

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

JAMES L. HUSKEY

*Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy & David Reuther
Initial Interview Date: August 11, 2017
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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is August 11, 2017. We are interviewing James L. Huskey. I have just finished interviewing his wife, Joanne Grady Huskey. You go by Jim, is that right?

HUSKEY: Yes, Jim.

Q: So, Jim, let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

HUSKEY: I am the quintessential Baby Boomer, born just after WWII in 1947 in a small farming town in southeast Alabama called Dothan, which proudly proclaims itself to be the "Peanut Capital of the World." I once got into a friendly debate with Jimmy Carter over this peanut claim. I was the Control Officer for his 1991 visit to Beijing, since I was the embassy Human Rights Officer, an issue of great personal concern to President Carter. So, I was seated directly across the conference table from President Carter and Ambassador James Lilley at the Country Team briefing in the embassy's secure "floating bubble" conference room. When I finished briefing him on the human rights situation in China in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Massacre, President Carter looked at me very intently and asked "Where are you from, Mr. Huskey?" "Why, ah come from the 'Peanut Capital of the World,' Mr. President," I responded in my best southern drawl. "Dothan?" he responded incredulously. And the two of us launched into a spirited discussion -- with the Ambassador and entire embassy senior staff (I was then just a first-tour Junior Officer!) looking amusedly and perplexedly on -- as to whether Dothan or President Carter's Plains, Georgia, just across the Chattahoochee River, was the true "Peanut Capital of the World." There ensued a light-hearted debate between two diehard peanut aficionados. Ambassador Lilley finally weighed in with "Gentlemen, I think you have both proven your point. It is clear that there are dual 'Peanut Capitals of the World'." So, anyway, that's where I grew up -- Dothan, Alabama, the self-proclaimed "Peanut Capital of the World," disputed only by those with vested interests elsewhere. But, I digress, Stu.

Q: I used to go through Watsonville, California, which had a big sign saying "Artichoke Capital of the World."

HUSKEY: Yes, I've seen that sign. And nearby there is Salinas the "lettuce capital" and Napa the "wine capital." Anyway, Dothan was a small and deeply conservative town in the "Heart of Dixie," the town's other sobriquet. This was also the heart of the "Bible Belt" -- heavily Southern Baptist and thoroughly segregated when I was growing up. Dothan Blacks — or "Coloreds," as less racist whites called them — were relentlessly poor, working drudge jobs, like the Dalits (Untouchables) I later saw in India. They lived a wholly separate existence in Acid Plant Hill and Baptist Bottom, the two Black slums of ramshackle wood-plank houses and pitted dirt roads literally on "the other side of the railroad tracks" across town. My father, like all doctors and dentists in Dothan, had the *de rigueur* sign on the front door of his clinic, "Colored Entrance at the Rear," despite providing *pro bono* dental care to poor Blacks each Thursday afternoon. I always thought this racial division very strange and blatantly un-Christian, but I learned early on not to question the prevailing racial and religious mores -- two sides of the same coin -- in Alabama.

I graduated from Dothan High School in 1965 and went off to college in the distant northern metropolis of Birmingham. In the "Iron City," with its thick crust of black coal dust, I attended Samford University, a surpassingly beautiful campus in the mountains south of Birmingham. Samford was a Southern Baptist college that was properly -- in those days -- lily white and blithely unaffected by the horrific electric cattle prods daily wielded by Birmingham police Chief Bull Connor and his Neanderthal, full-bellied cops putting down the uprising of Birmingham's Black population. I arrived in early summer 1965, at full tide of the civil rights movement, and became active in the movement, going door to door registering black voters.

Q: We will come back to this, but first let me get a little bit of background. On your father's side, where did the Huskeys come from and where did they get the name?

