypriots sort of blame the Turks for being the ones to say no. But, then, my recollection is that the Greek-Cypriots, by not saying yes quickly, let that happen. And who knows what Denktash and his side would've done and said if the Greek-Cypriots had accepted it.

Q: With some degree of enthusiasm.

HOPPER: Yes, but they didn't and so it… [Tape 5, Side B]

Q: Bob, we've been talking about your time from 1976 to 1979, particularly the period

from '77 to '79 when you were the special assistant to Counselor Matthew Nimetz in the Department. We especially talked last time about his involvement, and your involvement, with Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus. I think there are maybe a few more things to say about that. I don't know if you want to talk just a little bit about sort of the importance of that area in terms of U.S. foreign policy at the time.

HOPPER: I think we generally covered it pretty well, and I'd like to move on. We'll get back to it in some of the other things, but I'd like to cover some of the areas that our office covered.

Q: What else did that office get involved with?

HOPPER: And I'd like to talk a little bit about what I can now perceive even clearer and better – the value of having political appointees in the State Department, and sort of what they bring. It's hard for Foreign Service Officers sometimes to appreciate.

The other big issue that I worked on with Matt Nimetz was the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (which was then CSCE and now is OSCE) and human rights. The Carter administration, as is well-known, brought in a political appointee named Ms. Patt Derian to strengthen and start to take on the Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs – it was HA then. She was a wonderful, outspoken, iconoclastic person who really didn't care a whole lot about how bureaucracy worked, but just wanted to get things done. There was a committee established under Deputy Secretary Christopher that was called the Christopher Committee, which had met like maybe every other week to deal with those human rights issues that couldn't be resolved within the bureaucracy. Because I was the staff person doing CSCE and human rights for Nimetz, and because he viewed himself as a person who could help build bridges between new approaches and old approaches, I would go to those meetings for him. It was also interesting.

Nimetz's personal background was that of a politically interested young man who'd been part of the Jewish community in New York and who had paid attention to international affairs. He had a certain skeptical approach towards the Soviet Union and towards other countries with power, and he wasn't quite ready to make human rights a lone star policy. So he was trying to find a middle ground. He did feel that yes, we needed idealism, and we needed more attention paid to it than it would appear the Kissinger approach had. But not just to do human rights. So he'd find himself trying to carve a middle position, and it appeared at the time, and I think it was true, that Christopher valued Nimetz as somebody who could look at these things where passionate figures in the Department were fighting with one another. We'd often be given papers to look at, to try and figure ways to make them palatable and better. We did that on human rights. There was a big – I can't remember what they were called in the Carter administration: an NSDD (National Security Decision Directive) or PDD (Presidential Decision Directive) - one of the NSC studies on human rights, and we privately and quietly helped write parts of that.

The meetings that Deputy Secretary Christopher chaired were fascinating. Nimetz went to

one and then he said that they were just too big and that he'd talk to Christopher privately about the issues. But I would go to them and there would be thirty to fifty people crammed into the deputy secretary's conference room with the regional bureaus always well represented with thoughtful, well prepared arguments on why we couldn't really afford to vote against somebody's IMF loan or etc. And Mr. Christopher would go through huge agendas and somebody important would sort of veto everything. I can recall one meeting where we'd gone for maybe ninety minutes and we finally got to a loan for Benin, and at that time Benin, as opposed to now, had a very disreputable regime. It would've been hard to find a country where we had harder to identify national interests. Finally everybody agrees, "Okay, veto the Benin loan," and this applause broke out in the meeting and a number of people joked, "Well, I guess we can call it the 'beat up on Benin policy'." But it showed more just how hard it was, when you have everybody have a say, to figure it out. But for me, those meetings showed how powerful the regional bureaus were, and that in relation to making changes, they were in a strong position to identify the risks that would come to relations, as well as the benefits. So that was interesting.

The Humanitarian Affairs Bureau was trying to carve out an approach to the Soviet Union and human rights where one would use the known abuses taking place to individuals to make it the loadstone of policy. They were writing papers and getting ready for the follow-on CSCE conference, and just trying to load up things so that there was little scope for paying attention to anything else. Nimetz got asked to sort of intervene and try to make that policy work, and he was especially asked to take on the task of working with Chairman Fascell and his congressional staff. A really odd bureaucratic beast had been created, the CSCE commission. If one were to go to the founding fathers or could find a case to go to the Supreme Court, a lot of people suspected that the way that commission was established with actual votes for the Congress and the executive branch, in a way where it was really hard to tell who had the final say, probably brushed up against the constitution. But nobody wanted that fight, so for a while in the Kissinger administration they just never picked executive branch people. In the Carter administration there was an official from the Commerce Department and from the State Department who were…

Q: And the Defense Department, I believe.

HOPPER: And Defense. Yes, I think I remember the fellow from Defense.

Q: Jim Siana?

HOPPER: Yes, and a guy before him, too. I think his name was Taggert or something like that.

But they went and had all these meetings and the commission had an executive director who was a very strong and engaging person who, for all I know, continues to be active in…

Q: Spencer Oliver.

HOPPER: Spencer Oliver. Among Democrats, political Democrats, he had a caché that gave him a lot of influence. He, in fact, had had the office at the Watergate in the democratic campaign committee; it was his office that was broken into in the Watergate burglary and he won a very large civil settlement. I'm not sure who paid it, but he actually got some notoriety and some money. He had a folk-hero status within the Democratic Party. He continued to work and he was the executive director of the commission. And it all made him a power that sometimes, once again, for the Foreign Service people he was just a difficult person to deal with, a person who had his own beliefs in how things should work, who listened to people his own age – as we all were. He was a relatively young man, it was hard for him and it was hard for us. But we used to meet with him a lot; he would come over to Nimetz's office very frequently and we would invite the EUR people up to most of the meetings. The task was just keeping everybody on the same page.

Every once in a while Nimetz would meet with Fascell, but mostly it was just being able to tell Fascell from time to time, "Now, we're taking Spencer seriously. We're meeting; we're trying to factor in everybody's ideas." So that was a major part of our work. And we had mentioned before how the assistant secretaries in EUR sort of valued Nimetz taking the political parts of the Eastern Mediterranean away from them. It became clear after a while that dealing with the CSCE commission and actually handling the politics of that relationship would've taken so much time for the assistant secretary in EUR, that he was just grateful that he didn't have to meet with these people all the time.

There's a downside to letting these political issues go and just focusing on foreign affairs: at some point it all comes together. So we would have all of those meetings to get ready for one of the innovations of CSCE which was that all of the thirty-five nations had agreed that there would actually be public review conferences. That was a novelty – to hold nations to their commitments, and discuss the various issues. And for some reasons that are not impossible to discern, parts of the public suspected that the State Department would just take a dive at this conference and would not really want to use it publicly to assess anyone's record. That wasn't the case; we were actually preparing to do what was called for, but there were all these suspicions. And to this day, I'm not sure how this brilliant compromise was arrived at, but Nimetz came back one night from a meeting with the deputy secretary and said, "Have EUR come up," and so John Kornblum came up from EUR. Nimetz told him that the Department's leadership, in coordination with the NSC, had decided to appoint former Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, and former UN ambassador, to be the head of our Belgrade delegation.

Q: At the review conference?

HOPPER: At the review conference. That created a lot of anxiety because a relatively senior ambassador had been told by EUR that he was going to be the head of the delegation; a very talented and decent person named Bud Sheir. And another very bright senior mid-level officer, Jack Maresca, was going to be the deputy head and the executive director of the delegation. Well part of this deal with having Justice Goldberg head the

delegation was that there would be two deputies and that one of them would be Spencer Oliver. And it was really going to be a mixed delegation with – lets' see, there were thirty-five nations in the CSC, and at times it appeared that our delegation had thirty-five people. We had a lot of public members from all over the country brought in and we had to sort of calm everyone down, "Look, this is actually going to be good. It's going to dampen the suspicions of what we're doing. It'll give us lots of information," and "You're getting more money. Don't worry; your budget is not going to eat it. It'll all work out." That involved a lot of work and a lot of reaching out.

Watching Ambassador Goldberg do this was just fascinating because his approach was just tireless in meeting with outsiders. He would have private and public conferences, and meetings, with just about everybody, and listen to all of them. And he let them talk so much; let their ideas reign. Basically watching him, he figured out ways to let earnest people with a lot of inside information and deeply held views, share their ideas in public in front of people who had equally deep information about other sides of the puzzle. So basically he had enough conflicting inputs that he felt he could find clever ways to do whatever he wanted, and say, "See this piece. That's what you told me, and that's what you told me." I thought he managed it very well. It took a lot of hand-holding and management, and for EUR it was a public style of doing things that was very difficult. I think in the end it worked out quite well. This model still continues, in some ways, to this day.

Q: You were primarily involved in the preparation of setting the stage. You didn't actually go to Belgrade?

HOPPER: I did go to Belgrade. I did for the opening. In fact, the teams were so big there were actually two planes that went. So I went on the congressional plane. I later found all of the problems in Yugoslavia, and the former Yugoslavia and I would see them through the prism of having been there at one of the high points in their national life when they had this conference. I guess Tito, while ill, was still alive. The Yugoslavs helped Goldberg hold a big preparatory meeting and dinner at the Yugoslav writer's club; it was just interesting to see this. Later, serving in London, I recognized this Old World clubby atmosphere. However, in this Communist state, rather than the landed gentry, it was the intellectuals, the appointed-and-blessed-by-the-party intellectuals, who had this lovely club. We went there and we stayed at the Hotel Metropol; it was just fascinating watching the Yugoslavs chair this.

We met with the embassy and one of the things that Nimetz got to do was to very nicely meet with the ambassador and the embassy team. Larry Eagleburger was ambassador for part of the time; David Andersen, another very distinguished officer, was ambassador towards the end. And Nimetz just met with them to say that "Our job is to make this go smoothly. There'll be temptations at time for you because you're dealing with the host government to maybe see things from local interests, and that's fine, but please help the delegation to work smoothly. That's one of your prime goals." I thought he got that across very nicely. It never had to be bludgeoned to anyone. It also was clear that somebody as

smart as Larry Eagleburger understood what was going on. It went as smoothly as one could hope. It ended up being a very successful conference.

Q: I wonder if a fellow named Sam Weiss was helpful in that period. He later on, I think, was a deputy to Spencer Oliver. He had been a Foreign Service Officer in Europe.

HOPPER: Sam was with the commission. Sam was in charge of one of the key areas and was very helpful.

I had known Sam in Rome. He was just finishing when I arrived. I knew some of the people and was able to help people on just talking to one another.

Q: You mentioned at the outset that you wanted to talk a little bit about the value of political appointees. Have you pretty well done that now, would you say, or…

HOPPER: There are a couple of other issues. One, people sometimes forget that there was a guy named Burt Lance in the Carter administration who was the head of OMB (Office of Management and Budget). Lance and his OMB team had decided that they were going to institute something called "zero-based budgeting," Z-B-B, in the government. And I'd never paid much attention to government budgeting and things. I went, for Nimetz, to a couple of the planning meetings and it was so interesting to watch. For the State Department people who were in charge of the areas who sort of put together the budget, having anybody take a fresh look at how it was done, it was like you had these mentally deficient criminals running around. I had never seen such resistance.

Nimetz went to the meetings and he was torn. He understood the concerns of the career people at the State Department, but also thought that there was some wisdom to taking a fresh look at the programs, and that as money drives programs as programs drive money, that there ought to be some way to make people defend their program. So he was sort of cooperating with trying to get to a modified zero-based budgeting system. It became clear that there weren't enough people to actually assess every program afresh every year. There were actually some moves underway for deep-seated reform of the budget process. Then Burt Lance got into political trouble right in the middle of it. It was just amazing to watch how the people who had resisted the changes, used his slip from grace to just kill it. It died with Lance and we just went back to marginal budgeting where you just keep what you have and play at the margins. It was so much easier, but you never had to address competing priorities that way.

Then I also watched, as an outsider, Nimetz look at personnel issues and say, "Now, why are you doing it that way," and "Why are you doing it this way?" and it was really interesting to see how an intelligent person from outside could ask sort of bothersome, and sometimes seemingly naïve, questions, which they weren't at all. They made people think about what they were doing.

The other outsider, who took a lot of flak in the press and from some people, was

Hamilton Jordan, who was the public relations polling figure for Jimmy Carter, and the really high-level political adviser on what could be done. It was an area where the NSC and the State Department asked the question: why was this rank amateur having any say on what foreign policy priorities were to be. Nimetz would talk about how much he respected Jordan; he really had this incredible brain. Then there were Jody Powell who was the press secretary for the White House, Ham Jordan, and Hodding Carter, who was the press person at the Department, and who had a fairly large role. And they would try to figure out – this is before you did polling on everything – what could be done; what were the priorities.

At one point, I saw this wonderful memo; I have never seen it in public. It was a private memo that even under Freedom of Information or anything, I think no one can get. Maybe it's in the Carter Library; I don't know. But it was one that Jordan did on the balance between how one could do the SALT treaty, the Panama Canal treaty, work on the Middle East; it covered just all the various priorities of how to time them and balance them and worried about election campaigns, and just all of the different domestic and international political things that had to be factored together. And for me, I saw just how complicated it was. You're sitting in the White House, and you're trying to have a global plan, and you have your own sense of where the country should come out in four years or eight years, and then ;you are faced with offices in the bureaucracy that think that their issue is the most important thing, and operate issue by issue. How you bring some coherence and balance to it all, is something that only elected leaders and their people can provide. Bureaucrats don't have every role, and their role is to do their thing, which makes it really hard to provide an overall coordinating view. I think we're lucky to have a process where you have change; you have to look at these things over again with new elections.

The other thing that was fascinating is that it was clear that when an administration comes in, they assume they have eight years to actually do something; they think they'll be good enough to be reelected. So at first, they plan for a span of can we do it in eight years, then as the first mid-term election starts to approach them, there's a natural panic that Oh, my god, for our friends in the House of Representatives and a third of the senators, they've got to go before the public now, and if they do badly, it will reflect on us. So all of a sudden that eight-year window shortens very quickly. I found that the timeframe of the U.S. government is a very short one. Everybody has short timeframes, and when Foreign Service Officers complain that the political bosses don't look at the longer view, I sort of laugh because after a while the Foreign Service has two-year assignments and three-year assignments; two years is about the longest anybody in the U.S. government has to look out at things.

Q: And perhaps we're fortunate that they aren't always the same two- or three-year windows.

HOPPER: No, that's the beauty of it; that you have these competing and conflicting two-year windows. Or it would be really a disaster. No, it does help if they're not the same two-year windows.

One other thing that I saw that outsiders could do that was so hard from the inside was one afternoon, after I'd been there about a year with Nimetz, he came back and he said, "Bob, there are a couple of things that we're going to start doing that I want your advice on. I've been asked to play a role in looking at the public selling of the SALT II treaty." We hadn't gotten it yet; we were in the end game of the negotiations, but after having watched and seeing how hard the Panama Canal sell was, Secretary Vance and Mr. Christopher decided we need to start thinking right away about how we prepared for ratification. So they asked Nimetz to work on that. So I started staffing, getting him prepared, having him meet with key people, and it was really interesting. Nimetz saw all of the other connections and he would go and he would meet with his friend, Les Geld, who was the head of the POL/MIL (Political/Military) Bureau and one of the chief negotiators. He would meet with Mr. Vance from time to time.

Nimetz had a sense of tying the strands together, and would see that while the public was growing concerned, the Soviet Union was mucking around in the Horn of Africa, and so why couldn't you get some commitments from them there, and just all of these tradeoffs. Then you would see that now that the people negotiating would now throw weights and then would say, "What do you mean? How dare…you can't give an exchange for having them withdraw from Somalia." Just all of the connections were so difficult, and the combination of experts and lawyers was also at times. We went to one meeting with Secretary Vance where Nimetz pointed out some connections, and Vance basically told him, "No, we're going to do it issue by issue and just do the very best we can on every issue. It's too hard. I want to use the lawyers' method of analysis and just get the best possible outcome on each issue. Don't look for tradeoffs between them."

That bothered me in that I felt it's a complicated world and that there actually were linkages to be made. But we were really going issue by issue. At that same meeting Nimetz came back and said, "You know, in talking to people, one of the areas where the Department is open to criticism is that we're just not paying attention to telecommunications." This was in 1970 or '79. "Bob, it's just clear that telecommunications is where we are; it's where we're going. The whole world is going to be driven by this. The Department is not paying attention to it. I said that I'd be willing to supervise this for the Department. Dante Fascell has asked that we have a semi-bureau and that we have a person…"

I just turned to him and said, "Oh, my god. Matt, the Department just thinks that that's a minor sort of detail; that we don't have people who really are very good at that; that to give it its own bureaucracy just elevates it out of whack with other important issues. If you take this on, you'll be seeing the building as having this collection of the Crown of Saint Steven, and the Micronesians, and the Cypriots. You'll have all of these really hard issues, but ones that a lot of the big players see as marginal. You've got a lot on your plate. I really urge you … we don't have the staff, either, that can really supervise this."

I've always been sort of ashamed that his vision was right and mine was small and narrow

and wrong, and he actually listened to me and we didn't take it on. Nobody else in the Department took it on, and in the end legislation was passed and a special office was set up – and was probably exactly the wrong way to do it. It's pretty hard to dispute that telecommunications was an important issue. If there had been a way to do it, we should've played a more central role from then on. And that's another area where the political people can sometimes see these connections that were hard for me to see.

Q: You mentioned the Crown of St. Steven and Micronesia. Now, I assume there were other staff people in the office who took care of issues like that if it did take a lot of Mr. Nimetz's time. So we won't cover those.

HOPPER: The office was set up in a fashion where it was before the model that's used now where you have an executive assistant and a special assistant. A lot of stuff did flow through and the other special assistants would say, "You know, we're thinking of doing this. What do you think?" So I knew what was going on in all of the areas and would try to connect them.

Q: How many special assistants were there at that time? About four?

HOPPER: There were three and a staff assistant at any one time.

Q: Another topic that I think you've alluded to a few times, that maybe might be worthy of a little bit more discussion, is the relationship in this period between the State Department and the NSC. The tensions between Vance and Brzezinski I think are well-documented, well-known. I'm wondering to what extent you got involved in trying to bridge that relationship. And in the area of the Turkish-Cyprus relations, you had talked about Greg Treverton going on the Clifford mission. Paul Hensey was also another important figure at that time. Would you want to comment on any of that?

HOPPER: I was going to mention Hensey the last time. It was interesting; after the Clifford mission, Greg Treverton, who's now at the Rand…

Q: Or was it Harvard?

HOPPER: He was in Harvard at the Kennedy School and he's now with Rand out at Santa Monica, who I've talked to several times fairly recently. Greg was a really broad brushed fellow who really wanted to look at the big picture, and had no real interest in becoming a Greece-Turkey-Cyprus expert. He was just doing a job as part of his European portfolio. He'd keep involved a little bit, but it wasn't that intensive.

Interestingly though, Paul Hensey who was a career intelligence officer and who was also involved in these odd evolving portfolios. He was partly the intelligence officer for the NSC, but he also had an extensive Turkish background, and after a while started playing more of a role. And if anything, he was very protective of the Turkish relationship, and would try, while being careful about it, to make sure that the Turkish relationship was

protected in the political discussions. Actually, that was something everyone was concerned about, so at times he almost made it harder by making it so explicit that that's what needed to be done. The problem was that even though the balance of forces within the administration recognized that was a key part, you still had to explain it and sell it. There were complicated efforts involved in just helping the Turks to explain themselves to the American public.

Our political system is open to influence, and the Greek-American political forces did play the political process very well. They were good at helping campaigns. They're almost like the Cuban-Americans and were an ideal ally in that they had restaurants and churches that could provide venues for people to come and talk to large groups of people. And they only had a few issues. So, within reason, they were easy to appease and they could deliver. And there were just enough of them to matter. And in some places they mattered a lot. At that point, the number of Turkish-Americans, and Turkish-American groups, were much smaller, and so they would often complain that this just wasn't fair; that the political process disadvantaged them. And yet I found they had constituencies, too, in that they were more important to the American military; they were actually very important to what you might call the industrial military complex. So, everybody had their spokesman. But on the political side, dealing with the Greek-American influence was a challenge.

Q: I recall also from that period that we discovered that while there were concentrations of Greek-Americans in places like Astoria and Florida and Baltimore, they also were very spread out. I remember talking once to a senator from Nevada who said, "Well, I've got this big Greek community in Las Vegas," or Reno or somewhere. He was mindful of that.

Let me ask you, on this general subject about Turkish relations, to what extent did you continue to keep in touch with Clark Clifford? He was very active in 1978 when there was the question of Congress lifting the arms restrictions on Turkey. Then Burt Lance, who you mentioned before, came into the picture. Clark Clifford became very much involved with that situation. To what extent did he continue to take an interest, and did your office keep him informed, supported?

HOPPER: It diminished a lot after we were able to conclude the base agreement and after the arms embargo was lifted. Then, after the negotiations with Cyprus broke down, we used him as an adviser in that stage. Actually, the death of Makarios left sort of a vacuum in Cyprus so there wasn't a "big" person for him to deal with. It did become more of a NATO issue and there were structures in place to deal with it, so he sort of faded out. We'd talk to him from time to time. He was always willing and delighted to help, but he didn't play a big role after about a year. Was that sort of your assessment?

Q: Well certainly a much diminished role. He had other things that he was involved with and I think he didn't see that he could do very much. He was always willing to receive the Greek, Turkish, and Cypriot ambassadors and some foreign visitors who came to

Washington. And I often would go over and sit with him for those meetings and very occasionally would go over and brief him on something, or discuss something with him. My impression is generally exactly the same as yours.

Okay, is there anything else we ought to talk about in connection with your assignment to the counselor's office?

HOPPER: We worked on those issues. I can recall that at some point, for some reason (possibly there was a mid-term campaign or something) doing a paper for Nimetz on what had been accomplished. That was kind of interesting because it was a little bit more of putting yourself in the shoes of a political appointee.

Also, it started to dawn on me that as Foreign Service Officers, and I'm sure for civil servants as well, you get to a certain level and the downside of the political appointee process is that you're working with the political appointees: while they're bringing in these new ideas, and were a bit on the cutting edge, they are more partisan, and they are "things" that somebody is going to object to. When the next election comes and there's another transition, it's so easy for people to say, "Well jeez, you're a Carterite. You did what they wanted," and you try to explain, "But you know, when the Carter people came in, they thought I was a Kissinger person because I'd worked…" So how do you get the respect that you're just doing a job and you're offering your best advice? Over time I saw that the career people were expected to have more and more of a sense of what the political imperatives were, and to both offer advice and…[Tape 6, Side A]

Q: Okay, why don't you finish the thought that you were just going with.

HOPPER: That on the personnel side, interestingly you didn't even have to be that high. I was just a middle mid-level officer, and yet you could see that your next assignment was partially dependant on how these important people would talk about you, and what they would do with and for you. Basically I guess I did two and a…

Q: You came in, in the summer of '76 and you left in '79.

HOPPER: Yes. So I did three years in the counselor's office; two-and-a-half with Nimetz and the first six months with Sonnenfeldt. Then the Bureau of European Affairs made me a very nice offer to come down to the NATO Desk and to be the deputy in the political side. RPM (Bureau of European Affairs, NATO and Atlantic Political-Military Affairs) sort of divided into the military infrastructure side and the political foreign relations side.

Q: Before you talk about that, let me just ask you; now Matthew Nimetz, late in the Carter administration, moved from the counselor of the Department to being undersecretary for security assistance and some other things. You were not there for that?

HOPPER: No, he did that after I had gone to EUR.

Q: He was replaced by Roz Ridgway.

HOPPER: And I did work with Herb. I mean it happened while I was still in the Department.

Q: But you were in the European Bureau at that point?

HOPPER: Yes.

Q: Okay, why don't you talk a little bit more about this NATO office, and if necessary you can use the acronym EUR/RPM.

HOPPER: Right. And so we had the political wing and the military wing. John Kornblum, for much of the time when I was in the counselor's office, headed up the political shop and he actually inherited the job of dealing with those quadripartite talks that we had discussed. He was leaving, we've remained friends. He did CSCE. And so he recruited me to come down to that office. At first I was going to literally take his place and be the head of the office. They had also recruited Roger Harrison to come to the office, and Roger knew some other people in EUR and in RPM. It actually came down that year to Roger got promoted and I didn't. He would've outranked me and so they decided to make him the head of the office and me the deputy, but give me the quadripartite talks and somewhere we divided up the work.

It was really fun. We were alter-egos and did it as a partnership. But it sort of showed how the promotion system sometimes impacts on these things. George Vest was the assistant secretary when I went downstairs to the Sixth Floor, and I took on preparing for him to go to all these four power meetings. 1979 was a very busy and interesting year. Later, we did a count and in my first year in RPM I made seventeen trips to Europe and George Vest made thirty. It was really a reflection. It's almost hard to do your work and travel. It's hard to do your work, have a good family life, and travel that much. I really respected Vest who such equanimity and managed to keep everything in place. It was a useful model to watch.

The first summer we were getting ready for the four power ministerial talks at the UN, and the situation had changed where now the State Department staff person was the note taker at the ministerial meetings as well. So I prepared for the preparatory meetings and then went to the meeting in New York with Secretary Vance, Lord Carrington from the UK, Paul Sey from France, and Genscher from Germany. Sitting around in this private dining room in, I guess, the UN Plaza Hotel, (I think it was one of the first times that it was used) it's late September, early October, and as they're going around, Secretary Vance reports that there's some disturbing signs on the intelligence front that the Soviets are really getting very involved in Afghanistan, and that things are starting to go very badly for them and that their allies are venal and losing control. These were just reports that they were so upset and concerned Afghanistan could become their Iran; that they

were thinking of some drastic things to try and put the situation under control, but that following on the loss of the shah in Iran, that it would be this arc of crisis that Brzezinski used to describe; we'd get in even more trouble.

I'll never forget that during this discussion Lord Carrington (and I can't quote him exactly) essentially said, "If only the Soviets could be that stupid. If they're already ruing being involved in Afghanistan, we had our period there. If they take on more responsibility and get more deeply involved, they're just going to be hated. They're going to be in guerrilla warfare. They are going to be bled and their military is going to be doing that. It's going to be worse than Vietnam for them." So he said, "Cy, I hope that's true. And I hope it happens." So that's the fall of '79. Later in the year, towards Christmastime, it does happen, and the thing that always bothered me (I mean, we had reported and the NSC knew and who knows what any president actually gets to see) when the Soviets did invade Afghanistan, or however one wants to describe their brutal, and ultimately ham-handed intervention, President Carter made some public statements like it was a huge surprise and he was just shocked that they could do something like that. And I was thinking, you know, why are you shocked? Everybody had been talking about it and knew they were getting ready to do something. It seemed to me this sense he had that people could be good, that he just always had to be surprised when anybody actually did what sort of looked like bad and evil things. His public statement of being so surprised, was actually I think more discouraging to the American public who actually would like to think that their leaders aren't so surprised, and then meant that the reactions had to be more public than they might have been. But that was one really interesting episode. So you then had that going on. I guess the backdrop of an Iran that was already very troublesome and falling apart.

One of the things that the EUR/RPM NATO Desk did, which doesn't make sense, that bureaucratically would be a surprise to many people, is that EUR/RPM played a clearinghouse function on issues involving the Soviet Union, UN sanctions, and when there were any kind of sanctions. RPM did the master planning and kept track of, and managed, the politics of keeping the whole world in doing sanctions. I mean I can remember meeting with the Australian DCM, and meeting with all these people, and we hadn't got an extra staffer to track how the sanctions were going, and sanctions started becoming a big business at that time. And working on how sanctions are being implemented and who's doing what, was a very difficult task that took way too much of my time.

Q: Looking back, were those sanctions, in your opinion, done because something had to be done in the case of the Iran hostages and the Soviet role in Afghanistan, or were they seen as being effective and carefully tailored and so on?

HOPPER: Well they were all of those things. There was a hope that they might be effective. It's interesting to watch what we're doing now and sort of looking backwards and pinching oneself and reminding yourself that it was in a period where we still believed in a ten-foot tall Soviet Union and that the Warsaw Pact and NATO were, at

best, on equal footing, and there were areas where the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact had advantages, and the world was still poised on a knife edge. There were limits to what the U.S. felt it could do on its own and nobody wanted a military confrontation that might get out of control, so there were more constraints on what the U.S. could do, and sanctions had lots of advantages in that you could try to do these things and not have to do other things. And they always had that advantage.

That same year, we were working to try to keep the alliance together on Iran. There were always concerns that some of the Europeans felt that we had been way too close to the shah anyway; that we had used that relationship to our own commercial advantage – and having the shah leave, in some ways opened up new possibilities for other people to benefit. And before the capture of the embassy and the hostages, there wasn't a lot of support for being as worried about it as we were. We would use the four power talks to try to build a consensus. EUR would work with the Near East Bureau. Some experts groups would meet and try to do things to explain and educate as to why this was so worrisome. Where it sort of spins back to Turkey was the fact of SALT II, in that the administration felt it was very important to get a SALT II agreement and to be able to ratify it. But it was always going to be dicey whether it could be ratified because there had been signals from the very first vote on Paul Warnke as the delegation head that probably the two-thirds hurdle for a treaty is very hard. It was always going to be touch-and-go if there were enough votes for an arms control agreement. And we had lost some monitoring facilities in Iran.

Q: So Turkey then became more important.

HOPPER: Turkey became more important. So while we're trying to bring the allies along to see how important it is, we also needed to buy some time and were trying to figure out if there was some way to reopen a dialogue with the Khomeini government, and to not have it spin totally out of control. One never knows. Life is complicated.

I was in Bonn with the assistant secretary at one of these meetings. We were trying to put together an approach. Henry Precht, who was the office director in NEA and the point person on Iran, was ready to travel to Cairo, or to someplace, to begin a dialogue, and we'd had one of these quad four power meetings. We had finally worked out, especially with the French and Germans, a division of Labour. They were going to be on the team. They had talked to some people and there were some ideas for beginning a dialogue, and we were actually very hopeful that the first steps were ready to be taken, that we'd start moving back towards normal. We had agreed on a timetable and a division of Labour and everything, and let's say that we did this on a Wednesday. We'd send a cable back that night and Precht was getting ready to go. Whatever the exact dates were – it's like the next day – the students invaded the embassy and then barred the door. And I've often wondered that if that had been a month later, would the dialogue have got going and would things have been different.

Q: That would've been in November of 1979 that this happened. That's when the embassy

was taken, and the hostages.

HOPPER: So you had that. We went to the UN; we got sanctions. Then at Christmastime, while we had a very difficult and extended NATO meeting in early December, building on the Iran issues, we in fact stayed in Europe a little longer and had more meetings in London trying to build some agreement. Then you had the Soviets (I guess it was right after Christmas) do the Afghanistan number. And there were just meetings and meetings. It seemed like from Christmas of 1979 through the war against Iraq in Kuwait, that the new norm for people doing foreign affairs in the Department was that in what had been the sort of August vacations or Christmastime, bad things kept happening in all of those rhythm down times, to where the pressure of these jobs just went on and on and on; the hours got longer and longer.

Q: This was happening, the latter part of it, during the 1980 presidential campaign, and of course we had the secretary of state resign in about May of 1980, I think, over the failed hostage rescue effort in Iran. That further complicated it, I'm sure, and added more pressure. Also there was more sensitivity because Carter's reelection prospects were probably widely seen as being diminished somewhat during that year, and he actually did lose in November.

HOPPER: And there was a sense of, at best, somebody who was dogged by bad luck. Yes, it was a very difficult period. And then the new secretary, Senator Edmund Muskie, an experienced man of great respect , came in. At that point, I had been through what seemed like quite a few transitions…

Q: In a short period of time.

HOPPER: Yes. And Secretary Muskie's staff sort of tried to be very reassuring and they sent word that, "This secretary really values your work; has seen it a lot from the Senate and really is a man of voracious intellectual appetite. We know that you have been pushed over time to make things shorter and shorter and shorter. Stop doing that. He'd really like to see all the nuances, all the details. If you think something needs to be in it, put it in rather than take it out." Also the things got longer and longer. And, of course, after about three or four months…

Q: If that.

HOPPER: I heard from somebody. Well, it was really Leon Billings, who was the political executive assistant to Muskie. Billings even got tired of looking at them. But he was just doing the little chits that we talked about before. Senator Muskie rarely read anything longer than a page either. And how could he? There's just so much. But it was kind of comical that we had been led to write more. And letting the stuff all gush out wasn't a very good experiment either.

Q: Now did you stay in the NATO office past the election, into the next transition?

HOPPER: I did. I can't quite remember when George Vest left and Larry Eagleburger took his place.

Q: Well, George Vest left fairly soon after the new administration took over, which would've been in January of '81. I think he may have been there a matter of weeks, possibly even with Secretary Haig. But Eagleburger came fairly quickly, certainly by March, I would say.

HOPPER: And I think he was around even before, and there was a transition that was taking place. Sometimes people forget that one of the great Cold War rivalries was actually an internal one between the European Bureau of Regional Political Affairs and the State Department's Bureau of Political Military Affairs. There was almost as much love lost between them as with the Soviet Union. That rivalry, when you added the NSC in, was really in some ways a very stimulating one because EUR and PM would just compete to get the first draft, and to get credit. And it actually, while it's not always heartening, it led to what I think was some really good work. At times, that motivation of competition, while not terribly positive, does lead to a lot being done.

One of the things I learned was that if you could get the first draft out and have your draft be what everyone was working from, it shows that you were open to changes and you'd cooperate with people, and that invariably, 80% of what was in the first draft was what was done and worked from. So it really was important to have your draft. And EUR, even though a big and complex and cumbersome bureau, was able to move quickly and we often had the first drafts.

One day, when the new teams were in place, (I do forget what the actual issue was), but we were at loggerheads with PM, I went into Assistant Secretary Eagleburger's office and suggested we really needed to have a high-level meeting as the staffs just couldn't resolve something; so he had his secretary, a wonderful woman named Millie Leatherman, call PM and set up a meeting. It was going to be like in an hour.

PM was headed by Richard Burt. Bob Blackwell and Jim Dobbins, I think, were all in PM at that time. Eagleburger's DAS, who was working on NATO things, was a think-tanker named Dave Gompert. So this meeting was going to be Eagleburger, Gompert, and me from EUR, and Burt, Blackwell, and somebody else from PM. And ironically, both sides thought the meeting was taking place in the other person's office, so at about four o'clock one afternoon, the three staffers from each bureau are walking down the halls and we meet outside of our offices walking, and it looked like a scene from high noon or something. And in the end we sort of all jokingly drew guns while walking down the hallways. And it was just that kind of competition.

Eagleburger was really abrasive, but with good humor. He was very energetic and this man of contradictory signals because even at that point, (and as someone sharing some of the same problems) he was overweight, he had an emphysema problem, and still smoked.

So he was using a cane, had a breather and wandered down the halls. But he had so much energy and he was trying to manage so many things. And, this was before NIS, everything was in the bureau.

He had set up a procedure where in his office on the Sixth Floor he had two chairs on both sides of his desk, and for the many internal meetings he would have Millie double-book him and he would have two meetings at once. He would have people from two different offices, working on two different problems, come in and sit with him and he would talk to them about their venue. Somehow for him, it was faster to do two things at once and then if he got a call and a new problem came up, he would sort of look at the two people who were there. Many times, I'd be sitting there and he'd get a call and say, "Bob, that was the NSC calling. Could you go down to Southern Europe and explain to them that they need to do this?" So then you'd go out of your meeting and go to the special assistant or go to the staff assistants and tell them what you were doing, then figure it out and get word back to the action officers. It was just this incredible way to do many things at once.

On a much less important area, one of the great innovations that Eagleburger made, was that he was the first person I knew about who brought in from home a top of the line personal stereo system that he had in his office and had on in the background. Sometimes in a meeting with internal staff people, if he felt you had made your point and you hadn't quite gotten the point that the meeting was over, he would just turn around and turn up the volume on this stereo. You'd say, "Okay, boss, I guess we'll move on to something else now." But after that, lots of people started bringing in stereos and things, and the State Department became a more musical place.

Q: I don't remember that.

One thing we should probably emphasize is that the office where you were, the NATO office, RPM was directly across the hall from the assistant secretary's office. So you had access, you were the first…

HOPPER: Propinquity is very important. The other thing is, because of these quad talks and because the assistant secretary for European Affairs functioned at one level, as the equivalent of the sort of political director and went to these meetings where more things were discussed, the office I was in, in RPM, was used to staff that. So in some ways I was the special assistant to the assistant secretary for these other issues. And I was able to do that, just dropping in. It was like I was almost in the suite.

Q: And those issues really would cover the globe. The Middle East, the Far East…

HOPPER: Nicaragua, El Salvador, and just everything. It was really educational to work with so much of the government on all of these things.

Q: Now Larry Eagleburger did not stay in the European Bureau on this occasion for very

long. I think he became undersecretary for political affairs in the summer of '81; maybe even as early as July.

HOPPER: In July, he was still in RPM. He went up, and in fact, he personally kept the portfolio as political director and kept going to some of those meetings. Did Rick Burt come immediately and take his place, or did Allen Holmes take his place for a little while?

Q: Allen was the senior deputy, and may have been acting, but I don't think he was ever actually named.

HOPPER: Right, but Eagleburger kept going to some of the meetings. As I'd mentioned before – that sort of personnel issues and negotiating for jobs. I can remember we were driving to one of the meetings in Bonn and Secretary Eagleburger said, "You know, Bob, jeez, you're getting to the end of your run here and you've done a wonderful job. I'd like to know what you would like to be considered for, and we'll see what we can do." I had suspected at some point he was going to ask me that, and I had checked around and there was an opening coming up as the political chief in Lisbon, and the timing would work out. So I told him that I'd like to be chief of the political section in Lisbon. He said, "Oh that would be great. That's perfect. We should be able to deliver that. Consider it done. That's great." Yay, okay. So I went on moving ahead and I put that on my bid list and everything, and then about two months later, one day Tom Price, who was one of his special assistants, and the one who worried about personnel issues, came down to my office and sort of shut the door. And you never wanted doors to be shut.

It was like a scene out of a Godfather movie. Tom, who was a very droll and amusing guy, said, "Bob, the boss asks if he can be released from his promise." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Well, he had promised you that you could be political section head in Lisbon, and a number of personnel issues have come up and there have to be some changes in that embassy. There has to be a new DCM. A lot of things have happened and he asked would you please release him from his promise?" Of course, you know, sure, whatever. "But don't worry. Things will work out." But it was interesting; for all the talk that things will work out, basically he wasn't doing that anymore. I wasn't as close to him. So I ended up taking a congressional fellowship and went up to the Hill (Capitol Hill) for a year, and it turned out that being away from the Department only twenty blocks was far enough that working on an assignment was much harder. In the end it all turned out very well and I was pleased, but you never know what would've happened if I'd actually gone.

Q: To Lisbon?

HOPPER: To Lisbon as the head of the political section that summer. I would've followed a different path. Probably I'd still be sitting here with you today talking about it.

Q: Well I certainly hope so, but that is something to think back on; things that happened

and didn't happen that might have otherwise.

Before you leave the NATO office, I guess I have two questions. One, what, if anything, would you want to say about Secretary Al Haig in this early period of the Reagan administration? And secondly, is there anything else that we ought to cover about that job?

HOPPER: One, the quality of people in the European Bureau, and working in RPM, was just astounding: the amount of work that they did, and their selflessness. And the good spirits was fun. This team that had gone off for a long time; the NATO-RPM people always felt like they needed to band together and were sort of wonderful people, and help one another. That was interesting.

When Secretary Haig came in, I had worked a bit with him through Nimetz on the southern flank issues, so I was not a face that was totally unfamiliar to him. Woody Goldberg – I think that was his name – was his assistant. I worked with him quite a bit. He was a very approachable, wonderful fellow. I guess the one ministerial meeting, at least, that I went to with Haig, was in Rome, and one of the issues that was coming up was a question which involved elections in Zimbabwe. It was an elections issue pushing for democracy, and at one of the meetings some of the Europeans were interestingly and properly pushing the importance of elections. Secretary Haig – I don't know if he coined the phrase – but it was fine if you said, "Well sure, we want free elections, but there should be one man, one vote, but not just one time. And we have to be careful and not set things up to where we just say, 'Yay, yay, you had an election,' and totally bless things just based on one election." I was impressed. That was a judgment that it was sometimes hard to implement. It was sort of easy to sort of set up these hurdles or just do an election and then you judge it as okay or not, and move on. I always felt that there was a great deal of wisdom to the "life goes on" intention.

Q: He was much more involved than just an election?

HOPPER: Yes. And he was actually an experienced, bright guy, but he just had these problems of the stuff that came up after President Reagan was shot, of those doubts of who's in charge and the concerns. Really there was a friction and a tension in dealing internally that you could sense from the very beginning. So he left very soon and Secretary Shultz came in.

Q: But I think by then you were a congressional fellow.

HOPPER: Right.

Q: Where were you working and what were you doing?

HOPPER: It was a very humbling experience. The American Political Science Association ran this part of the program and it was one where you were free; you got six

weeks of training on how the Congress works, and then you went up and negotiated your own job. And I was pretty cocky. I thought, jeez, I'm free. I have all these experiences. This should be pretty easy to get an interesting job.

I did not want to work for one of the foreign affairs committees or for somebody with a known foreign policy record. I wanted to find somebody who was more involved in domestic things and figure out how foreign affairs issues impact a domestic based politician. And somebody had told me about this fellow named Al Swift from the state of Washington, and I went around and I interviewed with him and his staff, and at first they were so suspicious. But finally I really said, "Look, I don't need a special office. I'm happy just to be treated like every other staffer," and so they finally agreed and gave me a chance. And it turned out that for them (I was just barely in my late 30s) I was too old; I was too experienced; I was too highly paid. They were worried that I was going to want too much, that I was going to be high maintenance. It turns out that the issue was getting face time with the congressman; there wasn't enough to go around and the other staffers were really worried that, having some access, I'd dominate the congressman and cut into their time. And then the two senior people in the office were worried that I would get the congressman involved in foreign affairs too much, and that then I'd leave and they'd end up having to permanently staff to deal with the new interest. But I said, "No, that's not my goal. I actually want to help on domestic things," and I ended up taking on a portfolio of being the job promotion person in the office and the backstop.

The other thing I really wanted to do had to do with telecommunications: this is from my guilt on the subject. Swift was one of the leading members on the telecommunications subcommittee of the Commerce committee that was chaired, ironically at that time, by a very tall and intelligent Democrat from Colorado called Tim Wirth. And so I got to know Wirth and work with his office.

One of the interesting things was that the State Department made it very clear to all of the fellows that, "There's a lot of suspicion on the Hill that we use you as spies," and that "Please, during the year while you're up there, just don't worry about that. You work for the congressmen. You do what they want. We don't want you feeling that you have to squeal on them if you hear about things. You're working for them." We can get back to this later when I'm in my congressional relations period, but that whole philosophy, while in some ways good, has spawned into State Department people who routinely go up and work on the Hill and use that freedom to try and quickly implement their own views on how the State Department should be reformed and changed.

One of the things I saw, in working for Swift on telecommunications, was that in parts of our Cuba policy we were pushing very hard on some telecommunications things. The Castro government had figured out a way to broadcast their radio programs on a frequency that would knock out three or four important U.S. radio stations; not just in their immediate areas, but in their nationwide coverage. There were these negotiations between the State Department and the telecommunications subcommittee on what to do about Radio Marti. And watching it from the outside, the administration (it wasn't just

the State Department) was pretty brusque and didn't appreciate that there was some expertise on these committees on telecommunications issues. And the word on the street from the telecommunications community and the national broadcasters was that when they raised their concerns about Radio Marti, an administration official from the Defense Department told them, "Well don't worry. If Castro blocks or interferes in any way with your signals, we'll bomb the things and put out those things and you'll be back in business." And these people came running to the Democrats on the committee and said, "Oh my god, we don't want to be the cause of World War III. We can get around it." So there were these interesting tensions on…[Tape 6, Side B]

Q: Okay, I think, Bob, you were talking about Radio Marti and the discussions between Congressman Tim Wirth and Dante Fascell about Radio Marti, right?

HOPPER: So there were these meetings, interactions with the staff, and after a while I felt kind of caught in the middle because I wasn't very pleased with the way the Department was pushing. And I talked to Fascell's staff and then I did actually contact one of the key people in ARA who I knew and sort of said, "What's going on here?" and sort of got word back. Tom Enders was assistant secretary at this point. "This is very complicated. We're trying to keep some middle ground options open. We can appreciate how this might not look like the very best approach in the world, but this is really pretty moderate and this is keeping things going. We can assure you that this is one where Fascell also is a player."

The bottom line was that Fascell helped find an approach that was mostly what the administration wanted, but calmed everybody down. And they went ahead with Radio Marti and we didn't have to bomb any transmitters. But watching these people play was fascinating, and watching Tim Wirth work was really an education. He had figured out that the telecommunications issues were very important and it was at the period when there was pressure from the Hill to break up AT&T, and Wirth was in charge of that project. Watching him negotiate that, and play was very interesting. He wasn't afraid. AT&T could line up huge interests and it was sort of like everybody owned AT&T stocks, so it was very hard, but he kept finding players to go along with him.

The other issues that was brewing on the telecommunications front were the rise of cable TV, the role of satellites, and the creation of CNN (Cable News Network) and the role of Ted Turner. At one stage, while I was there, Chairman Wirth organized a hearing on CNN and had Ted Turner as the witness, and it got extensive coverage. And watching these two titans (they were about the same age and very similar personalities) go at one another was interesting. But Ted Turner was the first witness I had seen who was not intimidated at all by Tim Wirth and his approach; just talked to him in a very superior way, was very confident and answered everything. There wasn't any sense of, "I'm worried about what you might do." In the end, Wirth went away and worked on other things because it was clear that, at best, you could have a standoff with him. And then always later watching both the careers of Wirth and Ted Turner; that was interesting. Then later when Wirth comes to the State Department; again I was somebody who had

known him before.

I was able to travel with Representative Swift out to his Puget Sound District twice, and he had just been redistricted as part of the '80s census and this was in '81. He had a huge new territory and so I did the first trip to this new Puget Sound territory and watching him sort of reach out to the mayors and the school boards and all the people he had to meet with was fascinating.

Q: Who he hadn't known before this?

HOPPER: Yes. He'd only known a little bit about them in state politics, but now they were his people; he had to reach out to them; whereas the ones who had always been in his home district he was very comfortable with. But it was like doing foreign affairs going to this new district; he had to go across the Puget Sound on a ferry and rent a car and drive long distances. It was like going to a foreign country. He was sort of like Clark Clifford; he had a staple of two or three really good stories that he told at almost every meeting and he'd just keep using his. He was very comfortable with them. He could figure out how to lead into them and if they started going really stale, he'd keep working in some new ones.

I always noticed that, when I and other Foreign Service Officers would write speeches or would give presentations, there was an inordinate desire to have things always be new, never give the same speech twice. And after a while I started thinking, this is not very efficient. You're talking to different people and different groups; if you have a good message, why not use the same message over and over again? And I watched skilled politicians and that's what they would do. It was very efficient and then they knew what their message was. And so I watched him skillfully doing that. But one of the things that I observed on trips with him, and that later was confirmed on a lot of CODELS was that there's just a personality difference between politicians and Foreign Service Officers. There was a wonderful article done on the military, the Foreign Service, and personality types. In some ways, Foreign Service Officers do have more analytical and more introverted personality types than one would imagine, but they're also curious about other cultures and are sort of forced in their jobs to go out and interact with, and talk to, and generally meet people. But it's exhausting for them and they put limits around it. And when they have options, they sit down and read a book, or they'll go back in a cocoon and recharge their batteries reading and thinking. Politicians generally (this is a gross generalization) actually enjoy talking to people, hate quiet moments, sitting around by themselves and reading a book when there's somebody you could talk to. On these trips, when the meetings were over, the congressmen and senior staff would find a club or a bar or a restaurant – someplace where there would be people – they'd go and they would talk to people until they were kicked out. Two in the morning or whatever, they'd finally go back to the hotel and eventually go to sleep. And I just found over time that that was really true of political types; that they loved to talk. On CODELS and things they would find the Foreign Service people to be sort of standoffish and superior, and not want to talk to them about everything, and it was just, in some ways, different needs and personality

types.

Talking about this made me remember that when the Portugal job fell apart and I decided to pursue the congressional fellowship, it was a moment in time when the personnel policy was that if you went on something like the congressional fellowship it was considered long-term training and you were supposed to have a linked onward assignment. So I had thought since the Portugal thing wasn't going to come through, well, in Embassy Paris there's a POL/MIL section, and in traveling there a lot I had gotten to know Craig Johnston very well, who headed the POL/MIL section. He was going to leave at about the right time down the road so I talked to Craig, and Warren Zimmerman may have been in Paris at that point, too, and I worked out this deal where I was the EUR candidate. So when I got the congressional fellowship job I was paneled at the same time to Paris. And somehow AFSA (American Foreign Service Association) found out about it and I think there had been some discomfort with the linked assignments anyway, but they used my assignment as an example of how perverted this process was and that yes, it was important for people who agreed to take hard languages to have onward assignments, but that this was a perverse travesty and that the congressional fellowship was an award and a break and an honor, and so tying it to an onward assignment to Paris was just grotesque and unfair. And they actually raised one of these institutional grievances and the Department backed off and undid my assignment to Paris and said, "Well, we'll see. You can compete for that later." Later it wasn't available. The good side is that it cemented my relationship with Craig Johnston, which continued later.

I've had a career where, with some of these little innovations, I've seen the downside of the personnel system, but it was kind of fun.

Q: It worked out?

HOPPER: Yes, it worked out.

Q: Before we leave Congressman Swift's office, let me ask a little bit more. You said you also worked on trade issues for him. That district in Puget Sound, Washington certainly was very international trade oriented I would think - the Pacific Rim, lots of trade with Japan and Korea and the Far East.

HOPPER: It had three major elements of trade: it had trade with Canada with a complicated cross-border relationship that was sort of hard to get a handle on; it had Boeing and these huge high-ticket export deals; and then in the Puget Sound area it had timber, where the Japanese were making inroads and that was very complicated. All of them had a very complicated Labour component.