HUSKEY: The Huskeys immigrated to the U.S. in the early 1700's from York, in the eastern midlands of England. Actually, the surname is of Scandinavian derivation via the marauding Viking raiders who sacked coastal England and founded the city of "Jorvik" in the twelfth century. We also had French Huguenot refugee blood from my grandmother's ancestors from Bordeaux, France, the Burdeshaws (Bourg de Shaws). The maternal Meredith-Weathersbee line from North Carolina was English through and through. However, I often explain to people that I am half-Irish, because I married an Irish lass, Joanne Grady (originally O'Grady) and, thus, tell my children that they are, by that mercurial genetic logic, three-quarters Irish.

Q: So your father's family was English?

HUSKEY: The Huskeys migrated down the Shenandoah Valley into Tennessee and Alabama. In the mountains around Asheville, every cemetery has Huskeys resting there. The Huskey clan was part of the larger Scotch-Irish migration south from Pennsylvania, eventuating in an assortment of Huskeys, including Nashville's Ferlin Husky, one of the two great country music legends of the 1950's -- the other being, of course, Hank Snow.

Q: Your father, I take it, was a doctor.

HUSKEY: He was a dental surgeon, D.D.S. He grew up on a typical 40-acre-and-a-mule farm on the blistering cotton and peanut fields between Dothan and the Chattahoochee River, where he did the daily milking, then walked eight miles to school. Poor. These people were dirt poor. But salt of the earth, frugal and hard working, with Sunday meeting house at Smyrna Baptist Church their only respite. As poor as they were, they had even poorer black tenant farmers helping to work their land. My father stayed close to them his whole life. On Sundays, he would drive my brother and me out to see Old Alf, a blind, white-haired Black man who had worked the Huskey Farm in Daddy's youth and who was reduced to rocking all day on the front porch of his rickety dog-run (hall running down the middle from front to back) house and listening to the occasional car or mule-drawn wagon drive by.

Q: Where did your father go to dental school?

HUSKEY: Emory University in Atlanta. He graduated from Dothan High School and worked his way through the University of Alabama, then through Emory Dental School.

Q: And where is your mother's side from?

HUSKEY: Wilmington, North Carolina. An old colonial and revolutionary war family. They arrived in the Carolinas in the late 1600s. My grandmother was a proud member of the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution). In fact, I received a college scholarship from the DAR even though — much to their shock had they found out — I morphed into a 60's radical in college (of course radicalism is relative — in the south it meant you were an LBJ Democrat, i.e., moderately liberal).

Q: Where did your Mother go to school?

HUSKEY: Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, Virginia. A prime finishing school of southern womanhood and the University of Virginia's sister campus, Mary Washington has since been integrated — first, with African-Americans and then, more shockingly, men. Mother cherished those years at Mary Washington as the highlight of her life, when she could study and attend balls at UVA and the Naval Academy at Annapolis. When the war started, however, she took leave and returned home to do her bit for the war effort at Camp David outside of Wilmington.

Q: My son went to Mary Washington. He was one of the first men.

HUSKEY: Oh, really? That must have been fun.

Q: I am a Civil War buff. What do you know about your family's involvement?

HUSKEY: Well, the Weathersbees and Merediths were steadfastly gray. My grandmother was a Meredith from Raleigh, where they founded Meredith College, a still-thriving woman's college. On the paternal side, the Weathersbee's hailed from Barnwell, South Carolina, where they had a large slave plantation. This was the Old South, as in "save yor Confedrit money, boys, the South shall rise agin."

Q: What did you hear at home and at school about the Civil War?

HUSKEY: The Civil War? You mean the War Between the States, or the War for Southern Secession? Well, I was never a "good ole boy" Southerner, because I always quietly thanked my lucky stars that we lost that war. The South went to war for one reason: to defend slavery. I have always cringed at the thought of what would have happened had the South actually won at Gettysburg, setting off anti-war riots in the North and likely birthing a new nation founded on slavery. On the back of half a million men killed defending slavery, when, in God's name, could the South ever have freed the slaves from captivity and itself from the albatross of slavery?

Q: What about the propaganda of states rights and the Lost Cause.