When I did the first trip, Boeing had just announced some major cutbacks and layoffs and there were maybe going to be 1,700 union employees let go. Swift was going to meet with the electricians and whatever the appropriate craft union was. I said to him, "This is going to be really difficult." And we're fine. He said, "Bob, no it isn't. It's going to be a

pleasant, wonderful meeting." I said, "How can it be?" He said, "I'm not going to tell you that, but you just watch and take part and we'll talk about it tonight when we're going over the day and see if you can figure out what happened." So we go, he makes his talk, the issue of lost jobs kind of barely comes up; it's just a nice meeting. We were back at the hotel bar and I said, "Okay, Ed, you were utterly right. You were able to tell all your stories, it ran really well. I don't get it. What's the secret?" He said, "Well, one of the interesting and hidden, sort of unknown sides of most of the trade union world is that that union is associated with Boeing; to be a member of that union you have to have a job with Boeing. So the people who lost their jobs are no longer in the union. So the people you met tonight were the people who are still working for Boeing, and so for them Boeing made the right decisions, they let the right people go, and they're just holding on. But you met the happy, satisfied people." One of the problems, and that the unions know is a problem for them, is how do they represent the people who don't have jobs. And that was a surprise. I was a political scientist; I would've thought I would have understood that, but I didn't.

And then on the timber side, one of the big issues was whether this sort of log could be sent to Japan, be processed there and sent back.

Q: As lumber?

HOPPER: As lumber. And one of the problems was that the timber mills in the Northwest were pretty old, and had not had much capital investment since before World War II. The Japanese had recently installed much better computer operated saws that could cut to a fineness that the U.S. mills couldn't do. This complex interaction with the Japanese was the result of what the Japanese companies and mills had mastered through technology; as a result of which they were simply requiring in contracts that the lumber be cut to certain very exact specifications. It wasn't that the Japanese were saying the U.S. couldn't provide cut lumber; the U.S. mills couldn't meet the requirements and these mills didn't want to have to invest as the Japanese market wasn't quite big enough. For the entire twentieth century, the Northwest and the limber industry in Puget Sound in the state of Washington was really tied to suburban subdivisions in Los Angeles. When houses were being built in LA, Puget Sound could not have cared less whether Japan was buying or selling or whatever they were doing. It was only in the down periods that Puget Sound scrambled and wanted to sell timber other places; and because of that we weren't a really reliable supplier. The way we cut two-by-fours and framing is more than anyone would want to know, but the standards required to meet the construction business on the West Coast were so much lower than in other places that there was no need to tool up. So we'd resist and then complain in the down periods that we couldn't sell to other places, and that became a problem.

With Canada, it was just sort of like Mexico; it was just these little niggling issues none of them very important. Swift's district ran right up to Vancouver and the Canadian border and he was always trying to figure out, "Should I be more involved in Canadian things? What would it mean? What is the foreign angle that affects me and my district?" I

arranged for a planning meeting at the Bellingham Yacht Club; I had the consul general and the deputy consul general from Vancouver come down. This planning session with Congressman Swift was very good, but it was really just talking about things for ninety minutes over breakfast. There really wasn't that much to do. They were just happy to know they had our people now, knew that they could call Swift's office, and Swift put a face to these people. But the issues really weren't that big. I did get Swift involved a little and there was a coalition building, sort of a border caucus, and Swift played a little role in it, but not very much.

Q: Did he do foreign travel at all while you were there?

HOPPER: No.

Q: And so you didn't go anywhere?

HOPPER: No. I did not go on any trips with him. It turned out, after I got to know him better, that he had been hesitant to hire me because he had had a bad experience with the State Department. He had had a constituent who was kidnapped in South America and he felt that the Department had not been forthcoming; that our sort of "no negotiations" policy – we didn't communicate that somehow we sort of saw talking to the constituent or the congressman about the case was like negotiating too, because they had things that they wanted. It was very negative. He thought that the whole State Department must be uncommunicative and like that. He was pleased to learn that no, we could talk about issues. He did a very nice letter to the secretary about me and how he was willing to give the State Department a second chance. I felt good about doing that.

Q: OK, anything else we ought to cover about that year; 1981 to '82?

HOPPER: Ah, the Falklands War broke out while I was working for Swift and he was very curious about that. Was that when Haig left, or had Haig already gone?

Q: I think he was still there until probably early '82 maybe.

HOPPER: Swift was puzzled by what looked like Jeane Kirkpatrick and some of the Department seen almost apologizing for the Argentines, and wondered what was up. We'd talk about that a bit. During that period I ended up getting an assignment to London, where one of the things I was going to work on was the Falklands and Central America and South America issues. It had been useful to see how some on the Hill saw it.

Q: So you went to London in the summer of 1982 to work on those topics and others. You did it without language training, of course. That was a good assignment. That was not an easy assignment to get either, I assume.

HOPPER: It was a wonderful assignment. As I was deep into the congressional fellowship assignment, I still didn't have a job and I was sitting up on the Hill. I might as

well have been in Kathmandu as far as knowing what was going on, but I would sort of go over to the Department every once in a while. I guess the head of RPM at that time was the late Charlie Thomas who was a wonderful fellow who had been the number two officer from my junior officer class on the staff at FSI. So I had known him. I talked to him, and I talked to people. I had friends and said, "Well what's coming up? I'd really like to…" You know, here are these things. "Is Paris going to work out?" "No, that's not going to work out." I said, but you know what? Charlie told me that Rick Melton, who was the deputy chief of the political section in London, was probably going to Uruguay as DCM, and that was coming up and it had to happen pretty quickly. So there was probably going to be an opening in the summer. And I knew Ed Streator who was the DCM, and if I planned things right maybe I could get that opening as the deputy chief of the political section. So I wrote Streator. And, actually, Roger Harrison who I had worked with in RPM, was the POL/MIL officer in London. Long story short, I got a lot of backing, but what London was going to do was that Roger was going to move up and become the deputy chief of the political section, but he did not want to do Melton's portfolio; he wanted to keep his POL/MIL things and so we worked out this deal where I got Melton's portfolio, but Roger became the deputy.

Q: He got the title?

HOPPER: Yes. And he had the responsibility of sort of being the backstop supervisor for a large section. So I ended up going out in the summer of '82 and my responsibilities were going to be primarily – the first thing was sort of working with the Labour Party, and then the second thing would be Latin America and the Caribbean, and then I also was screened to do Western Europe, Southern Europe, and it turned out the Socialist International and the Commonwealth. There were a lot of things; it was wonderful.

Q: Well, let's see. Who was political counselor then when you got there?

HOPPER: When I arrived the political counselor was Dick McCormick. Dick had been in policy planning partly doing speeches for Kissinger, and then he stayed on and was sort of the East/West and NATO person on the SP staff (Policy Planning Staff) at the beginning with Tony Lake, so I had worked with him then and knew him. By today's standards, it was a big section. Roger Harrison was the deputy and Roger did almost exclusively NATO affairs, and was really busy doing the cruise missile issues and the deployment. It was just a huge job. That summer, Bob Frasier arrived the same time I did. Bob was the Africa watcher and did the social Democrats and the Liberals and the internal side. London had a rather relatively unique approach where a number of the officers had both internal and external responsibilities. Paul Schlamm who then went back to SE, who had been and worked on it before, and whom I had known at some point working on Greece/Turkey/Cyprus things, was in the political section doing the Conservative Party and Northern Ireland. Jim Hooper was the NEA watcher and he did not have any internal responsibilities. Casper Weinberger's office, the secretary of defense, decided that, given the upcoming cruise missile and all the defense issues, he needed somebody on the political section staff, so we ended up getting Paul Cassidy, a civil servant from the office

of the secretary of defense. He came that summer also, to join the staff. There was a junior officer doing human rights and a zillion other things and a person that shared responsibilities who actually was an analyst from another agency. And we had a separate Labour attaché who was supervised by the political counselor, but was sort of a co-equal and might've even outranked McCormick. There was a guy named Roger Schrader when I arrived, a wonderful fellow. We had a suite and it worked out that I did the Labour Party, he did the Labour movement, and we had an FSN who worked for us on those issues.

Q: Why don't you talk a little bit more then about your role vis a vis the Labour Party. Were they in opposition at the time?

HOPPER: Yes. It was really an interesting period in that you had the Reagan administration and the Thatcher government, and we had really close relationships with the conservative government – very constructive, very close, very warm. I always felt sorry for the two people who did the Conservative Party in the political section while I was there; those were really hard jobs because very senior important people had the relationships with the ministers and the offices. The DCM would go and meet with the Number 10 Downing political staff, and the ambassador would try to meet with people. It's just there wasn't much room to do very much.

Perversely, the Labour Party was in the doldrums; they had just had their split with David Owen quitting and forming the Social Democrats. There were people speculating that the alliance between the Social Democrats and the Liberals was going to kill the Labour Party and they were going to die and that maybe we should just ignore them. So I was going out at that time to be the principal embassy contact with this group that was seen as the "loony left." I had to workout how to deal with them, so I had talked to people. I had used the tail-end of my period with the Congress to start talking to some people on the different democratic staff committees to think about how to manage this. When I got to London and started talking to people, my sense of how politics worked was that the Labour Party had a long history, that Britain was not a mainland European country, that the social democratic model that David Owen was trying to implement was trying to blend German and American ideas together around his personality. To me it seemed there was a good chance that it wasn't going to really work, and that the Labour Party had the Trade Union movement behind it; had constituents and tradition, and that in some ways David Owen, who had a very bright and aggressive American wife, was sort of seen as a betrayer and a troublemaker, and it just kind of very quickly concluded that no matter how bad the Labour Party was, whenever the Tories wore out their welcome with the British public, it was Labour that would come back – no one else – and that no matter how good Thatcher was, no matter how competent, no matter how much in tune with the modern world – Britain was a democracy, Britain had a media – and they would get bored, she would make mistakes; at some point there would be a transition. So I concluded that my job should be to help identify moderate up-and-coming Labour people, put them in touch with the U.S. political scene – and that it didn't have to be done right away; there was plenty of time and that this could be a long-term project. So I started

working with staffers and with young MPs, and I really had this long-term plan of getting them back in touch with NATO, helping them build relations with the democratic party, and identify like-minded people having the same problems. It was interesting. I found that you could have a plan. In London, it was clear from the day I arrived that it was a place where I would want to extend and I sort of viewed that I had four years there to work on this plan, and so that's what I did.

Q: Now was this something that you did pretty much on your own, or was this something that you were encouraged to do – to think in these terms – by others up the line in the embassy and in Washington, or as long as you didn't rock the boat and in terms of the good relationship with the Thatcher government that it was alright as long as it was done very quietly and in the background?

HOPPER: Yes. It's the latter. We never did a cable or a memo to the Department on our grand plan for rebuilding the Labour Party, or I never talked with too many people in any coherent grand way what my plan was. I just kept doing it. The ambassador would host one event a year in his home, Winfield House, for the Labour Party. That was sort of a pro forma with the senior people. I made sure that the ambassador would go to the Labour Party annual conference and I would get him to host a couple of dinners and lunches for maybe one or two nights. And those I would use as sort of pinnacle events. I'd use the DCM. The DCM traditionally in London had a very good chef, liked doing meals, and was a place people wanted to come. So I'd maybe be able to do four of those a year. I figured out there would be enough visitors that I could take them to see people. But I never did an explicit plan. I'd talked to McCormick and other people; people knew what I was doing and didn't disagree with it.

Every once in a while, like before the Labour Party conference, I would try to do a cable that would set out what we were doing. There was a hope that they weren't quite as bad, and all of that stuff, it gets, "No, no, no. They're awful. Washington will think we're crazy. Just say how bad they are and keep it real minimal." So in the end that's what would happen. But I had all these meetings. I figured out how to use USIA's international visitor program, and there were regional ones to NATO and there were the ones to the U.S. And I found key staffers and junior MPs to send.

Q: Well, I have to ask this question. Now, we're twenty years on; this is 1982, we're 2002. Labour is now in power, in government in London. Can we see any impact of what you did twenty years ago, or almost twenty years?

HOPPER: Oh, yes.

Q: Good.

HOPPER: George Robertson was one of my closest contacts and he was just a junior MP from a pretty safe district who was not taken seriously by many people in his party because he was sort of a defense intellectual. I had him meet with many people and I sent

him to the U.S. and I worked with him and talked with him a lot, and considered him a good friend.

Tony Blair I picked for an international visitor's program, and sent him to the U.S. I worked with Gordon Brown, who is the chancellor of the exchequer, was from Scotland. It was clear that he had a seat he could keep for a long time, but he was also a pretty undisciplined young fellow. I had him go to the democratic convention in San Francisco, kept using him a lot. I was very close to a wonderful, wonderful fellow in Scotland who for a while was the deputy leader of the Labour Party, then was the head after Neil Kinnock for a little bit, and then had a heart attack and died. It's so awful I can't remember his name right now [John Smith]. But he was wonderful and I worked with his staff and I stayed very close to him. And there were rumors that his wife was anti-American and hated the U.S. And I said, "If you don't meet with her, how do you know that?" "Well there are rumors about her," and I said, "Well I've talked to her and she has strong views, but no stronger than a lot of our wives. She's not the MP."

I finagled an invitation to go spend a long four day weekend in Scotland with John Smith. We went up to Fort Williams in Scotland to climb Ben Nevis, which is maybe the tallest mountain in the United Kingdom. It was like 3,700 feet and I said, "Jeez, I've been to the Rockies." There's a club that for climbing these 3,000 foot peaks, you collect them – I thought what a bunch of wusses. What's so big about 3,000 feet? What I didn't realize is that, in Scotland, they're going from sea-level. You know, they were going from nothing to 3,000. Where you go to the Rockies you're sort of over a mile high and a lot of the peaks aren't 3,000 feet over where you're starting from. So it was a bigger hurdle than I'd thought. I'd never climbed a mountain. And it was a wonderful event. Families, it was about twelve of us, wives and everything, and we climbed this peak, took this ratty little train up to Fort William, were in the same hotel, drank together. It was just wonderful. And I was so lucky that that weekend it was like eighty degrees; it was the hottest it had ever been at Fort William. And so they were all kind of desperate and it didn't seem that hot to me, so it sort of put us on an equal footing.

But I found that if you would go with the Labour Party people to their districts and meet them on their home territory and be nice to their constituents, that they would think, "Wow, what a human person you are, and maybe this isn't just a capitalist land of Ronald Reagan and the plutocrats." So I was also able to get them to think, "No, we can work with the U.S." It was interesting. I actually had a plan and implemented it bit by bit. Neil Kinnock had a temper, but was a thoughtful person who actually saw the dangers and risks of communism very clearly even though he was like many Europeans – what might be called left-wingers by the U.S. And he was okay. Actually, at one point, as I was leaving London four years later, Kinnock promised me that when he became prime minister he would invite me to his first public event, but that never happened.

Q: So he didn't have to honor that commitment

HOPPER: Right. But over the four years I just constantly built with them. I stumbled on

it, but the most wonderful thing which helped me in the long run, and also the State Department, was my decision to try to find similar middle-of-the-road U.S. Democrats who were patient enough to have a relationship with the Labour Party and who would see them when they came in; that worked out really well. A number of the Democrats were about a year ahead of the Labour Party on the same curve of having been in the wilderness, and a little bit toying with strange ideas and sort of coming back to the center. It was interesting. I used Republicans as well; I would put the Labour Party people in touch with middle-of-the-road Republicans and get the idea across that you can work a little bit across party lines. Because of this plan and my decision to use visiting U.S. politicians, in the end it meant that, sort of by default, I became the person in the embassy who was organizing and taking care of many of the high-level political visitors from the U.S. So that sort of got added to my portfolio.

Q: Why don't we stop at this point and pick up next time?

HOPPER: Okay. [Tape 7, Side A]

Q: Bob, last time we were talking about your assignment from 1982 to '86 in the political section at the embassy in London. You had talked about a number of visitors that you sent to the United States and some of the other work that you were doing, especially with the Labour Party. I think at the end of our session you wanted to talk just a little bit about U.S. visitors to London, particularly some that were effective – high congressional delegations or others. I don't know to what extent we really talked about that.

HOPPER: For the record, I'd like to go back. The name of the one senior Labour Party leaders who invited me up to Scotland; he had the really difficult, difficult name of John Smith.

Q: That's why you couldn't remember?

HOPPER: Yes. *(laughs)*

One thing I was thinking about was how I built my relations with the Labour Party. One thing I'd like to go back to is to fill in a little bit more on how I started with staff people, and having worked in the Congress and seeing the role of staff, and knowing this is sort of trying to just jump right in. Trying to see really senior people didn't seem right, so I did some research and found some staff people who had very good reputations and started building with them.

I also had the problem that the Labour Party had an international section and they actually had their own senior staff person in charge of international relations. That person at the time had personality problems, was very difficult, and was actually quite anti-American. So there were problems of how to deal with the international secretary, and I concluded that it would be counterproductive to appear to not be meeting with her, but that I couldn't really get anywhere. So I did the minimum; I went and paid my calls. I asked her

to set up a meeting with the executive director of the Party and things went very slowly and she really didn't do it, but I didn't totally piss her off. But I also realized that there was no value in meeting with her a lot. It's sort of the first example of something I later came to call a "seed and weed" contact plan, where you only have so much time, so you'd have to think carefully. And there would be some people who maybe were great for another officer or just didn't know enough anymore, and you had to weed them out, but you had to weed them out nicely because you never knew if they'd bounce back or you'd need them. I realized later that that was a wise approach; that you couldn't just throw people away, but you had to use them less.

Q: The other problem that I think you may talk about later on is sort of the "gate-keeper," whether it's the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and insists that all contact be through it, or perhaps this international secretary of the Labour Party – the opposition party at the time. But you found a way to get around that, if that was a problem.

HOPPER: I did and it was building up multiple contacts. But when I started meeting with staffers, I discovered one fellow who, in my first talk with him, it became clear that he was one of the leading opinion pollsters in the world. He was relatively young; I'd say he was thirty-five at the time. He was the adviser to one of the two Labour Party people and he worked for ITN, the major TV network. He was their public opinion polling expert. Through him, I got to meet an American Democrat who was an advertising executive who had lived in London for twenty years; who was actually *the* opinion pollster for the Labour Party and for the Social Democrats in Germany, I believe – and coordinated with the Democrats in the U.S. And through him I was able to learn. I did tutorials with him and tried to learn about how this opinion polling was done. And then I'd make sure that Americans visiting who cared about polling, would go and meet him. Then, through the pollster I met another American in London who was a national committeeman for the Democratic Party and had been a campaign director. He was also a lawyer who was well-connected. And I thought Britain is probably unique in just the day to day interconnections between Americans and Brits that you can use positively in your work. So I worked through this one American and his wife; they helped me keep my connections to the Democratic Party. They were giving me great lists of people they were in touch with and that added really quickly to my contact lists. And I would help them in that I would sometimes send visitors through to have them meet with them – a few people they didn't know. So that was just a way to do the contact work. I think even to visitors that's a hole.

The hardest part was just doing the plans, because visits would cancel and you'd get frustrated sometimes that you'd do work and then they would go away. After a while I always took the attitude that I never wished a visit away. I noticed that sometimes I'd say, "Well, I hope they cancel." Once I'd done the work, I really wanted them to come and finish. So I always projected, once we got going, that I wanted them to come.

Q: Were most of your visitors serious in the sense that they had people who they wanted to talk with, things they wanted to talk about, or were they more interested in the theater

and shopping?

HOPPER: They wanted all of it. London was a jet-lag stop, and it was easy. Essentially, the world sort of divided into those people who wanted to stop in Paris, and those who wanted to stop in London. This was before so many of the flights went to Frankfurt. TWA (Trans World Atlantic) still had a daily flight to Paris, so you could do a Paris overnight or a London overnight. Really, people divided on which one they wanted to do, but frequently if the travelers stopped in London on the way in and were going to Africa or going to the Middle East, going anywhere else, they would then do Paris as their last jet-lag stop on the way back. So we saw a lot of the visitors.

And then the question also was going to the airport. I had colleagues who just hated going to the airport, and I decided I'm going to do this a lot and I got to know the administrative section people well and I actually had them take me around to the airport and introduce me to people and show me how they did it. I would always get the special embassy pass to the airport and go up. In those days, even though there were a lot of security problems in London and elsewhere, the American Embassy had a special pass that we could get. We could literally get plane-side if we had to. So I would always meet people right at the end of the gateway and then take them through special diplomatic lines and they always loved it. They were getting a little better treatment, though, in fact, things would generally go so smooth for any kind of American visitor that you didn't need to do that. But it was easier to find them right when they're coming off the plane (it only had one place to be coming from) than to wait and try to find them elsewhere in the airport.

Q: Was this still a period that there was a special visitors unit in the embassy in London?

HOPPER: Yes. There was a woman who had been doing it almost since World War II, and was still there. She was very good at providing services for senior people. She bothered some people because she was really a rank-has-its-privilege kind of person. I just went with the flow and would always make sure she thought my visitors had rank and were important, and that office was always wonderful to me. It continued when I visited there a lot later with congressional visits. I was able to use them and just kept it going. But I would help them, too.

That was interesting that you had that office. Once again, Paris had exactly the same kind of office, but I visited Embassy Paris quite a bit and it was so amazing that the two embassies, London and Paris, were alike in very many ways – about the same size; did about the same things; buildings about the same size; located in relatively similar parts of the cities – and yet the two embassies operated very differently and it was because you pick up the personalities of the country and the styles of the officials. And yet, the more I thought about it, we got exactly the same things done, in slightly different ways. But they were just these prototypical big embassies in big complex countries, and we would take on the flavor of the societies.

Q: And Rome of course was yet another, but we've talked about that already.

HOPPER: And in Rome some took on the character of having trouble getting the things done sometimes.

Q: OK, anything else we ought to talk about in terms of either the domestic political reporting or visits, or should we go on maybe to some of your external responsibilities?

HOPPER: Why don't we move to the external reporting things which were a co-equal part of what I did. What was fascinating also was that to make things work in London, we had both formal and informal backstopping responsibilities and so in addition to my normal responsibilities on the international side of the western hemisphere, parts of Europe and the Socialist international, I was also the backstop for the Middle East watcher. I wasn't originally. His name was Jim Hooper and I was "Hopper" and we found that we got one another's phone calls all the time anyway, and so we went and shifted the portfolios and decided since we'd get one another's calls, rather than have to send them back, why don't we just backstop one another. So we did that and then the second summer that I was there, in 1983, Jim Hooper went on Home Leave and so I was doing the Middle East during the summer. And that's when the Israeli/Lebanon War went crazy.

The State Department decided that to just avoid an incredible catastrophe, we might need to help evacuate the PLO from Lebanon. I forget how it came up, but it was decided that the British ship people who had helped move shipping to the Falklands were the very best people in the world at magically finding people who would take on dangerous projects. I was asked to reconnect with them. We had worked a bit with them during the Falklands War and I found some notes from Rick Melton or somebody, called these guys at the Baltic Mercantile Exchange, went down, and visited them. At first I told this Melton blah, blah, blah and didn't get too specific, but said, you know, we might need to find some shipping in the eastern Mediterranean, and would they be willing to help. And they wanted a call from the Foreign Ministry or from somebody that could really say that this was official, so I took care of that. But then we started in earnest to find some kind of roll-on/roll-off shipping so that the PLO could be evacuated. These guys were just amazing. I would go meet with them and they were in their early sixties and there were two of them, and they had these parallel two sets of ledger books that they each worked in and they had a little book that they took home at night and they did it all on the phone. They had like a school chalkboard behind them; no computers. Some Americans, as I described how they worked, ridiculed them and said, "Oh this could never work. How can you keep track? We must've made a mistake. We need people with computers." I said, "These guys are good," and as I talked to them they knew every ship in the world and where they were. That was their job. And they had a memory of which captains were reliable, who you could bargain with. And in the end, going back and forth, we found actually a Greek shipping company that agreed to provide the right kinds of ships at the right kind of price. I negotiated the price, we figured out how to pay them and then Embassy Athens also got involved in finally making the payment. It worked out well; the ships (I think it was the Cantorini or something) went in, took them out. And then the joke was that a year later some of the NEA people said that I had negotiated too well and

that I must've negotiated a round-trip package for the PLO because they seemed to pretty quickly go from Tunisia back into the Middle East.

One of the wonderful things about the Foreign Service is you can work on such a variety of issues, and that project was so important to people in Washington. And to me, amazingly, the part of getting the PLO out after the one Shatila Camp Massacre … Secretary Shultz felt personally bothered and engaged, as he had made his commitments that the PLO would not be harmed. So we were really going all out to evacuate them and I ended up being part of a Group Superior Honor Award and got a certificate directed from Shultz, and it was very nice. It was actually one of the most…one of the awards I got in the Service that was clear that it was not my boss and me going through doing it to try and get me a leg up; it was really the system utterly doing it on its own. That was very nice.

Q: I was in Cyprus in this period and I was aware generally that things were being done in London. I had no idea you were doing them. I think I would at least ask you to think about two things. I think this happened in 1982, not long after the Israeli invasion into Beirut, and secondly, I think the evacuation of the PLO fighters from the court of Beirut pretty much took place that summer of '82 before the Shatila Massacre, which was roughly in September. That led us to send the Marines back and stay engaged in the multinational force and otherwise. But a lot of the PLO had already been taken out by the Greek ships, and there was at least one Cypriot flag vessel also that was involved in the evacuation.

HOPPER: I'll look. I've got the things at home.

Q: I may be wrong, but that's sort of my recollection.

Well that was good work. Were you involved with other Middle Eastern issues, too, or mostly the western hemisphere and parts of Europe?

HOPPER: Because of how I worked with the Socialist International, and the Commonwealth association, I would get involved a little bit in everything. And because I was the contact point for the Labour Party on International, I had to know about everything. So I was involved, but I wasn't operationally responsible for anything else.

Q: The Socialist International has its headquarters in London and you would work with what, the secretary or the head … and the same with the Commonwealth?

HOPPER: Yes. The Socialist International, in some ways, was a really unique, strange organization. It might have been in Paris and there was some squabble and they ended up moving to London. They were in a working class suburb of London and they were pretty hard to get to and they were really skeptical; as one could imagine, skeptical about working with the U.S. Embassy.

When I arrived, the secretary general was a fellow, Burt Carlson, who was a Swede who had been very close to Lilly Brant. And he was skeptical, but I sort of won him over and we became friends, and the sad end to his story is he was one of the passengers on Pan Am 103 who died; he'd been flying back to go to a UN meeting. He was like the deputy foreign minister of Sweden by that time. He was a careful, at first brush, really sort of cold person, but when you got to know him, he was just devoted to human rights and democracy. After a while, you know it may seem naïve, but I came to appreciate that the Social Democrats in Europe had really, over the last century, taken more jibes and hits from Marxists, and they actually understood the risks to democracy from Marxism as well as anybody. If you could cast things in a way that had them look at their democratic side, they were really good. But if they got looking at their sort of anti-colonialist and U.S. as the hedgemon and the big clumsy Goliath, they could sort of reflexively work for the little guy in a way that would sometimes look pretty silly. I decided I would try to keep working with them as Democrats, and always project that we were allies in promoting democracy, and that worked pretty well.

I also found that they were nervous about being seen too much with us. So they were one of the few groups whom when you met with them, they really didn't want to be going to a nice restaurant downtown; they wanted it sort of either in their office or in a more quiet venue. Actually, I had Carlson come to my house a couple of times and we would just sit in my dining room at night and talk. We'd have to do representation vouchers and he was funny; I would buy, on representation vouchers, a really good bottle of scotch, and we would sit there. And I'm not much of a drinker, but we would sit there and finish a bottle of scotch and talk until one or two, and just really get a lot done. That's part of the work in the Foreign Service, where you can say, jeez, that's not work sitting down and buying single malt scotch; but, that was hard work.

Q: This was of course the Reagan administration; President Reagan's appointment was ambassador in the Court of Saint James – your boss. I mean, you've been talking about these contacts with the Democratic Party and with Labour Party and Socialist International. Did that ever become a problem for you, either in terms that the other people were saying, you know, well why are we dealing with a representative of Reagan here – you – or were there problems within the embassy that you were spending so much time on people that maybe they weren't always so comfortable with?

HOPPER: Amazingly there weren't. Obviously there weren't insurmountable problems or I wouldn't have stayed doing it. On the part of my contacts, sure there was lots of skepticism about what we were doing. I've developed an approach to diplomacy that doesn't use very many euphemisms and I'm pretty direct. I would describe that it's possibly the right thing what we were trying to accomplish, and try to explain that we are the United States and we have governments that change from time to time, but there are basic values that we're pursuing, and they needed to be careful about what they were doing. You know, did they really want to burn their bridges forever? I was generally fairly successful at getting people to see that they needed, and wanted, to continue having good relations with the U.S.

It was a little harder, but I would try to get officials to go meet with them; I would try to get visiting Republicans to meet with them. That was always a little harder to do, but it was OK. Then, as we discussed in the reporting, we weren't doing lots of reporting, "Dear Mr. President," you know, "you're really courting the Socialist International a lot." We would sort of build it into the reporting and sort of why we were doing it. But I must say, I always had a lot of support, especially from ARA, on using the Socialist International and using the Commonwealth to get our message across. And I found ARA very responsive in providing material. It worked pretty well.

The other thing I was able to do through working with the Social International, especially, was I got to meet some journalists in London who otherwise would've been quite skeptical, who didn't have close relations with USIA (United States Information Agency). As I worked with them, I was able to bring USIS (United States Information Service) along and they didn't hamper me in having contacts with journalists, and we helped one another. Two of them were really instrumental to us; there was a fellow who owned a Latin American newsletter, which was really prominent, and relied on relied on worldwide for information on the Americas whether you agreed with the political slant or not.. He was an Argentine and so he always wanted to talk a bit about the Falklands; it gave me entrée to him and then we became friends.

And then there was a journalist for the Guardian, a guy named Hugh O'Shaughnessy, who was just a prototypical guy: a hail-fellow, well-met, drink-a-lot, talk-a-lot, know-everybody-in-the-world guy. I started working closely with him and after a couple of months I concluded that I could trust him. And even though in some ways he looked and smelled anti-American, he too knew the area, was competent, was a Democrat. If I tried to keep the stories focused in long-term democracy, I could get him to be okay. And I remember we used to have a bet; I have a long standing bet with him that there would be free elections in Santiago de Chile before there would be free votes in Santiago de Cuba, and at first he did vote, but eventually he actually paid off on that.

Q: You won that?

HOPPER: It was one that I won.

Q: Now did you also spend a fair amount of time at the foreign office talking about these areas that you had regional responsibilities for in the administrative and political section?

HOPPER: Yes. I would meet with the Falklands office probably every week. They were nervous from the get-go that somehow we were going to want to get back in business with Argentina faster than they did.

Q: When you were there it was after the war?

HOPPER: After the war. I arrived sort of the day the ships came home and they were having the big victory celebrations. So I worked with that office; they had a very strong Central America and Mexico office, and I became very good friends with the director of that office. The Falklands had been the South America office and it became Falklands and South America. And then I worked a lot with the Southern Europe office. The British had a structure that was a little bit like how the State Department was organized, but figuring out the role of sort of their equivalents of DASes and assistant secretaries and under secretaries – it was always a bit more mysterious than at the State Department. In some of the offices it was clear that the office directors were really more like DASes, and had a lot of authority; at some others the assistant under secretaries were more like strong assistant secretaries in the State Department, and in others they were nothings and there would be a level that was sort of like the undersecretary in the State Department that did a lot, and then there were these political sort of junior ministers who supervised some of them. Figuring out who mattered, was a challenge. Also, some visitors from Washington – some of our senior officials and a number of the Republican Party visitors – really wanted to meet with the junior minister level and felt that they could be trusted and they were political and they were really conservatives. They didn't want to meet with bureaucrats.

There was one lovely, tough, very good woman named Baroness Ellis who worked on a lot of our issues and I would get people in to see her. Then, I found I could go to her if I really needed to; but, that was where things would get tricky because sometimes the ambassador might see that no, Baroness Ellis is getting up there and maybe he should be the one to be seeing her, or the DCM, or the officials at the foreign office. I know wives talked of going to her. He should be working through us. After a while I figured out that even though there were certain ego thrills at going in sort of as high as one could go, you had to be really careful in that it might work once, but you could just as well find that it started hurting your daily contacts if you were seen to be too effective with really senior people. So Edson pulled that in reserve and would work with them. I usually worked with really senior people through visitors; by finding the way to either call them because a visitor was coming or take a visitor to see them, but keeping working with the regular people.

The Central America and Mexico Desk was educational and tough. A new deputy director came in, who, God knows why, really hated the Reagan administration; anything I told her on behalf of the administration she would question and just take in the worst possible spirit. And her boss was actually quite helpful, but there were times I had to work with her. Sort of figuring out how to persuade her that her boss was Thatcher and that Thatcher had good relations with Reagan, and that, sure, some of them in the foreign office might have their own views that even their own government wasn't either on policy or stylistically right. But so what? You know, we're democracies and we represent our governments. And I would have to go around her frequently, even when I would have to deliver a message to her to make sure that other people knew what we were doing. Oftentimes I would find a way to go meet with the assistant secretary within a week. I'd find some way to get word to him of what we were doing.

I also had a number of senior working levels of the foreign office that knew I held the Labour Party portfolio and they were quite curious about what I knew about the Labour Party and were intrigued. They enjoyed talking the sort of domestic policy, too. But it was all piecing it together. I found that ARA basically wanted to use me, the Socialist International, and the foreign office, and media contacts. It was like our job in London on the key western hemisphere issues was not to just use Thatcher. It was actually easy to use the Reagan/Thatcher connection to get high-level declarations that we were in sync. After a while I came to believe that Tom Enders and the team at ARA in some ways wanted to use the Brits as a bit of an anchor. We would be very open with them about where we were trying to go, and try to get their help for building sort of a centrist compromise position that would move things in Central America without actually becoming anymore of a war than it had to be. And it was sort of fun to be working in the middle of that.

Q: Do you think that part of the reason for that was because of the success, if you will, of the Falklands War and the fact that we had kind of been together on that? We respected what Britain had done, and Britain certainly appreciated the support and understanding they got from the United States.

HOPPER: It was interesting. The Brits remembered that Kirkpatrick and Haig had not been all that helpful at the beginning of the Falklands War. The Falklands was probably the more difficult part of all of it, in that one of my jobs in the Falklands was to try to get contact going again between the Argentines and the Brits. After I got there, pretty quickly it had the Alfonsin government. This one fellow who was the Argentine sort of chargé in London…

Q: He's still there.

HOPPER: In some ways he had just a great job. He'd been the sort of deputy political officer and the Brits sent everybody home and he was sort of like the lowest-highest, this min/max solution. They let him stay. He thought everybody had come back right away, but the Brits really held out. And this guy ended up (he was exactly my age at the time) living in the Argentine ambassador's house, running things out of there. He found that even though the foreign office and Number 10 and the official things were closed to him, that there were lots of Brits who actually wanted sort of dialogue, so he was on TV and running around. He had just a great job. And he was a good guy. And so I worked a lot with him and I would sometimes pass messages for him to Brits he couldn't talk to. That was interesting. But in some ways it was just going to take time. He did a good job, but Thatcher especially, was just not one to believe them or move very quickly. And I understand. She felt that people had died and that they had been wrong.

Q: Who was the U.S. ambassador at that time?

HOPPER: We had two ambassadors. When I arrived, John Lewis was the ambassador and he was a political appointee; a wealthy man from the Johnson-Wax family and he had

run the Johnson family foundation. A charming, decent man who didn't know very much about foreign affairs and in many ways was in over his head. But for a while it didn't matter.

So he's the figurehead in this really well-run, big embassy, and he would go hunting, go do the things that needed to be done; a gracious host; had the beautiful Winfield House, the ambassador's residence; but was not a player – in no way was he direct player. But the embassy was good. We had a DCM who had been there forever…

Q: Ed Streator.

HOPPER: Ed Streator. Very skillful. During the Falklands War – and I wasn't there, but this was the residue when I arrived and it was this incredibly well regurgitated story over and over again – Ambassador Lewis had been on vacation in the Caribbean and when it blew he called the DCM and he asked the wrong question. Some of this is hearsay and it was so important for Embassy London that I'm not sure whether people actually remembered it totally accurately. The remembered history was that Ambassador Lewis asked, "Do you need me?" or a question to that effect. Not, "Should I come back?" but, "Does the embassy need me?" and the answer the DCM gave was, "We have a good team; we're on top of everything; the British are meeting us at this level, so no, we can get by." Like I said, wrong question. The problem was that because Ambassador Lewis wasn't there for the first pivotal week of diplomacy, he lost an incredible amount of credibility and he could never recover.

Q: In London and Washington?

HOPPER: In London and in Washington. And people had started asking, you know, "Why weren't you there?" and ironically it ended up hurting both him and the DCM because there were people who felt that the DCM had been there so long; was so good at working the British that he forgot that actually the answer he should've given was to help the ambassador and say, "You have a good team," blah, blah, blah, "Of course we can get by, but, you know, this is a watershed event. For your own good, you should get back here."

Q: As quickly as possible.

HOPPER: Yes. [Tape 7, Side B]

HOPPER: Ambassador Lewis was asked to leave and he was replaced by Ambassador Charles Price, who had been over at the bilateral embassy in Belgium. Ambassador Price, while a political appointee, was just exactly the opposite of Ambassador Lewis. The one had been smooth and of the establishment, but reserved, and Ambassador Price was emulent, dynamic, a little bit pushy, but in a very nice way; was much more aggressive; blanketed everybody and was very close and was going to push harder at everything and in some ways felt he had to reestablish lots of connections. In fact, things were still

working very well at many levels, but he felt a need to be much more active.

Q: More hands-on?

HOPPER: More hands-on with the Brits; he didn't need to run the embassy. But he was going to be on TV more and he felt the U.S. needed a public face because he had watched that for USIA it changed how they worked. Then Ambassador Price brought in another speech writer and put them in USIS. One of the things that Price had learned overseas – in Washington was that there was a great gap between USIA and the State Department; different types of town, different missions, didn't always communicate very well, but, in the embassies I worked in, just utterly teammates in the field. And that in a political section you would see that especially the press officer of the information side in USIS, it was hard to see where the political section stopped and they started. They were a direct part of the political and policy side of the team. The cultural affairs people might be different, but the person who had to deal with the press and write the ambassador's speeches, had to be really close to the political section, and that always worked.

One example though of communications problems and how they always seem to be at the center of human fiascos (it goes to the Grenada problem and the Caribbean was one other thing) was that I was surprised, when I got to London, to realize how much of my time would be spent on the Caribbean; it was an area where there was always a bit of a disconnect between the Brits and us. From Queen Victoria's time, there was a map tradition that, as an American, I never understood. In many atlases, many maps, parts of the world that had been in the British Commonwealth were colored pink – and a person who knew that, and who was British, and who believed that the sun never set, could look at the pink shades on a map and feel reassured that that influence would continue. Well much of the Caribbean is pink.

The U.S. made the New Jewel Movement around the globe; the kind of teenage tyranny of Grenada a big issue and the Brits all thought it was silly and that it was like the Peter Sellers movie of the tiny nation, and they thought we were just obsessing over the risks of Grenada. I got a blank map from – I think USIS actually found it for me – a good map of Central America and the Caribbean, and I did 500 mile circles around Havana, Grenada, and Nicaragua and that was the flight effectiveness of certain kind of aircraft. And it was interesting; if you looked at it that way – of the three places working together lock step, and if at some point the Soviet Union might've been able to operate from all three of them, unhindered, it would really blanket the Caribbean and make it harder for the U.S. to work in South America; make it harder to get to Africa. It looked a little more frightening when you did it that way. So I had this map and I had it on my wall and I sort of made some copies and sent it to people, but still Grenada was the problem. I would talk to visiting American experts on the Caribbean; for some reason I actually knew some people, and it was sort of like how when I went to Rome and found that Italians weren't like the Italo-Americans in San Pedro.

But one of the eye-opening things I discovered in Great Britain was that we were both

right; that there were a lot of West Indians who lived in the UK; there were a lot of Caribbeans who lived in the United States; and in some ways there had been big population movements in the Depression, during World War II, and right after World War II and the people changed. A lot of the West Indians who went to Britain ended up becoming Labour Party, real Socialists; really believed that the state should do everything; were in teaching and government sectors; and were generally pretty far to the left. West Indians and Jamaicans who'd gone to the U.S. had become more entrepreneurial, and ones who'd succeeded were pushing a political agenda that was very different from their brothers. And they didn't connect. There were not very many connections between Jamaicans in the U.S. and Jamaicans in Britain. And Jamaica was the most important of English speaking Caribbean countries and you had this competition between the Ciaga Party and government who were entrepreneurial and close to Reagan, and the Manray Social Democratic Party that was close to the Brits and close to the Socialists. In some ways they were Tweedle-Dum and Tweedle-Dum, but they had important differences. It was an area where even Thatcher was closer to the British view of what the Caribbean was like, and it was one of the few areas where the administration and the senior levels in the British government did not agree.

Q: Now did the intervention by the United States in Grenada take place while you were there?

HOPPER: Oh, yes. It did. And the run-up to it was fascinating because it was a real problem. It was one of the things I was working on. I was trying to get agreement that they were a problem, and I would also, from time to time, play a little marginal role. The Grenadan high commissioner in London was a wonderful, friendly, bubbly guy who was not a professional diplomat; he was an intellectual, who had lived in the U.S. and in Canada. While the New Jewel Movement and this guy had certain views, in many ways the high commissioner was probably more on the "people should be responsible" entrepreneurial side of the split in the Caribbean. And he thought the old-fashioned Socialist tendencies supported what his government was doing, but sometimes he even had trouble working with them.

I met with him about once a month and I was doing my pro-democracy approach. I said, "Look, we have these differences and clearly some of the things you're doing really frighten our government," and, "You may think that since we're so big and strong, why should we be concerned at all, but we are big and strong, and the fact that we are concerned, if I were in your shoes, I'd be concerned that we were concerned. You may think we're silly, but we can be silly in ways that I wouldn't want to be you if we got too silly." And he could see that and he would try to…I would have to go to these meetings where people would say, "But you know Grenada is a real democracy. They're the most democratic of all the countries in the Caribbean. Why don't you back them more?" and I'd say, "What do you mean?" Well they have lots of town hall meetings and so I'd meet with the Grenadan high commissioner and ask him to describe what were they doing, and they were having lots of meetings where they would have a neighborhood; they had neighborhood councils and they would get together and they would talk. But as he

described it, and from my experience just as a person going to meetings, I could see how nice, mild, meek, humble people could be cowed at these public meetings and it would look like everybody was agreeing. I'd say, "You know, we have town meetings in the U.S., but there's another step you have to have. You have to have a secret ballot so that those nice, wonderful little school teacher ladies, who may feel a little cowed by some big loud man, can vote. So if you added town meetings and free elections, we'd have a lot harder time questioning what you're doing." And it turned out that at the same time the deputy secretary of state – there were a lot of levels that were sort of trying to make that same message to the Grenadans, and incredibly, Maurice Bishop, who was the head of the New Jewel Movement, actually came to see – I believe, though it's all a bit of a mystery still – that unless he could get more of a consensual democracy, he was going to be vulnerable to people that were more ruthless than he was. So he agreed with – I think it was Whitehead, the deputy secretary; it could've been with Ken Dam; I'm not sure exactly which deputy secretary it was – but he agreed to a process that was going to lead to real elections. And amazingly, very soon after he agreed to that, his own party sort of fell apart and there were violent movements. The pot started boiling and the British did get worried that we were going to do something.

I was briefing and going in, and there was one weekend when it started to look like God only knows what's going to happen. I arranged to be around, and ARA had my number, and we were all going to be in touch. The working level contacts were nervous that we were going to do something. The foreign secretary, Sir Jeffrey Howe, was nervous that we were going to do something and he was operating in the wake of Lord Carrington having resigned because he hadn't predicted the Falklands. So there was a real nervousness that you didn't want to be wrong on a big issue, and amazingly, the U.S. doing something would be a big issue and because Thatcher was so close to Reagan they didn't want any embarrassing surprises. The senior working levels just kept begging me, "Well, please let us know what's going to happen," and I said, "Well fine." I said, "Look, if you're that concerned, have Howe call Shultz. While we're a little bit in the loop, if something is really happening, we're going to be told to tell you, but it's going to be sort of after something is really decided. So if you're that nervous, have Howe call," and they did. I pushed a lot afterwards. And Howe in some ways was a little bit of a reticent man and I don't think he asked the right question. But whatever he asked, he got an answer that he took as reassuring. I think he got an answer like, "Don't worry. Whatever we do, it'll be smart."

Q: We're on top of it.

HOPPER: Yes. He got an answer that he took as reassuring. He went to the House of Commons, got a question, gave an answer, and he went way too far and basically said, "I've just talked to the American secretary of state. I'm confident that while they're on top of the situation nothing dramatic is going to happen." He went away for the weekend, and I guess it was the next Monday morning or something, but we sort of did it and the ambassador got these instructions to go in and tell them, but we weren't consulting – it was sort of already underway.

At that period, the two weeks before that had been really interesting because it was also a decisive period on installing the cruise missiles in Europe. It was a period when very bad things were happening again in Lebanon; the first bombing of the Marines took place, or of the embassy; one of the attacks in Lebanon took place right then. You had huge marches all over Europe that weekend, and DS (Bureau of Diplomatic Security) had in effect sent embassies home all over Europe. So in London, we were not allowed to go into the embassy that weekend. And, amazingly, it was the weekend when Weinberger and Shultz, partly to show that things were calm, were playing golf in Georgia, and there was a little bit of an incident on the golf course and they were sort of put out of commission. So you had a lot of things happening.

In fact as that weekend went on, I got more worried that the U.S. government and the international system were kind of on sensory overload. I always felt that if the Soviets could have misinterpreted military movement and actions, that that was a weekend when things could've gone very, very wrong. Because we went in to Grenada, the ambassador had to go down and talk to them. It turned out that Queen Elizabeth was just grossly offended. She believed that because Grenada was part of the Commonwealth, because they had a governor general and because the queen was the sovereign of Grenada, (with no influence; it was an illusory relationship), that only the British could do something in Grenada and that it was like we had invaded Britain by doing this. It was very awkward.

Operationally, the first day was kind of confusing. I started getting calls, "Oh my God, our maps aren't very good. It turns out, Bob, that the best maps of Grenada are there. Can you go out and get some really good maps and Fed Express them," or whatever the equivalent was, "back?" So that first day was really tense because in all of these things it was clear that once we decided to do something, that the key was to do it well. In the end it happened that the poor ambassador had to go to a series of meetings explaining what we were doing. And amazingly this was really a tense issue in Anglo-American relations. Thatcher wasn't happy. It smoothed out, but it was difficult. I was able to sort of use it later and say, "Come on. We need to consult more." It got the British a little concerned that we might do something similar in Nicaragua so they started watching all of Central America more closely. It was an interesting period.

Q: It certainly was. I don't remember exactly when that was. I think it may well have been the Marine barracks bombing.

HOPPER: I think it was October of '83.

Q: October or maybe November; it was late October at least.

HOPPER: Yes.

Q: I do remember that the Marine barracks was blown up on a Sunday in about that time frame. So I think that's probably the other event that was happening that weekend.

HOPPER: And there were Brits who believed, and there are some of them who still believe to this day, that the U.S. just felt it had to do something, and that Grenada was the easy, convenient something to do; and that there really wasn't a threat to our medical students; that we had just been talking and talking and talking about doing something and so we did it. We had been talking and thinking and thinking about doing things, and I always felt it was mostly all just bad coincidences, but at the same time there was an element of "we need to do something," and these things do sometimes fit together.

Q: One other event I remember from this period that you were there, was a European Chiefs of Mission Conference; I believe it was late in '82. I think George Shultz had recently become secretary of state. I'm not sure who the ambassador was; it may still have been John Lewis and Charles Price was there. As you said, he had been in Belgium before coming to London.

I assume that Shultz came to London a lot.

HOPPER: A couple of those chiefs of missions meetings were held in London several times while I was there. The secretary came frequently. I would say that he planned to come to London once or twice a year. In the summer of 1984, President Reagan came for the wonderful set of events related to the fortieth anniversary of D-Day in World War II. He came and the British were hosting the summit that year.

Q: Of NATO?

HOPPER: No, it was the industrial, the…

Q: The G-7…

HOPPER: The G-7; it was seven at that time. So we had the president coming on his grand trip to Europe to celebrate the fortieth anniversary, and to show that everybody was working together; that we had managed the deployment. It was symbolically a big deal to show how friendly and resolved the West was. Michael Deaver came. I got to see, and was really impressed with the very clever sense of scheduling and packaging. It was very artful and it worked with the British. It was the first occasion where you were really going to have this big Thatcher/Reagan event on British territory. I was responsible for Shultz events; there was going to be a big secretary of state meeting on substance that was going to be held at the foreign secretary's house, which was a place called Carleton Gardens, which was two blocks from the foreign office and sort of near Nelson's Column. I was responsible for that and for negotiating some of the general things. I went with the DCM to negotiate for the Secret Service to please, please, please have their guns, and the British would say, "No. We told you and you guys keep asking us. No, they can't." And getting enough frequencies so that everybody could talk. That was one of my first experiences at really working on security issues and getting to know Scotland Yard and the policemen. That was interesting. Meeting all of the advance people and working on

the visit and doing some of the substantive work beforehand was amazing. The foreign office officials and the senior officials on Thatcher's staff at Number 10 (Downing Street) in some ways had a certain disdain for our administration, and felt, "Thank God Thatcher's so smart that it's really wonderful there's this team because she's smart and sensible and she's really providing the intellectual muscle for this relationship, and boy, this is really going to be Thatcher's summit and you guys think you're so smart, but you're going to see that we're really loving a lot of this."