HUSKEY: Ah, the fabled Lost Cause. But, Stu, "The Cause" was slavery. Don't let anybody tell you otherwise. Not states' rights or economic oppression or tariff incompatibility. Rather, the glorious "gone with the wind" civilization was wholly built on the "Peculiar Institution," which the "flower of Southern manhood" defended to the death.

Q: I feel close to it because my grandfather, who died the year I was born, was an officer in the Army of the Potomac and was wounded at Gettysburg. He and his German regiment later joined Sherman's March through Georgia. Later, he was captured, but after the surrender, Lee left him and the rest of the Union wounded behind.

HUSKEY: He was lucky he didn't end up in Andersonville.

Q: Oh, God, yes. Well, anyway, how about you? Do you have siblings?

HUSKEY: I have one brother, a year older, who is now a prosperous attorney in Dothan. He builds condos on the Gulf and buys railroads across the country.

Q: What was it like growing up in the South? Let's take it as a kid. What was it like growing up in Dothan?

HUSKEY: Dothan was a close-knit and conservative southern town. Very much a Leave-it-to-Beaver community. Religion and society there were of a piece -- religion re-enforced the strictly segregated society which re-enforced the conservative and racist political system. There was no room for questioning the existing order and one, if one knew what was best for one, either embraced the socio-religious order or kept quiet. In a quest for rationality, I over-compensated for my doubts. For example, in 1964, my junior

year in high school, I fully embraced the conservative zeitgeist in Dothan by serving as Vice Chairman of the Houston County Young Republicans for Barry Goldwater, wearing an AuH2O pin on my lapel at all times. Despite my then political and fiscal conservatism, I questioned the morality and theology of segregation, though discreetly. I remember once submitting a cartoon to our high school newspaper, the Dothan High School "Zootzus," that lampooned segregation with two trash cans side by side, one labeled "White Trash" and the other "Colored Trash." It proved a bit too close to home, as "Colored" signs were everywhere on water fountains, restrooms, waiting rooms, and motels. The school paper refused to print the tongue-in-cheek cartoon. So, I had already begun to question the dominant social structure and mores in my high school years. I vividly remember a dignified pepper-haired Black man named Arthur -- "colored people," you see, were not dignified with surnames or handles, like Mr. or Mrs. -- who worked at the First Baptist Church. Arthur labored quietly and obligingly as the church janitor out of his dank basement redoubt, the only "colored man" allowed entrance to this House of God. I often went down to the basement on Sundays between, sometimes during, worship services and sat with "Mr. Arthur," as I called him in private, and talked about his life and family and the old shibboleth "What Would Jesus Do" regarding race relations. Mr. Arthur was the most decent and genuine person I knew. I was learning to view African-Americans as people, beyond just servants.

Q: Let's talk about being a small kid in a segregated place. Segregation started early and kids were kind of like gangs of whites and blacks weren't they?

HUSKEY: Not in a small town like Dothan. "Colored" people lived separately, in slums across town. Affluent whites lived far away on the west side of town. Dothan had an old run-down three-vehicle public bus system, the sole purpose of which was to transport the African-American "Help" from their side of town to ours, where they served -- cooked, cleaned, washed, ironed, mowed and cared for children. Then every day at 5:00, the "Help" would trudge dead-tired to the corner to catch the one bus back across town to their neighborhood. It was a wholly segregated society. No one, Black or White, dared question the way things were. Perhaps Blacks still remembered and whispered of an awful night half a century earlier when nine Blacks were lynched in the "Wiregrass" region around Dothan. Questions were dangerous.

Q: Did your family discuss serious matters at the dinner table?

HUSKEY: Well, not politics. That just didn't happen in a small southern town in the old "Solid South" -- i.e., solidly Democratic and Jim Crow. I vividly recall coming home from school one afternoon when I was seven, a day that I now realize was May 8, 1954. When I entered, my mother was sitting at the breakfast table with my grandmother, who was visiting from North Carolina. Both were ashen-faced looking at the front page of the afternoon paper, "The Dothan Eagle," spread out on the table. Mother looked up and said, "Jim you are going to be going to school with colored children." "Colored children?" I said, quite delighted. "Oh, good, when?" They were both horrified. "No, no! You don't ever want to do that. You must never go to school with colored people. They aren't clean like we are." This unsettled me and I kept quiet. But over the next

decade I grew to question that way of life and society, so much so that years later, I became an activist in the civil rights movement in college way up north in Birmingham.