So we all worked and did our thing, and then afterwards I went around to get a debriefing from a number of levels on how it had gone. I met with one of the senior staffers at Number 10 and met with some of my contacts at the foreign office. The DCM went too. Two things that were reconfirmed in doing that is that the British were a much more disciplined government than we were and they would do cabinet notes and minutes and they would go around and everybody told us the same thing. It was fascinating. We discovered that we could actually economize on some of these big events; you could go meet the lowest person who you knew would get the notes, and you'd get the same briefing, or be handed the notes, and it didn't matter. Or you could have the ambassador struggle even to see Thatcher and she'd almost read him the notes. So we had that experience.

I sort of pressed some people; I said, "After you had thought that these meetings were going to go a certain way, and substance aside, just on style…" And a number of them who'd actually been note takers told me that they were just amazed that Ronald Reagan dominated every conversation; that he really cleverly, both emotionally and on substance, set and drove the agenda; that neither Thatcher nor anyone else really disagreed with him, and that he had a personal force. They were just amazed at how it went. And things changed a little bit after that.

But also, we would keep having these high-level meetings; and Thatcher went to Washington a lot. There were all of these high-level connections. Or they'd meet at some other summit. I would especially get these reports that, "You know, Thatcher is going to raise Central America. She's really concerned. She's going to do this." And after, we'd do these cables and nothing would happen. And finally, on sort of instructions, I went both to the foreign policy person on her Number 10 staff, and to the people in the foreign office doing Central America, and said, "Look, don't do that to us again. Unless you really know for sure that Thatcher personally is going to raise it, don't waste our time with your fantasies about what we should be doing. They have a good relationship and you've hurt the credibility of Embassy London, and through us you've hurt your own credibility. When we go writing these things about how Thatcher is going to object to something, when she then meets with the president and says, "Right on, Ronnie. Those Sandinistas are thugs and you've got to really keep them on the ropes." Yes, she said that and that was interesting.

I saw that over time it added to my sense that as a diplomat there isn't much room for speculating and giving your own opinion. You can help explain things, and explain how

your government works, but who cares what your personal opinion is, especially if you mix up your personal opinion and government views. You can just do a bad job at being a diplomat.

On Central America, we had a lot of visits; Elliott Abrams visited several times, both as human rights, as IO (International Organizations), then I think at the very, very end he may have – I don't think he had taken over the Latin American beat yet. I don't think Enders ever came, but the DASes came a lot and we would set up meetings.

And then Otto Reich and the public diplomacy team visited frequently. Otto Reich actually came on a big round going through Europe where he was trying to build a consensus on the public diplomacy side. That was an area where I had decided that I could use that visit because of all of these complaints that I had been getting. I could set up meetings with the key policy people at the working level and let them raise their own concerns. We went around and met with everyone who was significant and who had ever had a question about what we were doing. I arranged to have the undersecretary share a brown bag with them. I told the group, "Look, if you want, this is somebody who does public diplomacy, who isn't so senior that you're going to be insulting, and it's utterly off the record. If you're ever going to raise your questions, do it now." And they really took advantage; they went through and made clear what their concerns were.

It was easy to do the reporting cable and a summary reporting the key things. Although this was still in the period where you would generally end with a major embassy comment on what it meant, I thought about it, and decided not to do a comment and just let it go as a straight reporting cable with the summary setting up what the points were. I had also realized that if I tried to do a comment, that whatever I did it would be harder to clear, and I said, "No, it's better. Let's just leave the concerns in the mouths of the British the way they were, they're clear enough; people in Washington would be able to see them and it's not Embassy London or Bob Hopper trying to make a point." I did it very quickly so that Reich wouldn't be surprised and got him to sign it before he left town. And the cable worked really well. Ambassador Reich saw it as fair and it did start some – marginally, along with a hundred other things – thinking. I've used this cable from time to time at FSI as a training device and I would say, "Sometimes you just have to let some things speak for themselves. Every rule can have an exception."

Q: Okay. Anything else we should say about your four years in London? Great assignment.

HOPPER: Wonderful assignment.

Q: I guess I should ask you if you spent a lot of time working with the British foreign office or others about Cyprus.

HOPPER: Cyprus was one of the things I worked on, partly out of nostalgia. We probably could've split it any way we wanted, but nobody else really wanted to do it and so I did it.

Richard Haas, ironically, was the special negotiator for at least some of the period while I was in London.

Q: Special Cyprus coordinator.

HOPPER: Cyprus coordinator. He visited at least twice and I was his control officer and went. It was fine. To me it was kind of clear that it was really a holding period.

Q: That's why I corrected your use of the term "negotiator" because I don't think he thought it was negotiating.

HOPPER: No, he didn't. He was just keeping things coordinated. He was very impressive and it was fun. I hadn't known him very much and then our paths would cross from time to time later. And that's another thing; foreign affairs is a village and these people who work on it, they come and go, and come and go, and go and come and you do end up crossing paths.

Q: That's one of the particularly nice things about being in a place like London where a lot of people come through: you get to know people, sometimes people who are very appreciative of small courtesies and small help and advice, who later on become much more influential and significant and so on.

HOPPER: Ah, I guess his name was Middendorf who was the U.S. ambassador to…

Q: The Netherlands.

HOPPER: He was in the Netherlands, but he also…did he go to the OAU (Organization for African Unity) or the OAS (Organization of American States)?

Q: I think so – Yes.

HOPPER: He left the Netherlands, came through London, and he was going to be the OAS. I took him places. He had this wonderful royal West and East Indies society where there was a connection sort of entrepreneurially with the Dutch and the British. In the East and West Indies they had a club and were involved in Caribbean affairs a bit. I arranged for him to speak there. I arranged for him to speak at the IISS (International Institute for Strategic Studies), or the Chatham House group. He came quite a bit. He was an amazing fellow. He just had interest in everything and he was a composer and actually wrote music and he was trying to write themes for – you know, if the OAS needed a new song. But he was one of those people, who, at times, could come across as silly to some of the British, but he actually had a lot of foxy commonsense and I grew to sort of respect him. His judgment was pretty good and if you'd get him in the right setting, he would talk to people and he was very good. You got him with some people who were very sort of Oxford Don types and they thought, oh my god, what are these people doing. There's an example of your having to think a little bit about who you were putting people together

with to go with their strengths and weaknesses.

You realize that in London you had to use visitors well because you were just going to be doing visitors so often, and some of my colleagues really didn't like doing it, and by the time I left it would become a problem. It was one of the few sort of personal issues that if somebody didn't want to do their fair share of going to the airport, it would become a problem. Also, in London, there really was a lot of entertaining; most of it done by the ambassador and the DCM, but the way the political section was structured, almost everybody got to take part in it a lot. I had this range of issues and contacts and visitors. I would say that my wife and I went to a sit down dinner at Winfield House maybe every other month.

Q: That's the ambassador's residence.

HOPPER: At the ambassador's residence. And I went to the equivalents of lunches and dinners at the DCM's as often. It was really a lot. And then you'd do a lot of receptions, and one came to see that you had to guard your time. I felt that the DCM and the ambassador were doing so much socially, that in some ways it was a burden on them.

Q: Anything else on London? Where did you go from there?

HOPPER: It was interesting. In the last year Ray Sites came back and became the DCM and Ray had a start-over-again. When he arrived we did some think pieces and planning documents on how to build up and use his contacts. It was very useful because Ed Streator had been there so long that much of what we did was sort of intuitive and assumed. And it worked and we knew what we were doing, but it wasn't planned out. And when Ray came, we then started looking again, "Well, who are our contacts?" and we did new contact plans and that was very useful.

Q: Because he had previously been in the political section doing South Africa and Africa issues and so on.

HOPPER: Yes. And it was like heaven for him, coming back and being the DCM. Another thing that happened in sort of my last year in London, that was significant, was that the State Department had started the use of PIT (Part-time Intermittent Temporary) employees and started reaching out to spouses and looking at what were the skills that some spouses had that could be used. My wife had been working as an assistant to a builder in Alexandria before we went to London, and had real construction skills. It ended up she became sort of an assistant GSO (General Services Officer) and was in charge of programs to renovate a number of residential properties in London. She also ended up in charge of a project to renovate the DCM's house when Ray Sites came and was getting married. There were going to be a lot of changes in his life. Nothing had been done to the Residence since like seven or eight years before when Mr. Streator had come and there had been a lot of changes in just the infrastructure of London.

There had been things that were impossible to do in Britain in the mid '70s that all of a sudden you could do; just little things like water pressure had improved in the city, so you could actually add bathrooms and showers that you couldn't do before. So my wife was in charge of the renovation project there and she became, as one could imagine knowing how things were, very close to the DCM. We actually had a little bit of a problem in that we were almost seen by some people as being too close to the DCM. And I saw that poor Ray Sites, in many ways, was isolated; he was now back as DCM and a lot of people expected him to be always doing these high-level things and he was just a regular person. He was not that much older than most of us in the political section. He sort of made clear that he would appreciate being invited to things that the rest of us were doing; that he couldn't always come, but to think of him. And so we would do that and we were able to use him in entertaining.

Another project my wife worked on was the … Ambassador Price's wife had helped organize the "Friends of the Embassies" program, to encourage the donations of art for embassies and residences overseas. [Tape 8, Side A]

Q: Bob, I think when we finished last time there may have been a few loose ends related to your assignment to London in the political section from 1982 to '86 that you wanted to cover. Why don't you go right ahead?

HOPPER: One of the things I would like to outline is how we cooperated with Washington and the other posts in Europe, and the posts in Central America, to try to build European support for our Central American policies. I viewed that effort as part and parcel of what I was also doing with the Labour Party and other people to make them more comfortable with U.S. foreign policy, and to see that it was in their interest to have a partnership with us. Just as I was trying to find reasonable people to pair Labour Party hopefuls with to learn more about the U.S., I also made an effort to find occasions to take U.S. visitors who were coming to do Central America to try to find ones who would work with people who doubted our foreign policy credibility. We were very good in Embassy London, for a long time, at using exchange programs to get people contacted with the U.S., but sometimes we don't see that long-term contact with the U.S. isn't always a panacea.

One of the defense spokesmen for the Labour Party had actually been on an exchange program, and had spent a good deal of time actually, at the University of Oklahoma and had attended football games and everything. And he took as his sort of metaphor for the U.S. the sort of "we're number one," "hook 'em," "horns," and "go Sooners," and all of that, and he actually worried that the whole U.S. was motivated – sometimes wonderfully and other times worrisomely – by the desire to be number one; you had to win every game. He would sometimes use that on the stump and one time at a Labour Party conference we were having a beer together and he was saying, "You know, Bob, I've told you before that I would worry about the 'we're number one' and that you all would try to win at all costs." He said, "I'm now getting more worried that you're going to perceive that you're no longer number one, and that you're tied for number one, or on some things

you're number two and it's how you worry about the European community. And I'm really now worried that you're the ones who are going to lash out in some spasm because you think you have to become number one again." I just found that interesting. It showed how careful you had to be because sometimes it was very effective to play the card of how strong and effective we are, but other times you can see that you have to play that carefully. The marching bands can be good and they can be bad. Nothing is easy.

Q: So there was a lot of resistance in Britain at the time to what we were trying to do in Central America.

HOPPER: Absolutely. It would tend to be from the same people who were worried about what we were doing on cruise missiles, who felt we were not doing enough in South Africa. I was at a dinner where Mrs. Kinnock was sitting next to me and Jesse Jackson was there. She was just so upset that Jesse Jackson had stepped into the South African business, really, for them, at the eleventh hour on the last day, and yet was getting all kinds of credit for having moved the South Africans in ways that they felt they had prepared the way for. And it was sort of a sense of envy that was also a problem.

But we tried to work with anyone we could identify as like-minded. We realized that other Europeans were also important and so we would have, from time to time, Europe-wide meetings of the different key embassies to talk about issues. I remember we had a meeting in Paris going over Central American issues and the DAS came out from ARA and I think Otto Reich, the then Latin American public relations expert, came out. I had the idea (I was very pleased with myself) that we would often get hammered by our critics who would say, "Well I was in Nicaragua last week and the arch bishop told me this," or "Somebody told me that. When were you there? Aren't you just trumpeting the line from your main office? What do you really know about it?" So I proposed that maybe if a group of us in Europe who were doing Central America should actually pick two or three opinion leaders from our countries and then the Department and USIA should pay and we should go to Central America, do a tour, and be with them; talk to them about what they saw and build up our credibility and theirs. The Department thought that was a wonderful idea; started building on it; then, for a variety of reasons that were never clear, got cold feet on the part of inviting opinion leaders, and instead just had about ten embassy people, like me, go. And I can see the logistics would've been a lot harder for a group with different languages.

So we went and we visited Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala. It was very good. It really helped all of us to see what was going on. We ended up having to drive through Nicaragua because there had been a hurricane and so we took a van from San Jose, Costa Rica, up to the Nicaraguan border, then had to get out of the van, walk through the customs checkpoint of both countries – and it was a bit like going through a war zone as you got into Nicaragua; you could see all of their troops. For me, it was fascinating because I had heard all the stuff about Cuba troops and Nicaragua, and in looking around I could see them. I mean they weren't all that hidden. You could see this group of foreign, a little bit older professionals, and the Nicaraguan army was fifteen-

year-olds. It was really depressing to see how young most of them were. Then we went through and we saw things in Nicaragua and met with the embassies, did El Salvador, Guatemala, and went home. About a month later I was at a meeting with a group of Catholic Church experts on Central America, in London, and they started announcing some positions and saying, "Well we know there's this and this," and I said, "Well that's interesting. I was just there and I did see the Cuban soldiers and I saw how young the Nicaraguans are. I saw this and I saw that." It was me personally; it's not just somebody telling me. It changed the flow of the debate. So that was a program that actually had some payoff quite quickly. So sometimes we spend little bits of money in good ways.

Q: Okay. Is there anything else, before we wind up London, that you wanted to talk about?

HOPPER: London was a country also where there were lots of representational duties for everybody. For example, on Shakespeare's birthday every year there was a festival in Stratford and there would be a parade of nations, based on the theory that Shakespeare was an international figure and had influence all around the world. The ambassador and DCM had done it several times and had other things to do, and so I was designated to be the embassy representative at the festival. We worked with one of the Lord Chamberlains who was the head of the parade; my wife and I met them beforehand and then went up and we carried the U.S. flag and marched in the parade and went to a performance at the theater. And it was interesting; while I had spoken behind the U.S. placard at international conferences, and done things where it was clear I was representing the U.S., I had never had the experience of marching in a parade. It's just me and my wife holding the U.S. flag. You know there weren't millions of people, but there were quite a few people out on the street. And it was at a time when we had some threats. I felt both proud and fairly vulnerable walking down the street. That was just an interesting experience and was the kind of thing that did happen in London more than in some other places.

Q: Did Carol, your wife, work? She was quite involved with the embassy or was she able to pretty much lead her own life there?

HOPPER: She could do whatever she wanted and she spent the first couple of years taking classes and making sure the kids were well established, and then the last two years she was able to be employed through the PIT program at the embassy and was in effect one of the assistant GSOs. She had done construction work in the U.S. and so she ended up being in charge of a project to renovate a bunch of the apartment buildings that we had for staff to live in. And she worked top and bottom on the renovations to the ambassador and DCM's residence, and in doing that she ended up working with the "Arts in Embassies" people and helped negotiate and put together the first major survey of the art works held by an embassy. She worked with Sotheby's and Ambassador Price's wife to have a thorough survey inventory done of all the art in the possession of the embassy – at the Residences and in the embassy. And discovered that sitting in the cafeteria was a painting of Churchill that was quite valuable and there was a painting of Washington and of John Adams. People had lost track of them and when the inventory was done; the

National Gallery and the Smithsonian it turned out, wanted them back. So she did a project with Polaroid, which had just invented a huge life size, room size view camera; they came out and took photos of the paintings. They could do reproductions on a canvas to where they looked exactly like the paintings; and they did duplicate frames. The copies stayed at the embassy and the originals went back. But that was an interesting project and I ran across some of those same people later in my congressional lobbying job down the road.

As we left London, one of the recurring themes of my life, as Robert Frost says "the roads not taken," came up. DCM Ray Sites had been both Secretary Shultz' executive director and he had been a senior person in public affairs. He discovered that there was an office director job coming up in PA (Public Affairs) that he thought I would be perfect for and he lobbied for me to be the head of the outreach side of public affairs. In the end they picked somebody who was already a DCM to do it. It was interesting. It actually would've been a job that I think I would've been very good at, and had I taken that path it would've been yet another one doesn't know what would've happened. The Department was very great and gracious and I went to the War College for a year. That's an experience I would recommend to anyone.

Q: I think War College has been treated pretty well documented.

HOPPER: Yes. There was nothing extraordinary about it.

Q: Well, what trip did you take?

HOPPER: I took the Japan/Korea trip because it was a part of the world I hadn't been to, and that was interesting. And traveling with the military as colleagues was really interesting. I was put in charge of the program in Korea, working with the embassy. The embassy had suggested that there was a village in central Korea that gave a feel for what life was like in the country, and was a place that had been overrun in the Korean War; you could see both the war history and the culture of Korea. And so we'd arranged for this to take place and right before we got to Korea, my ten military colleagues on the trip came to me and said, "You know, there are some real problems with that trip. It turns out that the hotel in Korea is so full that the only way we can do it is we would have to be double-booked and we would have to show that we were in the hotel and in the village one night.

The military had no facility for letting us get per diem for both places and we can't afford to pay for two rooms. So maybe you better cancel it." And so I thought about it and I said, "Yes, I can see that." So I called the embassy and we came up with a plan where we got the travel agent who was doing that part of the trip to bill all of the funds as travel and put it down as transportation and not show any separate rooms, so that we took care of the room problem. I went back to my colleagues and said, "I worked this out. No problem. There won't be any separate charge," and then one of them came to me and said, "Boy, you really don't get it, Bob. We had been at a village like that in Japan; we ate enough fish eggs; we really don't want to go there. It's our last occasion; Korea has the very best

PXs in the world and four or five of us really want the time to do that. We promised our families that we would do that, so we just don't want to go there." So I just said, "Fine, that's easier to do," and I killed it and we had a free day. But it's interesting the different approaches.

Several of them had made clear that they traveled a lot for the U.S. government and that the tradition, especially in the army, was that you never went out-of-pocket, and that it was wrong – you were stealing bread from your family if you went out-of-pocket on a trip; where, for many of us in the State Department, oftentimes you'd end up having to stay in hotels that were more than the per diem, or you'd have meals. Sometimes you'd make money, sometimes you wouldn't. And it wasn't something that many people worried about a lot. But it was a different approach. I guess learning about some of those different ways of viewing the world was one of the reasons for the War College program. But it was a nice year and then I went to ARA.

Q: And that was in 1987, and what job did you do in the inter-American Bureau?

HOPPER: I became the deputy officer director in the Office of Southern Cone Affairs, and at that time there was a separate office in Brazilian Affairs so the Southern Cone was "just" Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and Paraguay. But it was a busy time and there was plenty to do. I enjoyed that very much.

Q: This was the end of the Reagan administration, the beginning of the Bush administration.

HOPPER: The whole time in ARA was the end of the Reagan administration. And it was the period of the run-up to the Pinochet Referendum; there were coup rumors in Argentina; just a lot of instability in a charming, but pretty incompetent civilian government that we were dealing with, that had economic problems it couldn't cope with very well.

Q: In Argentina?

HOPPER: In Argentina. While perversely, the Pinochet government actually ran a very wonderful economic program; it was sort of a poster child for World Bank XM programs, though everybody had trouble acknowledging that because democratically they were so bad. Then, amazingly, Uruguay was just okay and we kept working with them and they were pretty quiet and we would pay just enough attention to not have them think we were snubbing them, and Paraguay was always a bother because Alfredo Stroessner Matiauda was still in power and he and his government would do anything on the corruption side to make an extra buck, including (and we would catch them) selling visas and passports to really bad people. Selling them; they didn't give anything to anybody. If you could do a fake Cartier or a fake anything, you could find it made and sold in Paraguay. They didn't make anything legitimate, but they had lots of illegitimate businesses.

One of our projects was to try to institutionalize democracy and to get the militaries to agree that their episode of being in power was something they needed to put behind them. In Uruguay we had discovered that the navy had been one of the worst players in the period of military government, and they still didn't have anything to do. So we talked to the ambassador – the Uruguayan ambassador was a very clever fellow – and we talked to colleagues at the Pentagon. On the desk we came up with a program that was going to provide three surplus destroyers that would be fitted. They would be upgraded to where they wouldn't sink and would be decent; not super, but decent. We would provide them to the Uruguayan Navy and the navy would then spend more of its time cleaning up the ships and going out to sea and doing the things they should do.

We had a lot of support from the Pentagon. We had worked with key congressional committees, and it was all agreed; it was a program that was fully endorsed. We ran into one problem; there was a budget process within the executive branch and this was like our number three priority for the new program. It went through and the deputy secretary's office and PM and the security undersecretary didn't think a whole lot of it, and didn't really endorse it and didn't really push it. And OMB (Office of Management and Budget) killed it. So it wasn't in the State Department's budget, but we had briefed people about it before and the House, at that time, Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Latin America loved it. And so they pushed. They had us come up and talk to appropriations colleagues. There was no foreign aid bill that year which was not unusual at all, but they actually got it in the appropriations bill (there was an earmark to do it) and when we met with them, we told them that, yes, it's a good idea; we couldn't support it because there hadn't been enough funds in the budgetary review, but that it was a program we thought of substance and great merit. Blah, blah, blah, blah.

It went forward and it actually passed through the House, was semi-endorsed in the Senate, and as the appropriations bill went to conference, we would do courtesy of the committees, a side by side mark-up of the bills showing sort of what was in and what wasn't. When that came through and OMB and the deputy secretary's budget office went through the bill, they were surprised to discover this Uruguay program. And it might've been OK, but when they went up for their review and they said, "Well why is this Uruguay program here?" and then the committee said, "Well your guys in the Southern Cone really pushed this really hard and made clear this was one of your high priorities, and so we agreed with them and we put it in there." And they said, "Did it cost anything?" "Well, Yes, we had to cut…" there was another program – I think it turned out it was for Yugoslavia; it was for someplace that was near and dear to the deputy secretary – and that afternoon the office director and I were called up to D (Deputy Secretary) and were told by…

Q: Larry Eagleburger's office.

HOPPER: Yes. At that time we were told by the DRP, or whatever the acronyms were for the budget review shop, that the deputy secretary was really upset with us and that our job that afternoon was to call the committees and tell them that we had made a mistake

endorsing that, and that the State Department very much wanted them to take that money out of the Uruguay program and give it to the other priority, and then we had to call and apologize to the Uruguayans. It was a lesson that sometimes people think, well maybe we can get more if we let loose clever desk officers and people to work their things on the Hill independently. And sometimes you can, but the sacrifice can be an overall sense of priorities and you can get what looks really important at the Uruguayan Desk and may not really be the highest overall U.S. priority. That's a story I've often told to describe why you can't always just let everybody freelance for the money they need.

Q: Even on the good programs.

HOPPER: Even on good programs. Sometimes there isn't enough money to go around for every good program. That was kind of embarrassing.

Q: Okay, anything else that you were particularly involved with during this period? Who was the director of the office? You were the deputy director.

HOPPER: Dick Howard, who had been the director of Caribbean Affairs before, had been political counselor in Buenos Aires, and was a real Latin American expert. We had a good division of Labour; I was the person who pretty much managed the office and took care of recruiting and morale issues, and would backstop everything. At first, especially since I was new to ARA, I spent some time learning and Dick was out doing the sort of morale, what policy formulation there was. In fact, for the whole period we had very strong DASes supervising South America; first we had Bob Gelbard who had been the one who pushed me into the job, and then Mike Skol. They were both very knowledgeable, very aggressive, had programs they were pushing and we were their foot soldiers.

And after a while - it was interesting - as I learned more about the area we became a team, and Dick Howard and I were sort of interchangeable in going up to the Front Office and working on things.

Q: You traveled to the region?

HOPPER: Only went to the region twice. Divided the countries up and went to two of them each time. It was interesting; in Chile I went during the run-up to the plebiscite, and sort of like the Stratford episode, it was interesting to see that there was a great public interest in the deputy office director for the Southern Cone, which was sort of amazing to me. Every meeting I'd go to, there would be TV cameras and national newsmen outside sticking their microphones in my face and wanting comments on how did the U.S. view or what position were we taking on who should be president. Fortunately we had thought about what to say. And it was kind of fun to not only have to speak for the U.S., but do it in a foreign language on television at a time of great sensitivity. It all worked pretty well.

On policy terms, one of the things that was really interesting in the run-up to the

plebiscite was we had some other crises in the Southern Cone and in ARA, and we had gotten pretty good at using Operation Center task forces. So in the week before, during and after the plebiscite, we set up a task force in the Op Center so that we could control rumors. We paid, in a strange way, to have an open line to the embassy, basically by just having a lot call and having nobody ever hang up, and just keeping the phone line open. We had really good relations with INR (Bureau of Intelligence and Research), partly because the chief of the Latin American section was a real team player, and also one of the analysts had been one of our desk officers before. They had suggested to us about six months before the plebiscite that we should work with the priorities tasking group, and we were able to get all of the collection assets focused on Chile during the run-up to the plebiscite and that was really invaluable; we did get rumors and reports of things.