Q: Well as a white kid in a small southern town, what sort of things did you do for fun.

HUSKEY: I was heavily focused on Boy Scouts, a big part of my adolescence.

Q: I think I made Second Class.

HUSKEY: Well, I worked hard at scouting and earned my Eagle rank and “God and Country” award. One of my most memorable camping trips was to the National Boy Scout Jamboree in 1960, a vast conclave of 50,000 scouts from across the nation encamped at the foot of Pike’s Peak in Colorado in celebration of the 50th anniversary of scouting. I was also quite active in the First Baptist Church, where I was President of the Youth Council. And at Dothan High School, I was active on the debate team and in theater, where I alternated between being Stage Manager and acting on stage. Guess I was part of the more serious -- some saw it as nerdy -- crowd.

Q: Were you much of a reader?

HUSKEY: Incessantly. In grammar school, I was already a voracious reader, spending long hours reading the World Book encyclopedia, the Hardy Boys and Tom Swift series, and every one of the orange-backed biographies of famous men and women. In the 9th grade, I joined Book-of-the-Month Club and Doubleday Book Club, which brought in two or three books a month. Through high school, I used most of my weekly allowance to buy books instead of buying candy or going to the movies and often in lieu of buying lunch. By the time I graduated high school I had a wall of bookshelves holding a library of wonderful books of literature, history, and philosophy.

Q: The Book-of-the-Month Club no longer exists, but it was a great institution. Based in New York, it selected one or more books each month, which members could buy at discounted prices. I always read those books; they were good books.

HUSKEY: Yes, and each book came with a certificate you could exchange for special book collections. I was most proud of my sets of Will and Ariel Durant’s Story of Civilization, Winston Churchill’s History of the English-Speaking People, and Carl Sandburg’s Abraham Lincoln. I also built up full collections of Heritage Books, Harvard Five-Foot Classics, and other series. Beautiful sets of reference books. I read about half of the books in my library. Some, like Lucretius’ On the Nature of Things, were always on my to-read list . . . and still are! It was a wonderful way for a confirmed autodidact to educate himself in a small town that did not encourage scholarship.

Q: What sort of public library did you have in Dothan?

HUSKEY: It was pretty good. But my own library had more than enough good books to read. Moreover, we had decent school libraries, and the First Baptist Church had an

episodically good library. Every summer it sponsored a reading contest to encourage young people to read over the summer. I always won those contests and received a small selection of, as you might guess, books.

Q: Well, let's talk about your church. What do you recall about the church?

HUSKEY: Church was a big part of my life growing up, and I was quite active in choir and youth activities. The First Baptist Church was a theologically conservative, essentially fundamentalist church, which meant the Bible was accepted literally and without question -- seven-day creation, male dominion, separation of races (the verse in Jeremiah that the leopard cannot change its spots was repeated ad infinitum). Just as the Southern Baptist Convention had been founded in the antebellum years to defend slavery, so it continued well into the 1970s to reinforce Jim Crow and racial segregation. It was very conservative on politics, economics, and social issues, creating a holistic, fully reinforcing social order. You instinctively understood that if you questioned one doctrine or practice the whole house of cards would come tumbling down. There was no room for doubt or you would quickly find yourself outside of the realm, a stranger. So, while I questioned the socio-religious order, I did so only up to a point and not too loudly, otherwise the whole superstructure would collapse. On the contrary, the more I doubted religiously, socially, and politically, the more I defensively embraced the whole structure, hook-line-and-sinker. Thus, I fully embraced conservative politics, especially Barry Goldwater and his "conscience of a conservative" philosophy. In this way, I overcompensated for social, political, and religious doubts by desperately embracing the environing orthodoxy.