In fact, during the weekend of the plebiscite there were really troublesome reports that the military figures close to Pinochet had figured out they were going to lose and were going to do something stupid to block the thing. We had the deputy secretary call the ambassador in on a Saturday, which was pretty unusual, and basically tell him in a nice way, and not divulging the sources and methods, but being very candid that we were aware that there were people who couldn't possibly be speaking really for President Pinochet and the government, and surely they had agreed this would be a fair test. Then we saw that that had played back and it had been put to bed and they took their chances on the plebiscite and they lost.

The whole experience was really quite positive. We used the National Endowment for Democracy, and AID (Agency for International Development) and local groups, and cooperated with a wide range of people to have a very positive pro-democracy program and it worked. It mostly worked because the Chileans were ready for it to work, but we really did our part. Assistant Secretary Abrams, who had been the assistant secretary for both IO (Bureau of International Organization Affairs) and human rights, had a very keen understanding of how he could support democracy and then what could be done. Clearly, he ended up making his mistakes and running afoul of things he should've seen more clearly with Ollie North on Central America, but actually was somebody who cared deeply about having the U.S. promote democracy and human rights, and was very effective.

Q: Were we equally effective in the period after the referendum?

HOPPER: Yes. It was one of those cases where we didn't just say, "Okay, you've done it," and walk away from it. I moved on fairly quickly after that, but I kept in touch and we did work very hard. We had a desk officer who had come from USIA and who had been a cultural affairs officer in Santiago and knew the country really well, and that helped a lot. There was an incredibly activist ambassador in Harry Barnes during the period. Ambassador Barnes was one of maybe two or three people I've met like him in my career – Tom Pickering being another one – who were able to see the two or three highest priorities for themselves, but map out twenty different activities that their team or embassy could be following in pursuit of those three priority goals; keep the balls in the

air, march people off, and have the sense to ask at the right time how it was going to keep track of everything and to be able to tactically retreat when one avenue wasn't working, but always moving forward. It was just incredible. Ambassador Barnes would make his enemies because he was, while a very nice guy, just relentless in pursuing these things. But it is one strategy that can work; the sort of "always on tack in pursuit of U.S. policy" strategy.

Q: Always keeping your eye on the goal?

HOPPER: Right. And not looking like you're just trying to explain away the problems of the local society you're dealing with, but pushing things.

Q: Do you want to talk about Argentina a little bit more? You've mentioned it briefly in terms of coup rumors, I think.

HOPPER: One of the most fascinating things about Argentina was that to try to help them get back on a normal footing, our senior policy-makers assumed that it would really help if we could get Great Britain and Argentina back on track; have them put the enmity of the Falkland Islands behind them and get back to a normal relationship. And also, as part of this track of trying to get the military out of politics, the U.S. believed that we could find a reasonable Argentine military to work with, and that we could find programs for them; that they had basically lost their Air Force and that we didn't want them following a proliferating track of developing missiles and nuclear weapons, which some of them were considering. So we felt it was best to find some safe, conventional military things they could do.

Prime Minister Thatcher made it clear in twenty different ways to anybody who would listen, that not on her watch were they going to. That we were right to be worried about dangerous programs, but we were wrong to think that letting them have anything was the answer. My most hopeless task, and I spent months trying to broker first a deal between ARA and EUR so that we could even go to the British to discuss an approach, and then finally, amazingly, we were able to do that with the help of the International Organizations Bureau who did come up with a plan to have a working group basically between ARA, PM and the foreign office in London, to try to come up with a plan of what were safe weapons. We did that and we finally, after a number of meetings, got an agreement on some things that we could offer. And we also tried to come up with a program to actually help Britain, Argentina and the Falklanders manage the fish stocks around the Falklands; that was as sensitive as the weapons.

Working on all of these Argentine issues, one of the lessons that came through loud and clear, that I've never forgotten and that ended up guiding me later when I was doing training at FSI, was that as countries get interesting and the interest in them throughout the U.S. government gets broader, then there was the country reporting exercise and the embassy would be asked to do a lot and we had a good, aggressive embassy. They were doing lots of reporting. My job as the deputy office director – and I was pretty good at it –

was to go through the cables. I'd learned to speed read cables and to really go over everything and ask questions and make sure people were working on things. I got us a second generalist who could jump around and help as areas heated up. But during one period when things in Argentina were kind of tense, I had noticed three or four cables that didn't seem to jive. There were just different messages coming in and I'd ask the Argentine desk officer what he thought of them and he was very good, very diligent, very hardworking. He came in a couple hours later and he said, "Jeez, Bob, I'm really sorry. I haven't even seen them. I haven't had a chance. There's so much stuff coming in. I'm doing so much on this visit and that visit that I'm very grateful when you spot the key cables and send them to me for my opinion because I don't have time to read all of them." And we had sort of kidded ourselves and told ourselves, oh well, we can do all this reporting because it's being read by the desk officer and INR. What I discovered was that actually INR and the CIA did seem to pretty much have the staff and time to see most everything, but it became crystal clear to me, and it was just Argentina, that throughout the Department the desk officers were too busy; we had sort of downgraded them, understaffed them, and asked them to do more and more managerial tasks, reviews, etc., to where they didn't have time.

Q: To keep track of what was really happening?

HOPPER: I thought, oh my god, if they're a really good desk officer who only has one country and can't read everything about the country, who can? And how does the State Department play its role at bringing coherence to it? I realized that in some ways deputy office directors had to play a role in that in spotting what the important trends were. We didn't do a good job later when the budgets got tight; we ended up sacrificing a lot of the deputy office director positions, saying they were superfluous and they didn't have any direct thing to do. Now we see that was a disaster, in that when it worked well, those were the people who actually did sort of have the time to see how trends came together. Letting them go was a huge mistake. If anything, the redundancy in the Department was between office directors and DASes, and that we'd never quite sort it out as, if you had activist, energetic, committed, caring DASes of the type that we had, there really wasn't very much of a role left for an activist, policy-making, inclined office director.

Q: I suppose especially when they had a very strong deputy who could keep track of the desk officers and all these strands.

HOPPER: It was a wonderful period. George Vest had been right that sometimes when you get a job that you don't think you want, it can be a wonderful experience and a learning experience. I very much enjoyed the two years of doing the Southern Cone.

Q: One last question about Argentina: was this the period of the disappeared, the missing, the human rights issues? Was Tex Harris in the embassy in Buenos Aires yet?

HOPPER: No. The defeat of Argentina in the Falklands War got rid of the military government and brought in Raul Alfonsin as president and the "Radical Party". In their

hearts they were very good on human rights and were trying to move in the right direction; but they couldn't control the military. As far as we could tell, there weren't any ongoing problems. They were miserable failures in trying to get any acknowledgment or redress. The mothers of the Palazzo de Mayo still demonstrated. They met and there were endless processes to try and get something going, but the Alfonsin government couldn't really confront the military. Eventually they had a real pale process to…

I saw yesterday just a frightful story in the Washington Post about the families of the missing who had been belatedly given $250,000 each for a spouse who died and $125,000 for children; and that at the time that that was to be done, the government of Argentina couldn't afford to actually pay them in real money so opted to pay them in bonds. The bonds have been payable and then put in bank accounts, and in the economic chaos of the last six months, when Argentina basically defaulted on its bonds, it defaulted on these payments to the missing. And, in dealing with the World Bank and everything, the economic team from Argentina has been in this quandary that you're sort of not allowed to discriminate between your bond holders. These aren't investors in Argentina; these are people who were hurt.

Q: Victims.

HOPPER: I wonder what the U.S. government and the Treasury undersecretary…this is a challenge for us to figure out a position.

Q: Okay, anything else about your time in ARA?

HOPPER: Watching the ARA Front Office, and we were still in the great period of the Central American wars and while I was back there, Iran Contra blew up. It was fascinating from my perspective. Assistant Secretary Abrams… [Tape 8, Side B]

Q: Okay, you were beginning to say you were just as happy not to be involved at that point with Central America.

HOPPER: Well, when we tried to get Assistant Secretary Abrams' attention – and he was very energetic, a quick study – he was so preoccupied with Central America that he didn't have a lot of time for other things, which is one reason why he had people like Gelbard and Skol doing it. But also it seemed to me, from the sort of Fourth and Fifth Floor perspective, that Secretary Shultz had in some ways sort of washed his hands of Central America and assigned Abrams to keep it away from him – and not let it explode. It was important; it should work out right, but not cut across and hurt other priorities that the secretary had.

I still marvel; the U.S. government, when we talk about how we can't keep secrets, often we can and there are layers and the people do their things and what you don't need to know about – oftentimes things happen that you don't know about. You sense people are very busy. On Central America there was a lot going on and within ARA people were

trying to keep it sort of bounded and productive, but they didn't control everything. It was just interesting to sniff around the margins.

Q: You mentioned the effort of the task force to try to come up with some acceptable weapons systems for Argentina. Were you involved in weapons sales to Chile or anywhere?

HOPPER: No.

Q: It wasn't really an issue. I know often it is in South America, over the years.

HOPPER: In Chile the one issue was that there were planes (I think they were F-4s) that the Chileans had, that they had had for a long time, that were starting to face some maintenance problems. And basically, there was an embargo on Chile for human rights violations and we didn't want to have military sales; but at a certain point we came up with a program that stressed crew safety, and since they had these American planes, we felt that (and I'm sure there were people who thought it was sophistry) as long as the brass were going to have young men fly them, and they were American manufactured planes, they needed to be safe. So we did come up with a program where we allowed Lockheed or somebody to go down and do crew safety repairs. But other people say, well, that's nonsense; that that allows them to continue as military platforms. That's true too, but we just didn't want to face planes falling out of the sky and have the moral responsibility of crew members. And the other side of it, the American industry didn't want bad publicity of their own planes falling out of the sky. So we compromised on that.

We were pretty aggressive in stopping some programs that would've led to military advancement in both Argentina and Chile. And later I was subpoenaed to accompany a Chilean arms manufacturer who had contacts in the U.S. and had brought a suit against the U.S. government for illegally blocking his businesses. We were subpoenaed and had to do interrogatories. We live in a complicated world and trying to do your job where you think it's pretty clear that what you're doing is following the priorities set by the government and the right thing to do, but there could be other people who don't see it that way and can fool you.

Q: And sometimes there can be conflicting goals or priorities; policies that you sometimes don't quite know which to be on top of.

HOPPER: But the other thing was that I'd been semi-sued and subpoenaed twice; I've been lucky, but I've found that the government was supportive and offered clear instructions. I felt that since I was confident that what I was doing was proper and right, that it worked out fine. It was a pain, but not a bother.

Q: Okay, anything else about this period in Latin America? If not, maybe we could go on to your next assignment in Washington.

HOPPER: Once again, it's always interesting thinking about your next job. A friend of mine, Tom Weston, whose place I had taken as a staff assistant in EUR many years before, and I had stayed in touch. We had both worked on the Cyprus and Southern European program around the time of the Clifford mission when he was in the Bureau of Legislative Affairs together with Nelson Ledsky and had been part of the team to try and get the embargo lifted. We'd been friends for a long time; our families were friends, and we had been at the War College together. Tom, when we were at the War College, was called by Rod Spiers and asked to leave the War College and go back to M (Office of the Undersecretary for Management) and run the legislative, the appropriations side of M, to try and get a budget through. It was a period when Secretary Shultz had signaled that there were going to have to be dramatic cuts unless we got more money. This budget appropriations job had taken on a higher profile. Tom had done it for three years and he said he was getting ready to move on and he had recommended me for the job.

I talked to Rod Spiers, whom I had known very well when he was ambassador in Ankara, and he had sort of picked me for the job; but, then, subsequent to that, there had been the election and the Bush I team had come in and there was a new undersecretary designate for management, Ivan Sullen, and he interviewed me.

It was a fascinating interview; just a dynamo of a business manager and a systems manager, a former DOD (Department of Defense) whiz kid. Even though he had not been confirmed yet, he just had a million ideas on how he was going to change things and run things, and how they were going to work. In this interview I think we talked for at least an hour and fifteen minutes, and if I said twenty-five words that was probably twice as many as I got out. But he laid down a marker of all the things he wanted to do and how it would work and sort of gave me three days to decide whether I still wanted the job and could live within the parameters of how he wanted to change it. While he thought they were dramatic changes, they weren't really going to change how it worked. The kind of team he wanted us to be was what I wanted and how I wanted to do it anyway, so I agreed and took the job.

And in the summer of '89, I became one of two legislative assistants to the undersecretary for management. The other one was a gentleman who is still a good friend of mine, Bill Bacchus, who was responsible for the authorizing committees and was essentially in charge of management, legislation and authorities, and I was responsible for working with the Commerce/Justice/State appropriation subcommittees; I was responsible for actually getting the money. We did have a good division of labor; I did the reappropriators and he did authorizers and we helped one another. The major change that Mr. Sullen had pressed for was that we were to be a team, and for the first year while I was learning the job I was to accept that as a senior person who had been doing it for a while, Bill would be the team leader. I didn't have any problem with that. Sullen wanted me to agree, if things went well and he liked how it was going, that I would stay for three years, not two. So that I could then for the last two be the team leader and he had some plans for Bacchus to do something else, and we would help find somebody. Bill was a civil servant and I was a Foreign Service Officer at that time, and Sullen had in his mind a change where the

person doing the appropriators would become a civil servant and be permanent because the personal side of the relationship was so important and the numbers and the issues weren't ones that every Foreign Service Officer jumped to; they wanted to shift. Ironically, that actually happened, but with me becoming the civil servant.

So I started in July of '89 and the Commerce/Justice/State House subcommittee had a big trip planned to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and because I was in town I started working with Tom Weston – probably in May – going to meetings and doing things so that we could have a rather seamless transition. So I go instantly from having helped put together this trip and then in August leave escorting the congressional delegation on this trip, something that I hadn't done in that way before. Going around with Tom on his farewell calls and introductory calls for me was interesting. It was fascinating to see the good relations he had with the members of the staff and how tricky it actually was to have really good relations with the members. I could see after a while that the key staffers had the scope to do seventy or eighty percent of the work, and sometimes with the guidance from their bosses maybe even more. While the chairmen made the tough decisions, these were decisions oftentimes after a lot of framework had been established by the staff, and so it was more important to have a good relationship with staff and that you couldn't save things at the last minute by having wonderful friendships with the members because too much was done beforehand.

I also discovered that unfortunately to have the kind of relationship you needed to have with the staff who were professional appropriators that you needed to learn a lot about appropriations' procedures and that all of the budget issues had become incredibly complicated and arcane. The professional appropriators also played on their special knowledge and special vocabularies. So 302-Bs and 602-As and all the different segments of the budget act and firewalls and things became important. I actually found that I was the first person doing this appropriations lobby job for the State Department who actually had to learn the budget and had to learn the budget making rules and the congressional rules, and that knowing the arcania was much more important than it had been before. So I spent a lot of time learning how it works so that I could talk to the OMB people and have them not just blow me off as somebody spouting grand foreign policy pronouncements, and as who didn't know how the budget worked. That was very hard; took a lot of time to learn the details.

The other thing I discovered was that to try and build friends on the Hill, you had to spend nine hours with people in the State Department figuring out what they were up to, and what they were doing, and what they were telling and not telling the Congress so that you could spend one good hour on the Hill and actually have the right things to say, as well as know what was going on. It was just shocking how secretive the different parts of the Department (even though in my job for the undersecretary for management) I led this sort of team where we met formally every week and talked multiple times every day to know the different M family bureau's needs and plans you'd still find them doing things that they had almost purposely kept away from us. "Oh Jeez, we didn't know. That just affected us. We didn't think anybody else needed to know about that." And you'd get

called by the Hill and it would be very embarrassing not to know of some initiative by an office that reported directly to the undersecretary. The amount of homework necessary to be a player on congressional things was very surprising. At first I thought it was an area where one could get by on charm and finesse and political skill, and I was surprised at how much one had to know.

Q: In terms of the contacts that you had on the Hill, do I understand from what you said before, that you realized after a while that you really had to spend probably more attention on key staff people while still paying attention to the members as well; especially the members who would go on trips and who did take some interest in your work?

HOPPER: The beauty of congressional travel was that, as the person making the trips work, and accompanying them, the sort of quality face time that I got with the members just sitting on the airplanes and in the hotel rooms and on the buses was incredible. If I was patient, I got to know them really well. If you knew the members, the Department people would suspect that, "Oh God, you've become a really good friend of Jim Moran; he did this. Did you tell him to do that? He would've never known to do that. Did you spill the beans on this?" Just a lot of suspicion, and that suspicion wouldn't exist when you were working with the staff.

I found that I needed to build up the relationship with the members and that this was something that you could use in extremis and that I figured out it was best to use it to get timely meetings for Department principals with them. Even at times, when I might've been able to find a way to contact the member and get them to do something, over the long haul, it was better to slow down and actually work through staff: build up, have a meeting, and let a principal close the deal even though I might've been able to do it quickly. There were long term relationships that needed to be built and if I just jumped in with the members, the staff in the Department and the staff on the Hill would start to get very suspicious and they could cut me out. If they wanted to, they could cut me out or they could involve me in a way where it was useful.

Another thing I learned right away when we were trained as Foreign Service Officers that you won't have to spy; you want to collect all this information and you never know when information will be valuable and you sort of feed it into the machine and it gets used in ways you may know about and you may not know about. I found that in working with the Congress, that the State Department (and probably all agencies) are so fretful about what the Congress will do to them that they actually don't respond very well to seemingly bad and threatening news. So sometimes you realize you maybe didn't want to know something; that you'd pick up a piece of information and somebody would tell you, "Now, I want you to have this as background, but please don't tell anybody." That was the worst position to be in because oftentimes if you would tell your boss or you do a memo, they would want to act on it, and if they acted on it there was no way that it wouldn't be clear that you'd been the source for it or that somebody else had been your source and they would be undercut.

In my very first round of action on the appropriations bill (and I was both semi-ashamed and proud of myself for this) I was up on the Hill with a Senate staffer technically reviewing the bill and the report that they had just written. Very nicely they had invited me up on a Sunday to read the bill and my job was to help them if I spotted anything that seemed wrong; outrageously wrong, stupid, would cause embarrassment to the U.S. or would really hurt us. I was to let them know. Or if I found that they had made mistakes in describing our programs and it would embarrass them, I was to let them know. If they had made a policy choice or a money choice and it was within their prerogative and it wasn't a "mistake," I wasn't supposed to go back and gin up a lobbying effort, which is a really awkward position to be in. This fellow had given me the bill – the bill language, the report language – to review and mark up and put little tags on and get back to him, and he had accidentally given me two copies of the report. So I kept one. I went back and I'd had a good idea, a good recall of the thing, but I actually had the stuff. So I did a report to the undersecretary and I was able to Xerox some of the key things and I pointed out that we needed to be prepared; we'd be able to work this on the floor, but that they really didn't want…

Q: Phone calls.

HOPPER: Phone calls. The undersecretary couldn't resist. "Bob, we can't have this. We can't have that. Please call." They start calling people and I was viewed as a conniving thief and it took me, with that one fellow, six months of very hard work to get back to a point where he would trust me at all. I learned that sometimes you can be too clever and know too much. A friend of mine (this was later) had been a life long college friend of Speaker Gingrich's chief of staff, and they went to the same church together. He had the awful experience of one time before a mark-up his friend had told him, "Just forget it. There's nothing you can do about it. Just so you'll be prepared, the committee is going to do 'X,'" and it was pretty heinous what they were going to do. He said, "I probably shouldn't tell you and you can't tell anybody." And he didn't. This thing happened and it was bad. Later the assistant secretary for legislative affairs, when she hammered on the majority staff for doing this, they said, "Well, but we had signaled it to one of your people." So they had it both ways and it was like a case of where once he learned it, he actually should've…

Q: In that case.

HOPPER: In that case. And of the lessons I've learned and when I was training the political officers they sometimes would say, "Well, Mr. Hopper, what do we do when we're out there, we're making friends, we're building contacts; what if one of our contacts tells us something that's important to the U.S. but may hurt them if we do something on it?" and I would tell them, "Look, the government pays $250,000 a year to have you in place, and so long as you have accurately identified yourself as a U.S. official – even if somebody who you think has become a dear friend – if they tell you something that's sensitive, that's important, and may hurt them if you act on it, your assumption has

to be that they knew who you were, and that in their letting you know, they really wanted you to do something with it. Maybe you can find a way to not finger it back to them, but that's why you're there; to find out these things. You're nobody's best friend, you're a U.S. official. Use it."

Q: I think you may have touched on this much earlier, but let me just come back to it. In this new job that you have in the undersecretary for management's office as deputy director, and then director, of legislative affairs, to what extent did you particularly try to work with the State Department congressional fellows that were spending a year or two on the Hill? Not at all, or somewhat?

HOPPER: Having been one myself, I had the relatively naïve idea that maybe we could work with them closely. I tried to get involved early on; talked to personnel, find out who the people would be, come up with a plan to talk to them and keep in touch, and over time, consistently discovered that the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, in their view, had had such difficult experiences with the fellows that after a while they had decided that, no, the best way to do this – since the Congress suspects that they're State Department spies – is that we basically set them free. I told them, no, you go up there and you work for the members and don't feel any obligation to tell us anything and we won't feel any obligation to especially tell you anything either. But I always found that that was sort of a cop-out and that we needed to find a better way to manage it. We never were very good at either making sure that the people who went up there had some legislative experience and skills, or in necessarily using them afterwards on anything related to legislative issues. And we still did send them up. It's still a problem.

Many of the State Department people who end up spending a year on the Hill, and especially those who extend and sort of try to stay longer – bless them – over time make the cardinal mistake of thinking that they can use the congressmen or representative or senator's power to help fix the State Department. I've seen time after time where the fellows end up having their own agenda to reform the personnel system and practices of the State Department, and they have seen up close and personal a particular fault that's related to them and then a generalized idea that if they could get a law passed so that would never happen again, that all would be right with the world – and usually it's not that simple.

Q: And there are probably instances where there would be a foreign policy aspect that they were concerned about and thought that from the Hill they could, at least at the margins, change that as well.

HOPPER: The members would give them great leeway on items related to the professional behavior of the Foreign Service. And think, wow, Yes, you're part of it. If you think that needs to be changed – that you really know – where members and their staff actually would not think that a temporary member of the staff necessarily was actually any more expert on the Soviet Union than they were. One of the beauties of foreign policy is that actually many people think they know a lot about it and that they can

make policy for the United States without being a Foreign Service Officer.

Q: Now your main role was to support the State Department budget with the Congress, particularly in the appropriations process, and other State Department programs in terms of their budgetary impact. I guess I'm still curious how you, in the office of the undersecretary of state for management, worked with all sorts of other people in the executive branch. You mentioned it took nine hours of your time to make one hour on the Hill worthwhile. I understand that because you have the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, you have the chief financial officer of the Department, the head of the budget shop, you have an office in the deputy secretary's office, you have the Office of Management and Budget and I've probably only begun to list…

HOPPER: And you have the Legislative Affairs people both at the White House for the president and at the NSC for the national security adviser, and chopping that all up was…

Q: And then there's the Defense Department.

HOPPER: There was the Defense Department and the CIA who each had their legislative players and had different approaches. The foreign affairs budget is the responsibility of many different committees; money for State Department operations and for the UN all comes out of this Commerce/Justice/State subcommittee; the assistance budget, the "secretary's walking around aid money," the World Bank, the IMF, the Inter-American Bank all come out of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee.

Q: Now would you be involved with all that, too?

HOPPER: I would be involved in that in the liaison fashion to make sure that oftentimes say AID might be complaining that if the State Department would only provide them with more security and more flexibility and better provisions in Nigeria, they'd be able to run a more coherent program. There would be lots of blame-gaming on what was going on, so you needed to cooperate.

Let's just say that, for lack of better numbers, the defense budget was $250 billion and the combined State Department, foreign aid and Commerce/Justice/State budgets were $20 billion. Nonetheless, we had a feeling in the State Department that we were an important part of national security and that we actually were more important than those numbers would suggest, and that there were times when it would make sense to get the Defense budget to pay for some of the things we did since we couldn't shift the money to have them do some things. And we ended up having programs where we would try to get the marine guards paid for almost exclusively by DOD, or get the CIA to do things. Even though that seemed sensible and wonderful to us, and to be literally falling off the table of DOD, they were always, when you get down to it, somebody else's pennies and peanuts. Nobody's budget ever seems big enough and nobody does the $250 million at the DOD; everybody does some little piece of it. And we'd actually be wanting some piece of some little piece of it. And they would fight like the dickens.

When peacekeeping became a big issue at the end of the Bush administration, and beginning of the Clinton administration, both Secretary Baker and Secretary Eagleburger realized that, "Wow, increased UN peacekeeping risked just chewing up the State Department budget." I can remember back when I was working for Nimetz in the counselor's office; he had the breadth of mind to see that if we treated our paying a guaranteed 25% to 30% of peacekeeping as an obligation and just willy-nilly kept voting for things, and if programs got bigger and bigger, and the State Department couldn't make the case for getting other monies, we were going to find our budget eaten up by UN programs. He looked for ways to fend that off, but no one at the Department took him seriously.

Q: At that time.

HOPPER: At that time. Thought he was silly. What was he talking about? It was a bottomless pit. And he was utterly, absolutely right. There were a number of cases like that where he saw these train wrecks coming, but saw them too soon.

At the end of the Bush/Baker/Eagleburger period, Eagleburger had done a very clever letter to Dick Darman at OMB, manipulating the firewalls and the budget process and protecting State Department funding, because of peacekeeping and trying to get some more money set aside. That was also the time of the new embassies in the former Soviet Union and a lot of people in the Department were very critical of Secretary Baker and his team for not going up for a supplemental, and asking for more money to fund the new embassies. I always thought that Baker and his people were very, very clever. They needed to move quickly; their goal was to really establish the independence of those countries and in some ways to make sure that Humpty Dumpty could never be put back together again. And so that trick was do State to State agreements; do successor State rights, acknowledge their independence, get embassies on the ground going right away. And to do that the Baker team decided they just couldn't afford the risk of having to do legislation, of having to do something where the Congress had to physically act first before we could do what needed to be done. So, greatly with the help of the Eagleburger budget people, and EUR, the Baker people figured out, at first, we can reprogram a lot of money between and within Europe to take care of this.

The way re-programmings work is one of the things that the public and most people at the State Department doesn't understand. The Congress, in passing both authorization and appropriations bills, at the end of each bill has a chapter describing how you can shift money for different purposes within appropriations and that if it crosses certain financial limits you need to do a re-programming letter to keep committees informed and to wait so many days before you can act. And what it allows you to do is change the way you spend resources while only having to get the acquiescence of the specific subject matter committees. So you're not open to somebody from some state who feels he's being short-changed by the State Department to raise some extraneous issues; if you keep good relations with the key committees, you can do this out of public light and do it quietly.

Ordinarily that works quite well. Baker figured out how you could do that to establish the embassies by essentially shifting a lot of money from Western Europe. But he also recognized (and Eagleburger was key in this) that there was a hope (it turned out to be wistful) to establish the new embassies in a very rational way and have staffing be severely scrutinized so that we wouldn't end up with embassies larger than they needed to be. There was a broad recognition that in places like Oslo we just had far more people running around than was necessary for the priorities of our foreign policy.

So one of the plans (I heard Eagleburger and others talk about this) was, by God, we were going to get the size of Embassy Kiev right. It was an important country. It would probably, in a grand European context and over a period of time, be the sixth or seventh most important country. If we could get that to where we could run it with about fifteen professional staff, it would set an example that could then be used to downsize other places. It was a noble idea that didn't work. Security issues and other things grew. The pressures to let other agencies come and to have the embassies grow were sort of unavoidable. The career State Department officers sent to be ambassadors and DCMs at these places all had agreed that the goal was to keep them small; but once they got there, all felt that the only way to do their jobs was to make them grow, and many of them had them grow. The bottom line is for the first year we got them all up and running just by re-programming funds.

AFSA (American Foreign Service Association) and the FSOs (Foreign Service Officers) saw that and later felt that we had thinned the soup, we had to do all these extra programs, and we didn't get any money for it. The next year through the appropriations process we were able to get every penny that we could document that had been an additional cost because of the new embassies actually added on top of our request. I was just amazed that in that subsequent year, when John Rogers was the undersecretary for management, we got something like $61 million over our request to run the new embassy program, and that it became part of the base. That was what we could document that we had re-programmed. Now, in fact, it was much more expensive than that to run the post. So we probably did eat some things. But because we wanted to keep getting more money, it became part of our standard argument that we had nobly and courageously eaten the costs of those new posts and hadn't gotten anything for it. There was never a tactical moment where it made sense to actually say, "No, no, no. We actually did get the money for it." It was better to sort of let the myth grow to try and get more funds, but you ended up having Foreign Service Officers think that their management had been kind of dumb when actually they hadn't been.

Q: So you had argued that in the short run we were able to get the new embassies in the newly independent states, and in the former Yugoslavia, up and running right away at reasonable size, and in the medium term, or at least in the following year, it really didn't hurt us in terms of funding levels. And that the problems – which I assume you'll agree did exist later on in the '90s – really not because of that, but because of some other developments…

HOPPER: Yes because basically nobody got enough money and things kept growing. Yes. But even there, I had talked earlier about how I had to start learning more about budget rules to sort of help the State Department. One of the things that became quite clear after a while was that some agencies funded in the Commerce/Justice/State bill were able to collect new fees and collect changed fees and keep the money for their programs. [Tape 9, Side A]

Q: Bob, you were starting to talk about the issue of agencies with keeping fees collected.

HOPPER: In working on the problem that became really clear when we had to do the new embassies we found that we just weren't going to have enough resources to do all the things we had to do; and that the American people wanted some kind of a peace dividend and had been hoping that international involvement would become cheaper and not more expensive, when in fact doing more without one grand, huge threat actually had the potential of being more expensive to deal with than the old problems. A number of us realized that we needed to find some clever and less painful ways to get more money. In working on the Commerce/Justice/State bill, we had the advantage of watching how the INS (Immigration and Naturalization Service), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and parts of the Commerce Department, were being permitted to create new fees basically for activities they had always done, or to increase the amounts of fees they charged to get funds. Part of this had to do with the budget caps that had come into effect, and their clever appropriations staffers had figured out ways that if they could raise money through new fees, it wouldn't count against their levels either and it would be sort of like free money.

And a number of us discovered that the State Department actually collected huge amounts of fees on the consular side and on the passport side that all went straight into the Treasury; the State Department didn't keep any of it. Several of us tried to make the case that those fees were no different from the fees the SEC and the INS collected, especially the INS fees, that we should be allowed to keep them. And the OMB guys said, "Oh no. There are rules against that and there's procedure."

Q: It's never been done?

HOPPER: There were actual rules on how it was done; that those other things were different. You just didn't understand them. So I had some other friends at OMB and I did some study and tried to figure out what was different and what was the same, and eventually reached the conclusion that we were running up against the problem of where the teacher gave one student an "A" and one student a "C" for the same answer, but if the "C" student protests and makes a big deal out of it, it's just as likely that the other student would get a "C," than we would be allowed to get an "A." So we had to figure out some way to make it different. We kept recovering the ground. We had a lot of support, but OMB, for about two years, killed our fee proposals. However, we'd built congressional support.

Sort of the proof that there literally is no cloud without a silver lining, is that after the bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building, our committee, especially Chairman Hollings in the Senate on the CJS side, sort of said, "Are you all taking security seriously enough?" His staff had been ones who wanted to help us on the fee side, so we put together a package that was of the border security program. We relied partly on the fact that the blind sheik had got in the U.S. because we didn't have good communications; and there was no way to check the data bases and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, and so we needed to upgrade everything related to visa security. That would take the use of machinery to pull passports, and machinery to pull visas, and as this new technology was actually a new product. Jim Mollet, who was the financial office legislative person, and I, working together, came up with this plan where we could call it border security, call it new, build it into the global government-wide security programs, and we'd managed to put a package together that allowed us to increase our visa fees, increase our passport fees, and keep the increases.

It ended up being a huge additional input to the Department. And then the controversy became that, understandably, the consular affairs people wanted all the money just to go to them. The risk was that if you did that, at some point the Congress would say, "Well okay, we'll just not fund the consular operation; we'll let them be fee based," and it wouldn't have netted out as a gain for the State Department. So, the chief financial officer at the time, Rich Greene, and Dick Moose, the undersecretary, and I came up with a sort of peace treaty in the State Department and we added increasing the communications pipelines for the posts; adding computers and things that benefited all of the sections, but made the embassies able to communicate; adding security that was good for the consular sections, but for everybody. Everything that we could put into this pocket, we funded out of this, and I think it was adding at least $250 million. It was adding real money. It was one of those things where, as we were being scrunched, the key way we were able to keep going was that we got that extra visa money. And once again, publicly we wouldn't say, "We want to thank you for making those extra fees available." We were talking about how we had been cut, so you'd be sort of hung between you'd use these poor arguments that were necessary to help make your case and sometimes your own employees would hear only them and think, "Jeez, you must be incompetent jerks if you can't get us enough money," and we were actually being very competent and getting more money, but having to kind of keep it almost a secret as we got it.

Q: Bob, I think when we stopped last time, a week ago, you had just talked about some of the aspects of being adviser to Undersecretary of State for Management Dick Moose. Maybe you want to talk some more about some of the issues that had to be addressed during that period; this was near the end of the period of Secretary of State Warren Christopher, I think.

HOPPER: It starts at the beginning and in some ways it shows the importance of getting off to a good start and what happens when you don't. The Clinton administration came in; they had actually studied very closely an effort by the outgoing team under Secretary for Management John Rogers. The group had done something called "State 2000," a report

that looked at some fairly important managerial changes and it sort of got set on the shelf because of the transition. The new team came in and they had looked at it, and actually they were ready to do some of the major changes which was to go to a structure that was modeled more on a corporate board of directors with trying to not have every decision either go up a management chain just to end, or, oops, be seen as political and go to the deputy secretary and the secretary. In that model, what would often happen is that the undersecretary for management, and his team, would work a problem and be ready to make a decision, and if it impacted especially a regional bureau, the regional bureaus would seek to move it out of the managerial chain, into the policy chain. It almost inevitably trumped the management goals. So the idea was that if you had a corporate board of directors, all of the under secretaries would meet together and you'd make decisions more corporately. It was one of those wonderful ideas that was never tried. My understanding is that, in fact, during the entire Clinton administration there never was a meeting of the corporate board as such. Basically, P&E didn't want the decisions made that way.

Q: They preferred to make them themselves?

HOPPER: Yes. They tried to have things come to them and then if it really got tough, they'd go to the deputy secretary. And there would be ad hoc meetings, but not corporate board meetings. And that was kind of interesting.

In another part of that reform effort, it became clear early on in the Clinton administration that the budget was going to be a problem, so they started looking at some managerial reforms. They had a number of initiatives to study the Department, which the Department didn't react terribly well to. But that goes back to my point of you need a good start. I don't know how many people remember, but Warren Christopher had been the person tasked by President-elect Clinton to advise him on putting together the whole Cabinet. You almost got the feeling that, being a gentleman, he gave everyone more attention than the Department he eventually took. Whether he had always intended to reserve the secretary of state slot for himself or not, I don't know, but it almost appears that the whole foreign affairs apparatus got the last look in the process. When Christopher was named, in meeting with the concept of diversity and new approaches and trying to give Africa more of an impact, and to give AID more of an impact, they selected former FSO, Cliff Wharton, to be the deputy secretary. He was an African-American and had a stellar experience as managing a major foundation, TIAA-CREF in New York. He got in the job, and somehow, it just didn't take off.

One of the big issues was that part of "State 2000" and the reforms they were looking at was that the deputy secretary would play a much bigger role in supervising AID, and so in putting that together, they needed to get the right person for AID. They went around, around, around in circles; there was a fight between two different candidates who had friends in the White House, and they just went in circles. They had trouble finding someone to do it, and eventually it got so nasty that part of the outcome was that Deputy Secretary Wharton resigned. They had trouble finding somebody for AID, and so in a

switch they took the undersecretary for management at the State Department, Brian Atwood, who actually knew the management issues and had gotten off to a very quick, strong start at State. They switched him to AID to become the director and they brought Strobe Talbott up from the special adviser on Soviet Affairs and made him the deputy secretary. Mr. Talbott was a brilliant, wonderful, articulating person who wasn't a manager, and so when you wanted the deputy secretary to take more of that managerial burden, that was a problem. And in Brian Atwood you had somebody who had just gotten started, had done a lot of work and helped put together a team who had started looking at what the weaknesses and strengths of the State Department were, and then went to AID. They then had to put somebody for the State Department in in a hurry and they brought back Dick Moose, who had been in very briefly in the Carter administration and hadn't like it and had decided to become African assistant secretary. He comes in, has lots of ideas, but it's just not a coherent team. It was a group that talked a lot about having teams and building teams, and it just wasn't a team. And it never became clear who the final decision makers were; Talbott was on some things. It was just a messy process.

It also was fascinating for me in that Dick Moose, who had been a Foreign Service Officer and had a lot of experience with the State Department and in the corporate world, and just utterly – to his toenails – wanted nothing but the best for the Foreign Service and the State Department; and in everything he did tried not to hurt anybody and to make it better, actually got into too many details. And he just cared so much that some of his assistant secretaries interpreted his deep caring for meddling in the details. The irony is that the previous undersecretary, John Rogers, had had very little foreign affairs background, but was a manager, and had good relations with Secretary Baker. John Rogers told me on a number of occasions that his key view of the Foreign Service was that they were spoiled elite who should not get special favors, and that there should be fair rules and if he ever caught anybody giving a special favor to the Foreign Service, he would punish them. And yet, with no love lost for the Foreign Service, and no great knowledge and experience about the State Department, he was actually able to apply managerial models and delegate to people, and that probably worked better than loving and caring deeply about making it a better and nicer place – which is one of those great life ironies that's hard to deal with.

Q: Let me just ask you a couple of details. Did you say that Cliff Wharton was an ex-Foreign Service Officer?

HOPPER: His father was a Foreign Service Officer and an ambassador. I can't remember well, but he has an interesting bio; it may have been that he was more a Foreign Service kid who traveled the world a lot. But he had worked on foreign affairs and he had done assistance related work.

Q: And he certainly had experience as a manager; had been president of a couple of major universities and so on.

Was Brian Atwood actually confirmed as undersecretary?

HOPPER: Yes.

Q: So you worked with him for a year or so?

HOPPER: Oh no. He only did it for about three months. Brian had been one of the heads of the transition team, so was somebody who was able to start immediately. So I started working with him by late November of '92. He had put together a team. He had a plan for doing congressional relations. He had been confirmed, had a round of hearings on the appropriation bill, and then left.

Q: And he also, of course, was a former Foreign Service Officer with lots of congressional experience both on the Hill and in the Department of State under the Carter administration.

Now Dick Moose – you gave his background during the Carter administration, but he also was a Foreign Service Officer. Where had he been in the early days of the Clinton administration? In government or what?

HOPPER: No. He was working for American Express; he was their senior public relations congressional person out of New York. They got him to come back into government.

Q: Now in this period of the Clinton administration, you continued to work with the undersecretary – the new various under secretaries – primarily on budget issues, or did you have broader responsibilities?

HOPPER: At that point, under Atwood and Moose, I was the head of legislative affairs for M, but especially with Atwood, the concept was that there would be a much closer relationship with the Bureau of Legislative Affairs. He had recruited and brought in a wonderful, wonderful person who sadly died a couple of years ago, Meg Donovan, who I had worked with on CSCE things in the past, and she had worked for Dante Fascell. She was brought in as sort of the special projects DAS in H (Bureau of Legislative Affairs), and she was going to work closely with M and I had very direct instructions that I was to work very closely with Meg and make sure that our efforts were coordinated. That was off to a very good start, but the problem was that she had been selected and told to do that by Atwood, and then when Atwood left, Moose knew her and liked her, but it wasn't the same. Then the people in H got very busy just doing all of the nomination hearings and all the issues and so we ended up not being, for a while, quite as close as the model had called for. For much of the period when Moose was doing it, I'm heading it for him and we have a team of people in all the M bureaus who we would meet with every week to keep on track, and then I would keep H informed and try to keep everybody working closely.

It turned out that Wendy Sherman, who was the first assistant secretary in H in the

Clinton administration, had a model in mind where, in fact, H would run all congressional relations and her goal was to take people like me out of the area we were in and bring everyone into H. That was an ongoing managerial issue for forever. Eventually it was solved in a string of budget reviews and managerial reforms.

Undersecretary Moose decided, after a couple of years, that while he was asking other people to streamline their operations, it would be a sign of good faith and progress to merge the M and H legislative operations; and so my office was moved, physically, into H. That was a fun negotiation. But the merger was on a basis where we worked for both M and H; my EER at the time was drafted by the assistant secretary in H and reviewed by the undersecretary for management. It was kind of unique. And I really did work for both of them. In the end, I found that it worked very well, but it required a lot of effort on my part to keep them both informed, and run back and forth. But in the end, it meant that I was a member of the H senior staff; was in all of their planning meetings; and over time I was able – because they were smart people – to convince the management in H that budget and appropriations on the State Department side mattered more to them. In the past, they had cared about, and run, the foreign operations part of the budget and sort of ignored the State Department part. It got fit together in a way that actually helped.

Q: It probably was of some help on the budget appropriations side as well because you were aware of other things going on in the Congress and Department priorities for other bureaus.

HOPPER: Yes. We could fit things together. And it came down to making priorities; what were the four or five key things and how did you concentrate on them. We were able to make the State Department's budget one of those top three priorities, which it hadn't always been before.

Q: So you actually physically moved into the Bureau of Legislative Affairs?

HOPPER: Yes. In H, I headed a budget operation and I had, in addition to the people who had been with me in M, two senior advisers in H who had done the foreign operations budget; we worked together as team. So we had more depth; we were able to deal with the appropriators. They had played us off a bit, one bill against the other, and now we were able to do a better job of not having that happen. Now, it's one of these cases where you have to look at what the results were; it was a really tough budgetary period with budgets going down and the result was that we didn't get eaten up more than we did.

What was fascinating for me was that I came into the job of doing congressional relations and working on management issues, with a typical political cone/FSO view of management, sort of skewed by basically having seen lots of managerial decisions that didn't seem very effective or focused on a big picture, and thinking it was kind of a silly endeavor and it got in the way of doing policy. The more I worked on it, I saw that it was that kind of attitude that helped make it a silly endeavor that got in the way of making policy, and that, in fact, it needed a lot more attention and we needed to do a better job of

it. I came away with an incredible respect for how intellectually challenging and difficult managerial issues are.

One issue that I worked on from the day I started in 1989, until the very end, was the Moscow embassy problem. Trying to match security, the ups and downs of foreign policy, changes in the Soviet Union, budget problems, changes on the Hill, changes in the administration, to get to one solution on one day that would have enough of a consensus behind it, that with confidence one can move ahead, was incredibly difficult.

Q: Did you ever have success at the end?

HOPPER: Yes. Finally we returned, more or less, to a concept that had been looked at and rejected a couple of times, and rebuilt the flawed and bugged embassy by essentially tearing it almost down to the ground and starting over again – but on the same footprint of using some of the same theme. It was just a very difficult process. There were two occasions where there were fires in Moscow and they involved the old embassy building and most people working on the issue almost tore their hair out and said, "Oh God. It's the wrong building that burned down. They should've just let the whole thing burn down so we could really start over again."

Q: With the new office building it was probably, in some ways, flawed, but it was also too modern in terms of fire prevention.

HOPPER: That was the old one, though, that had the fire. The irony was that there was a period when there had been some fires and we couldn't use much of the new building, we couldn't use much of the old building, and we packed all of the employees together in sort of an underground part of the new complex that connected to the school and the PX and the cafeteria; and we literally took what had been a bowling alley and turned it into the combined political/USIA; different sections and people shared tiny spaces and were just cheek by jowl, and the embassy never worked better because people communicated and connected. It was an endorsement of the open office cubicle plan. It was a crisis atmosphere, too, when almost anything can be done.

We would regularly take CODELS and STAFFDELS (Congressional Staff Delegation) out to Moscow; we would put together special groups to try and make sure that they saw the situation as it really was on the ground and so we could explain to them what was really going on, because it was an issue where the FBI, the CIA and lots of people were briefing on the Hill and often the different parts of the government were not saying the same thing. It was a painful process.

Another management area that was very difficult, and where it was a bit hard to use CODELS to help, was housing for the Foreign Service overseas. Some of the congressional figures on our committees had sort of got into their heads that we had too much housing; that it was too big and too grand; and why didn't we have middle class housing like people would have in the U.S. I would, on these trips, try to find a way to

make the case that in lots of countries where are these middle class neighborhoods where you would want people to live, and would they be time effective in going to work, would they be safe, would they be good for the families, and would they be healthy. That part was fairly easy; that, no, in most places there just weren't those kinds of choices. Then when they'd say, "Okay, fine, well let's build something," the question would be, "Well if we're building housing complexes, and we control it, why can't the sizes of things and the way they look be more like a middle class townhouse development or something?" It was always a hard thing, in some ways, to explain why they couldn't be.

We had a case in Saudi Arabia where the committee had watched the housing very closely, and over a long period of time had just felt they didn't get straight answers on what we were doing. One of the problems was that because we rotate our personnel, we can't be sure that the housing that has four bedrooms and will take care of a family of a certain size, will be available when the family that needs it is transferred in; so, we end up building everything for the extreme big nice cases. When they would visit, they would frequently find that there would be single officers living in big, grand places.

We had one case at a Middle Eastern post where I had asked the embassy administrative officer to find a good, typical example of housing to show them as the committee wanted to see housing. It should be an example that helped make our case for what we needed. We ended up going into a large, beautiful, three bedroom apartment that also had a service apartment and overlooked the main square in the city. It was just gorgeous. When the chairman asked, "Well, how many people live here?" it was the one person who was the head of the economic section. Not only was she one person, and fairly junior, but it also turned out she had no dependents and was married to an officer posted to the nearby embassy where we were visiting next. We go to the next post and they ask to see his place which was a four bedroom townhouse. So we've got eight bedrooms set aside for these two people in two different embassies. There was just no explanation for it. What you needed to do was to pick better cases.

Q: What other issues did you feel were either helpful to you in terms of taking CODELS, or unhelpful and you wished you hadn't gone? Or persuaded them to go somewhere else?

HOPPER: I found after a while that every place they went, with very few exceptions, if the embassies were at all willing to invest some time in talking about their managerial issues and budgets, that every time they went on a trip, they would come back with a sense that those were competent people working in difficult places, so the CODELS were almost always a real plus. We had trouble getting CODELS to go to Africa, partly because it's far and partly because it was hard to put together trips that sounded not just interesting, but had some element of learning about new places in a way that was manageable; and places where they'd want to take a spouse. It was just hard. Our posts didn't volunteer either. But mainly, it was very hard to get there commercially and even hard to get there with the Air Force because the structure of posts wasn't right.

Q: Having served in Africa, I think it's not so much that it's hard to get there; it's hard to

move from one post to another once you're there without going back to Europe. So that certainly would've been an issue as well.

HOPPER: But even if you had one of the Air Force planes, the problem was that you would usually have to go through Brazil or either go hopping down Europe, in which case, by the time you got to Africa, there wasn't much time to see many African places. So there weren't very many who went. I must say, Senator Hollings, in charge of the Senate side of Commerce/Justice/State (CJS) appropriations, did go to Africa a couple of times with small groups and that was fairly useful.

Q: Did you usually go on these trips quite often or did you sometimes simply organize them and then send them off on their own with somebody else?

HOPPER: I went on all of the House/CJS trips, and there would usually be two member trips and one staff trip per year. I would also try to do one Senate staff trip a year. The senators traveled very differently from the House; they would tend to organize trips where the chairman would go by himself or with one person. We'd do it commercially, especially because Hollings was also chairman or ranking member of the Senate Commerce Committee, and supervised the airlines and had good close relations with them. He was able to put together packages that worked for him. The senators in general were a little more suspicious and felt they could do things on their own and had different rules, so they tended to travel in groups of one, two or three. The House, especially as the budget got tighter, had firm rules on who could get an airplane; you had to be sponsored by a chairman of a committee and have the blessing of the Speaker to get a plane. So they would be larger bipartisan groups and I found that it was important to go with them. And they weren't household names and sometimes the embassies would say, "Neil Smith; who's Neil Smith?" and so it was helpful to make sure that they knew they were important.

One trip a year we would try to have the undersecretary go with the House committee. That usually worked out and was a good way just to build some human connections. There's nothing like traveling.

Q: Would those kinds of connections build primarily on the plane trips between posts, or would you see that your role, the undersecretary's role, was primarily to kind of improve the embassy's relationship with the members that were visiting, or both?

HOPPER: The undersecretary had a lot of time to talk to them on the plane. But, there would also be a control room in the hotel and the delegation would get together before and after and have snacks and talk; that was a chance when you could talk. We also tried to get senior embassy people to both wander the control room and talk to them, and to go on things in-country. Basically, in addition to building contacts, our role by going with them was to make sure there were no misunderstandings and to keep the trips going smoothly.

One thing that was shocking to me in going on these trips was to discover that hardly ever did any of our embassies take the occasion of a visiting CODEL to talk about their managerial problems. They'd rarely explain their budgets; they'd rarely even show them the tough conditions in the consulate. They would just talk to them about policy and take them to see the foreign minister, and do policy things – which was fine – but we never educated them about life in the Foreign Service.

One of the most fascinating things was I discovered that David Obie, who was chairman and ranking member of the Foreign Operations Committee, and traveled a lot had never received a management briefing at any of our posts until some of us had made an issue of it. They just treated him as an AID walk. The AID people would meet with him and describe their moans and groans about not getting refrigerators from the admin. section, and the ambassadors would meet with him and just talk about policy, but never talk about their programs. So, over time, we tried to correct that.

Q: With some success would you say?

HOPPER: Yes, I think so. Part of that success was due to the fact that we started sending out talking points; part of it was the success of the merger of M and H, and, finally, we started doing cables at the main travel season outlining where were the bills standing in the Congress, what was the status, and what was going on. And then we would have the undersecretary for management call a few posts and just remind them that they needed to take it seriously. It's just an irony that after a while what I would tell people is, "You know, we're good at taking seriously parliaments in other countries where there hasn't been a fair election in a hundred years, and where nobody actually does anything. We'll treat them with great respect and cajole them and we know what to do to try to influence them. When the U.S. Congress comes to town, we treat it like an imposition or we go in and lecture and harangue them like somehow we have the only answers on foreign affairs; that's not how you influence people. Why don't we just use our diplomatic skills and concentrate on influencing the Congress? Bit by bit that message was getting through, though it was really hurt by the budget shut down exercise when both sides kind of went to war against one another.