But when I left home in June 1965 to go to college at Samford University in Birmingham, I was suddenly released from the holistic embrace of society, politics and religion, and, like Lazarus, I began to see and my long simmering skepticism boiled over. Even though Samford was a Southern Baptist college, I felt free enough to read a vast array of literature that I would never have known about in Dothan -- Bultmann, Bonhoeffer, Tillich, even the "Death of God" theology, as well as existentialism and Zen Buddhism. The scales seemed to fall from my eyes, and I evolved quickly, so much so that by the end of that first summer school I was a full-blown agnostic, verging on atheism, and attending the one liberal redoubt in all of racially-torn Birmingham -- the Unitarian Church. I moved rapidly away from the Southern Baptist denomination and creed. In college and in Birmingham, the Unitarian Church was, paradoxically, my "salvation" from closed-minded religion.

Q: How about the Bible. Did you accept Bible stories growing up?

HUSKEY: Up to a point. With all of my years of reading over the full gamut of literature, by the time I reached high school I had already moved away from a fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible. I never had a problem with evolution, for example, which is a central shibboleth for fundamentalists. To me it was just so obvious that evolution described reality — the world around us as it really was. Actually, it was wolves that clinched it for me: *canis lupus*. Whereas ten thousand years ago only wolves

existed, several millennia of breeding — i.e., artificial, human-expedited evolution — produced thousands of breeds of dogs — *canis lupus familiaris*. So, I developed my own symbolistic interpretation of the Bible. But I instinctively knew that I should keep those kinds of questions and views to myself. That is how I, as a literate and reasonably well-read youth, could keep with the Baptist creed . . . by reading the Bible allegorically.

Q: How did your church treat Blacks?

HUSKEY: Oh, no, no, no. This was a Southern Baptist Church. Blacks would never, ever have been permitted to enter our “holy” sanctuary. The only “coloreds” inside our church were janitors, cooks, and cleaning staff. That increasingly struck me as odd and not at all in sync with what I read in the Bible about Christian love and how Jesus loved “all the children of the world,” as the song goes, “red, yellow, black and white.” But this love narrative stopped at the church doors -- another glaring contradiction that emerged as I grew up and increasingly questioned my church and society.

Q: As a child, did you play in the streets with neighbor children or mainly in organized activities?

HUSKEY: Well, this was a small southern town in the 1950’s. Boys and girls in our neighborhood played in their yards, ball fields and streets -- tag, hide-and-seek, kick-the-can, marbles, tops, yoyo’s, and sports. These were totally safe streets and neighborhoods. We rode our bikes everywhere, played baseball in the summer, football in the fall and basketball in the winter -- in clearly demarcated seasons that never bled into each other. We lived and breathed by the sports seasons. And there was swimming, tennis, golf, and proms at the Dothan Country Club.

Q: In your reading were there any particular fields or authors that you found especially stimulating?

HUSKEY: Yes. I loved Faulkner because of his southern roots. And Hemingway. I read lots of their novels. Also a great deal of history -- the Durants’ Story of Civilization, Gibbons’ Decline and Fall, Shirer’s Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. I tended to binge read. The summer of my junior year in high school, for example, I spent reading Russian novels non-stop -- Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Turgenev.

Q: Well then in school what subjects did you particularly like or dislike?

HUSKEY: I loved history, English, biology, theater, and debate. I did well in chemistry and math, though I never really loved them. Nevertheless, given my family background filled with doctors and dentists, when I went off to college I automatically and unquestioningly started out majoring in chemistry and math as part of a premed program in preparation for medical school. But I gradually woke up to realize that I did not love the hard sciences, and in my sophomore year I transferred my major to history and English. This was a great disappointment to my mother, whose father, uncle, and brother

were dentists, as was her husband, my father, whose own brother and uncle were M.D.'s.

Q: What sort of plays were you involved with in high school?

HUSKEY: Typical high school plays. We performed two plays each year, one in the fall and one in the spring, usually comedies such as "The Importance of Being Earnest" and "Cloud Nine." I was either in a play as an actor or served backstage as Stage Manager.