Q: It was certainly a difficult period and the atmosphere between the executive and Congress throughout much of this period was confrontational and contentious. I would think though, that even with a post abroad with an ambassador who was reasonably well-informed about what was happening on the battleground in Washington, that it would be hard sometimes to put his situation into that broad of a context. You know, his budget was rather small; if he lost a few thousand dollars that would have a big impact, but in the billions in Washington it was hard to sort of trace that. And if you talked too much about your own problems then it would sound like special pleading or would seem to be a narrow kind of approach to bigger issues. I don't know.

HOPPER: The problem was that while in each case it can look like that, if on the other hand you lay out everything you can do without ever complaining, explaining you have a

great reception, and you do a zillion wonderful things, it will look like you have so much staffing that one could walk away and think, wow, they don't have a problem in the world. When people add it all up and never hear a complaint about the budget and it looks like everybody is fat and happy, the conclusion is that everybody is fat and happy. So if we have to take five percent more, all those people are all doing fine. So, actually, it was okay to do a little bit of special pleading, as long as it was not at the expense of somebody else and in the pursuit of policy, but you had to know what the priorities and the policies were. Similarly, when our assistant secretaries and DASes would go up and brief the Congress, which would happen a lot (I attended many, many briefings) our people rarely understood what the budget issues were, and the managerial impacts of their policies. If someone would ask them, "Well what will that cost?" they just sort of throw up their hands, "Well, who knows and who cares? It's for a policy. It's important." [Tape 9, Side B]

Q: You were talking about the State Department's emphasis on foreign policy, or foreign affairs as opposed to management of resources in the foreign arena. Do you want to say anything more about that in general?

HOPPER: When we would brief the appropriators, it was especially apparent that we didn't understand enough. Actually, this was also partly the fault of the people who did congressional relations and budget issues in the State Department as they tried to keep the group doing the work small because the issue was so complicated. We just didn't explain well enough that these committees had a special role; that at the end of the day these committees were going to decide who got the money and where it went, and the appropriators wanted to talk about the details of the money. After a while, we began to try to make that clear.

I must've arranged hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of briefings where I would go up with State Department people, and multiple cases where our teams would just paint the most complex, interesting, almost bedazzling cases of the policy problems we faced, and how tough they were, how tough the environment was, and paint this nuanced picture of shades of grey. The meeting would be over, and I would take them back and then I'd get a call from the key staffer who would say, in effect, "Wow. Bob, every time I have one of these briefings I'm more and more convinced that individually the people – Foreign Service, Civil Service, political appointees – person, for person, you have the most brilliant employees in the whole U.S. government, but we can never figure out what you want. After that briefing, could you tell me what are the three things that your people were trying to get from us? What do they want us to do?" One guy would say, "You know that every time DOD comes up, the briefings are sort of pedantic; they go through their slides. At the end of the day we understand what they want, and what they want, while it may to you seem like hundreds of millions of dollars, is doable. They want money and we can understand what to do. In your cases, it's not clear what you want; it's not clear what we should do for you. So either they're going to say, 'Wow. They're real smart they can do it on their own,' or 'we don't give you what you want.'"

The more I thought about it, what in many cases we actually wanted was to confuse and convince them that the foreign world is so complicated, and that we know it best, that they should just leave us alone and let us do it. And that that really was the bottom line; that it's complex, it's nuanced. You know enough now; go away and leave us alone. In most cases, that was fine, but sometimes we actually did need something and we weren't very good at asking for it. And over time, as the budgets went down and it was harder to get resources, that giving them all the complexities approach just didn't build support and the understanding of what it is we were doing as it used resources.

Q: Now this raises two questions in my mind that I'd like to pursue just a little further. One is, what about OMB? Was that part of the problem sometimes in dealing with the Hill; that we hadn't really been able to make our case effectively with the Office of Management and Budget, and therefore something that was needed was not really in the president's budget, or was that a lesser problem – or was that something you really weren't very involved with?

HOPPER: No, that was a huge problem; it was hard, in some ways, once you had failed and didn't have something in the president's request, as it was very unlikely that the Congress would do more than the president asked. So that was a problem.

One of the problems with the way the entire OMB budget process works is that it is essentially the budget officers in each agency who deal with OMB. And OMB wants it that way. They just want to get numbers; they don't want a lot of flim-flam on the big policy issues. We weren't much better at talking to them about just what our needs were. We tended to do either the same kinds of policy type briefings, or we would do just the numbers, which was fine - but we never came up with a way to do both.

If you go back to the corporate board not working, for years we in the State Department never had a system where the secretary and the senior people really cared that much about State Department resources either. Within the pie that they got, there was always enough flexibility to ensure that the senior people, if they really wanted something, could get it. So it would be on the margins, and everyday you'd keep making marginal choices that you could live with; but it was just the accretion of them over time that was so bad. But we weren't good at talking to OMB. The structure under the deputy secretary that tried to put everything together often was better in the OMB context at asking for the foreign assistance money than at asking for the State Department money. But, after a while, because it was so hard to get the foreign assistance side properly authorized and dealt with, the OMB people on the one hand got tired of giving us extra money that we couldn't get and we on the other became an easy target. We didn't do a good job there.

Essentially though, we just didn't give budget issues a very high priority. Because our job was explaining and persuading foreigners, we, understandably but wrongly, felt that so long as we were understanding, and explaining things to our clients, we were okay. And then we got so tarred with the brush of clientitis that lots of times when we explained things it sounded like we were making excuses such as, "God, that poor Kyprianou. He's

got this problem and he's got that problem," rather than starting out with why the U.S. cares (just the same things that we try to get people to do in their reporting now) and what's in it for the U.S., what the basic U.S. interests are, and building on that. Because when it looks like what you're trying to do is support U.S. interests, it's a lot easier to get support because in the end there's not that much interest in making lots of foreign countries a better place just on their own.

Q: Or necessarily even having them have better relations with us. They don't have an interest.

HOPPER: Right. Who cares? Who cares?

Q: The other thing I wanted to ask a little bit more about: you said that the Department of Defense tended to be more effective in having priorities. And in having clear needs and goals; and, that the State Department often was fuzzy and ambiguous. Another thing that's been suggested on occasion – I'd be interested in any thoughts you have on this – is that the Department of Defense tends to be more effective also because it has offices physically located on the Hill. It had lots of things to give on kind of a daily basis to members such as trips and information and so on. Do you have any thoughts on how the Department ought to better organize itself on the Hill, in light of all this experience you have?

HOPPER: I think that in some ways having offices up there is fine; but, the more I thought about it, I came to the conclusion that we shouldn't obsess about it. Some of the successes of the Defense Department are just so natural, and flow from the fact that at one point there were two million Americans under arms, that there were bases everywhere, that every congressman had multitudes of members who were in the service, that for a long time most members had been in the service, and that the Defense contractors had major programs. People like Lockheed were incredibly skillful in cooperation with DOD at making sure that their major program buys had components in every state. I remember when they were building the big transport plane; components of it were made in a majority of the congressional districts. The State Department will never have that aspect of constituency. It shouldn't worry about it, or let it drive it crazy. It's just different. Most members of Congress are either intrigued by foreign affairs and care a little bit about it or it was something they were interested in in college; so, there's just enough of an interest and concern. There's a fear on the part of most members that they really don't know that much and that a war can develop – that something can happen overseas that will bite them. We get some leeway in terms of the "it gets complicated" argument. We are able to talk to them. I've seen more State Department people be able to go up and get time with a member than happens to people working in the Department of Labor. The problem is just comparing yourself to DOD.

The other thing I noticed was that those offices on the Hill that the Department of Defense have, they essentially do trip coordination and putting people in touch to get answers to nitty-gritty questions. Sometimes it would be helpful for us to do that. But

these offices are not the answer; they're not how DOD gets policy support on the Hill. When our people assume that somehow people are gong to come running to the office we have now established up there on the Hill to learn about what is going on in different parts of the world and our policies there they are a bit wide of the mark as most seem to want to know about visas. So we very rightly put consular experts there, and that will help. We should use our own strengths and not worry too much.

Finally though, with DOD, what I noticed was that it's the three services that have great relations on the Hill. The secretary of defense, when he or she had overarching policy goals, if the services don't agree with the secretary of defense, those offices up on the Hill are not working for the secretary of defense; they're working for the services. Oftentimes, what the secretary of state is trying to do are those kinds of complicated overarching things. Peacekeeping started to become a problem during the Clinton administration. That had started following on an initiative by the Baker team under the Bush administration. It had grown and grew and then started to eat into our time, attention, and budgets. The peacekeeping issue was studied at the beginning of the Clinton administration, and then really ginned up after Somalia went bad, a plan was put together to have a division of labor where major parts of the funding were going to come out of the Defense budget. It was agreed to in the interagency process; OMB, NSC, the Chiefs, and the secretary of defense bought on. There was a policy document, NSDD, I forget the number, but one on peacekeeping. We went up and we briefed the Congress. It was put in the budget. And then we found out that, especially from the army, that they really feared that the peacekeeping efforts were getting in the way of doing what they felt was their main mission, and the colonels who went up and briefed just torpedoed the project. While the secretary of defense and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were on board, the brigadier generals and the colonels killed it. Did the secretary of defense care? I don't know. The structure of briefing did not support that policy.

Q: Let me jump ahead here for a minute. At some point, between 1989 and 1997 I think you retired from the Foreign Service and converted to Civil Service, and then after you left the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, working closely with the undersecretary of management, you came over here to the Foreign Service Institute as director of the Political Training Division, where you continued until you retired. You want to sort of talk a little bit about that, and particularly about the FSI responsibilities, and then maybe we can come back to these budget questions a little bit later on.

HOPPER: Yes. When I took the job in M in the summer of '89, I had two or three more shots at getting through the 1 to senior service window. And things had really tightened up and you could tell they were going to stay tight for a while. Well, one could imagine that working for the undersecretary for management and knowing how the budget works and doing congressional things, might be the kind of skill that maybe, if worse came to worse, would position me well to do something else - either to go out and become a lobbyist or move to working with the Congress. Whatever. It was almost an insurance policy and it was something I enjoyed doing and was good at, so I moved over. I had multiple efficiency reports from a number of under secretaries and help from executive

assistants. I thought I had done very well and it turned out that coming out of my second year in M, I got a call from the acting director general. He had me come down and said, "Unfortunately you weren't promoted. I know it's your last try. We're sorry." Blah, blah, blah. Then I talked to M and M had executive assistants call and ask what happened and the intriguing answer was that that year there were only eleven political officer slots for promotion from 1 to OC and I had been ranked fifteen out of hundreds – but fifteen was four away; it wasn't good enough. Ironically, there had been twenty-seven multi-functional openings and they could only use twenty-six, so there weren't enough people so that they even had to give one back, and they were surprised that Hopper hadn't sought to be multi-functional. It was the first year of an initiative where rather than the boards determining whether people were multi-functional, each officer had to request to be multi-functional. The Department notice had come around. I had read it; it had got to my desk I looked at it and I called my guidance counselor. I said, "Dick, I read this thing. I've been multi-functional the last two years. I have a quintessentially multi-functional job,"

Q: And experience.

HOPPER: "What am I supposed to do?" and he said, "You don't need to do anything. You are Mr. Multi-functional. Don't worry about it." Since I was busy I didn't do anything. Since I was busy I didn't write a MEMCON (memorandum of conversation). So I didn't apply and it turns out you had to physically write a little memo and apply. I then did a grievance because I felt that the guidance had been poorly crafted.

I learned a lot about the process. The acting director general at first said he was really sorry and that he didn't know that, but what he recommended was the only way to fix it as he couldn't just fix a problem like that. It was that I should file a grievance.. And he actually encouraged me to file a grievance. I filed it and then the system went hostile. The grievance process, as I discovered, is a litigious process where you're fighting one another. There were no negotiations. There was no attempt to solve it; the answer was just, "Well, we'll see what happens."

Q: See you in court.

HOPPER: Yes, so I had a lawyer; we went through a process. I ended up being extended for about fifteen months as the process played out. It was rejected administratively and then I went to a panel and I had hearings. Really, the saddest part was that my guidance counselor had a stroke and couldn't appear, couldn't remember anything and he did a deposition where he said, "Well what Mr. Hopper says could've happened, but I can't remember one way or the other." And it turns out that in these kinds of proceedings the burden was on me to prove what had happened. It wasn't enough and it was a split decision and I lost. But, it was okay. It had played out long enough that a couple of under secretaries had said, "Well, jeez, this is crazy. It would make more sense to have your position be Civil Service anyway to have some continuity." So as it was playing out I was offered to convert to Civil Service at the same pay and do the job that way. So at that point I decided to do that. So on one day I retired as a Foreign Service Officer and the

next day was hired into the same job and then did that for a while.

Q: And when you came to FSI (Foreign Service Institute) you were still Civil Service although that had been a Foreign Service position on occasion?

HOPPER: After doing the appropriations bill for nine years, I had done enough of it and I thought there might be some way to become a trainer and to pass on some of what I had learned. Ruth Whiteside, who had been with me in M, was deputy director at FSI; the acting M, Pat Kennedy, and people in H, decided it would be a good idea if I could go and become the director of political training at FSI. There was going to be an opening. The problem was that it was a Foreign Service slot and so the question was how to do that. They worked out this complicated arrangement where I was detailed to FSI, and as a detail nothing had to change; it remained a Foreign Service job and I just filled it. I had reemployment rights on the Seventh Floor. It was just very, very complicated. But the good thing is I came to FSI and was the director of political training for three years and that was a wonderful job. I was able to take some of these hard won lessons and try to find ways to get new political cone officers to pay attention from the beginning to management and Congress and to a number of other things. I felt that was quite successful.

The other thing I tried to do at FSI, as the director of political training, was to develop more of a focus on preventive diplomacy. I actually found that the State Department and FSOs are good crisis managers and work very well in a crisis. The problem is that the rewards are all for dealing with crises. To do advance planning and to figure out ways to make a problem go away, clearly are what we should do, but are hard to structure and hard to reward. But that, as well as trying to strengthen the approach to global issues, were my main goals. Working at FSI was wonderful.

Q: You also mentioned, I think earlier, stressing the importance of being clear about what U.S. interests were, in a particular country or situation.

What kind of length of training did you have with these new junior political cone officers – two weeks, three weeks?

HOPPER: There's something called political tradecraft and political economic tradecraft, which is a three week long course for officers being assigned for the first time to a political or an economic or a combined political/economic section. And the great debate that we had at FSI, and with personnel, was if a brand-new JO (Junior Officer) got a rotational assignment and did a year in the consular section and a year in the political section, or six months here and six months in the political section, should we treat that as the first assignment to a political section and give them the tradecraft training then, before that first assignment. I had thought about it and I'd argued that for these courses to work to their maximum, it was helpful if somebody had had a couple of tours, knew how an embassy worked, knew how the government worked, and this was training to go out and really do a full-time job as a political or economic officer and that the course worked best

when people had been in at least four years and knew a little bit of what reporting was like. But, the personnel system was very worried that if they let people go out and they did a year in a rotational job in one of the sections, and they hadn't had the training and they did badly, that there would be grievances and complaints: people saying, "Well of course we did badly. We hadn't been trained."

The other concern was that if we waited for the third tour, given how tight positions were, that a number of the regional bureaus (even though they didn't own the people until they were at mid-level) would put roadblocks in the way of their getting the training, and the personnel system didn't feel it was strong enough to actually resist the regional bureaus and say, "No, you will take a three week longer gap." So, increasingly, we ended up having our tradecraft courses have more than half the people who had never been in an embassy before. It wasn't ideal.

Q: Yes, I can see that another problem would've been if you waited say until the third tour; as the third tour is often in Washington and that's another complication. It seems to me that it would make a lot of sense if you would take them basically before they went to their second tour which generally is in cone position.

HOPPER: And that's what's we wanted. We wanted to give the course right before the first real assignment to a section, when you'd have a full assignment to your conal duties. We couldn't make that work.

Q: Did you see a big difference in the people you were training if they had never been in an embassy before; could you overcome that?

HOPPER: We could overcome it. But, especially in trying to do the training parts on doing drafting and contact work, you could just tell that the people who had been out once got it. There are some people who are just naturally gifted writers and they would get the ideas and would do really well, but the people who had had one tour saw how you needed to build a team, how you needed to do the contact work. And it was just so theoretical for the people who had never been out.

The other problem was for the brand new JOs; they had just done their six weeks of the A-100 class and then they'd done their consular training. The question was, did you do the tradecraft after that, or did they have area studies and then tradecraft, or did they do language. The ideal approach was to have them do language last so they could extend that, get their 3/3 and go out, which meant they would've had these nine or ten weeks of functional training just after arriving, and they would start to get tired. There was some redundancy between tradecraft training and A-100. However, if you'd been out and come back, the political tradecraft course built on your experiences and didn't seem like a redundancy; so we had thought about that. If you were just coming from one day to the next from the A-100 class to the course, some of them would be very tired and would not have the enthusiasm to be sitting there with their butts in a chair for three more weeks. So we thought very carefully about it. We eliminated some of the things that were

redundancy even though I actually believe redundancy is a sign that things are important. I would tell people, "If in the State Department you only hear about something once, that's the Department telling you it's not important. If you hear about it over and over and over again, you should pay attention to that."

Q: And if you hear different people with different backgrounds telling you the same thing in slightly different ways, then that also makes an impact.

HOPPER: Right. The other thing that became especially clear in trying to do the drafting training, was that over the years there had been an approach developed that treated the pinnacle of Foreign Service reporting as being the policy recommendation cable. All the training was geared towards having people and posts write these wonderful cables setting out that basically the policy isn't working and here are the options. The embassy recommends that the Department do "Y."

I firmly believe that one of the ways you learn to write is you read a lot, and that one of the things you read a lot of when you're in the State Department is other people's telegrams. People actually do get better when they do, and, miraculously, the reporting ends up having a pretty consistent flavor because we're all reading that corpus of cables. So I decided to add a segment in the tradecraft training where we would consciously read. We would have an all morning exercise where we would come in, you would simulate your morning in-box, the political counselor would call in sick and the deputy was going somewhere else and he'd ask the new officer to represent the section at a walk-through with the DCM on the morning's traffic, telling him what was important. So we'd give the people about twenty-five cables to read and ask them to each pick out the three most important cables that needed to be briefed to the DCM, and to pick out the three stupidest, worst cables. It would be interesting in a class of twenty-five to see what the variance in what those were. And then we would read those six cables at more depth and discuss them later. People would complain that it was hard to read twenty-five cables in an hour and make any sense of them and we said, "Well, you know, when you come in in the morning you're going to read two hundred or three hundred, not just twenty-five." So they'd get a feeling that there isn't a lot of time to read these things.

But in the reading exercise, I went to a good friend of mine, who was the deputy executive secretary of the Department, because I had had trouble finding these policy recommendation cables. He went looking. And over about a year, as we looked for things, we discovered it was a dodo bird; that the Department had stopped writing those kinds of cables; that the bureaus did not want the embassies coming in with things saying the policy is not working, look at these three options. That's not how it was done anymore. There were E-mails and phone calls and visits. And so one of the key things we had been training these people to do was not being used anymore, so we adjusted the training. But we tried to get people to write and I always worried a little bit that we were too good at it. We were trying to get people to write shorter, more focused cables that focused on U.S. interests because nobody had time to read the longer ones.

The other thing we discovered is that the policy recommendation cables had actually slipped over elsewhere, showing up in trip preparation cables. The post would write in and say, "You know, Assistant Secretary is going to be visiting. We recommend you meet with these people and you try to do this," and without ever doing the kind of old-fashioned careful analysis, the recommendations for new approaches would be in the talking points and the approaches set up for trip preparation cables. So it was still being done, just in a different way. That was fascinating.

The other area we focused on was contact work: to make people think consciously about who they're going to see, why they are seeing them, and whether they have coordinated with other people in the embassy. You could see that one of the problems is that we have tiny, middle-sized and bigger posts, so you're training people who have a range of experience to go out to this range of experiences, and so it was a challenge to make the training generalizable and helpful. I think we did a good job at it, but time will tell.

Q: Did you get any feedback from supervisors ever, or not much?

HOPPER: What would be your guess? Feedback is not something we're good at. Also, our information systems tend to be so bad. Even when we tried to find people before the classes, they were hard to find. It was hard to come up with a system where six months down the road you knew where they were. Knowing who their supervisors were was incredibly difficult. We need to get better at that. We need to follow up and ask people. I would find out sometimes that people had quit and I would try to find out why and what had been the lessons. We have a process in personnel for sort of end interviews and talking, but it's pretty perfunctory.

I was pretty proud of the tradecraft training that we were doing.

Q: Besides the three-week or so political tradecraft training, were you also doing some longer or shorter courses?

HOPPER: The three weeks was the longest course we did. I would go and meet with some of the area studies courses that were longer. I would be on panels and people in our section would be on panels in the A-100 about what it's like to be a political officer, but we had about twenty other short, three-day to one-week courses; we did global issues twice a year, we did congressional relations twice a year, we did intelligence and foreign policy twice a year, and we had four or five arms control, POL/MIL and national security seminars.

Q: And all of those would not necessarily be related to onward assignments like the tradecraft courses are?

HOPPER: Right. We had the POL/ECON tradecraft where personnel assigned the people.

Q: And you would do that jointly with the economic training?

HOPPER: Yes. We used to have separate ones and others that we did together. However, because of the success of Secretary Powell's program to hire more people, the only way to cope was to merge them all. Every one of these courses is now a combined POL/ECON course and they're going to be doing ten of them this year. I think it's utterly right that political and economic are just two sides of the same coin of power and influence and should be seen together, and it's a mistake when they're pushed too far apart.

We also had courses that we helped the Bureau of Refugees Population do on preparing new refugee officers. We helped INL (Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement) do a week long course for new people going to work in drug sections overseas. We hosted and organized a three week long Labour officers course for people newly assigned to the Labour function. That was a really tough class because over time the Department had been sort of scaling back and the Department of Labour and the AFL-CIO were very suspicious of us, and how to do it well within the given time, was a problem. I spent a lot of time negotiating; I became the point person for the Department in working with Labour on refining that class. And we had classes for Micronesian diplomats which I don't need to go into, but that took a lot of time.

I want to say something on preventive diplomacy. When I came we had a course on peacekeeping once a year. I found that it was too much on managing the crisis of once you needed peacekeeping, so I added a course on preventive diplomacy and trying to deal with things before they spilled over. Then, ironically, I found that in some ways, the best time to do preventive diplomacy is after a crisis. We found that it made most sense to convert it into a week long course on the whole cycle of conflict. People who wanted to focus on preventive diplomacy and the theories of conflict and dealing with conflict could come and take the first three days, people who wanted to learn more about how you do a peacekeeping operation could come and do the last three days, and people who had enough time could take the whole cycle; on the third day in the middle we had a big exercise, so people got to know one another. It was a model that worked pretty well. We had had to cancel the peacekeeping class a couple of times because, amazingly, there weren't enough enrollees. By doing it as sort of a rolling week long segment, I had enough people to do it.

I'll never forget when I started doing this class. I went around to get support from senior people in the Department and talked to Bob Gelbart who was then doing the Bosnia stuff, and he said, "Oh thank God. Bob, there's nothing more important. We really need to be doing a better job at preventive diplomacy and thinking about it in advance. My people are just so overwhelmed by doing this. I'll do anything you want to make that class a success. I'll be the kickoff speaker. I'll do anything." I said, "That's great, Bob. I'll take you up on that, but what I really need you to do, is to let a couple of your people come take the class because I'm sure that even though they've been up to their necks in doing it, they could benefit from three days to think about it and they would be so wonderful to help the other people rub up against people who are actually doing it." "Oh Bob, anything

but that. They're so overwhelmed; they're so busy. I can't let them go even for three days," and that was the problem we typically had. The people really working in regional bureaus couldn't get away. A) We didn't value training very much, and B) they were overwhelmed. For a lot of our elective volunteer classes, we had more people from other agencies, from F&P as well as from other cones, such as management taking them, than we had regional bureau people who were actually working on these issues.

Q: That's the other thing that you alluded to earlier, that we were short staffed during some of that period. You mention Secretary Powell's success in getting funding to hire additional people, junior officers. Do you want to talk anything about that? That's probably after your day, and certainly your day in the management area dealing with Congress. Why did he have so much success, and why did we continually have so many problems earlier?

HOPPER: I think, one, he committed himself to it and he had a concept of sort of "train and equip" that came from his military background. I think drawing from an understanding of his whole career that if you didn't keep providing new people, and have enough people to do the work, that the work got done worse and worse; so that you could make a case for getting the people. I think he also walked in and saw what sort of chump change it was compared to other budgets in the private sector and the public sector and just felt not embarrassed at all in asking for and making some of the money. He cared and he just had incredible – I have never seen anyone with the charisma.

End of interview