Q: On what area of history were you most interested in high school?

HUSKEY: World history, especially European history. But my PhD was actually in U.S. History, more specifically U.S. diplomatic history.

Q: How did the Cold War affect you?

HUSKEY: In pretty typical ways for the 1950s. I was very much aware of the nuclear threat. Some people in Dothan actually built bomb shelters in their back yards at the height of the bomb scare. That brought up the awkward issue of what one should do when neighbors came knocking at the bomb shelter door. Should one have a gun in the bomb shelter to keep outsiders at bay and protect the family? Or would one open the door and share limited provisions with others. So we all lived under the nuclear threat. I was often quite fearful that the Soviets might drop an atom bomb on Dothan, a fear that sometimes produced nightmares. I remember one in which I was walking down our street, Hazelwood Avenue, carrying a baseball bat and glove, when I heard planes flying high above with a long line of specks — bombs — dropping below. I ran as fast as I could to reach home before the bombs hit.

Q: I forgot to ask, when were you born.

HUSKEY: August 17, 1947. The same day and month as my hero, Davy Crockett, a fact that I always proudly shared during the Davy Crockett fad in the early 50s.

Q: OK, well how about the Vietnam War? Where were you during most of this?

HUSKEY: In 1965-1969, the height of the war, I was in college in Birmingham, where I gradually became radicalized. It was not kosher to be anti-war in conservative Alabama, but my college in Birmingham allowed enough space to be different, and I became active in the antiwar efforts of a group of more liberal students at Samford University. We became increasingly critical of the Vietnam War in counterpoint to our growing dismay at and critique of southern segregated society. So, I became concurrently active in both the civil rights and anti-war movements.

Q: How about George Wallace? What place did he have in your family and in your town?

HUSKEY: Wallace was a central presence in Alabama through the 1960's and even into the 1970's, when he was re-elected for the last time following his 1972 assassination attempt by a man named Arthur Bremmer. Unlike his earlier racist campaigns in rabid support of segregation, Wallace won his final term as governor with the support of Alabama Blacks. He was at heart a populist who gauged the mood of the public which he, like Robespierre, would run to catch and lead. In the 1960s, Alabama voters were driven by racism and segregation, so Wallace the populist sought to out-racist his competition. And it worked. He took command of the segregationist movement as a prototypical southern demagogue who used -- and fomented -- racism to attain political power. But in the mid-70s he switched and emphasized his populist, working class roots, which, ironically, lured many Alabama working class Blacks into his fold.

Q: Ben Tillman, et al.

HUSKEY: Exactly. And very much like a recent populist president, who tapped into the same kind of white nationalist paranoia and fear.

Q: Well, did you get involved in the dating game or not?

HUSKEY: I never dated in high school, and rarely even in college, largely because I was a stutterer, a quite severe stutterer, and always felt awkward in private conversations. Counterintuitively, the only time I could speak clearly was on stage, whether in a play or giving a speech. So, I entered numerous oratorical contests -- American Legion, Civitan, etc. — winning several state contests with generous college scholarships. But in everyday life, I was a severe stutterer, which so affected my life that I never dated and spent a lot of time reading and listening to classical music. In general, I hung around with the more serious students and kept dating at a safe distance, going out only when some girl invited me to a prom or dance.

Q: Well, I am sure you must have run across all kinds of cures for stuttering.

HUSKEY: Yes, everything from Demosthenes' prescription to speak with a mouthful of pebbles (presumably to distract the stutterer from his affliction) to a host of cure-alls and tricks to deal with stuttering. Stutterers have an elevated rate of suicide, because the inability to express oneself is immensely frustrating. I tried everything. Nothing worked. I went to several speech therapists. None of their counseling or prescriptions worked. In most cases of stuttering, there is no physical cause for the verbal blockage. Rather, it tends to be some kind of psychological block that afflicts certain people and personalities. Much later, I attended Graduate School at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, seeking to become a college professor, just like my Samford mentor, Prof. Wayne Flynt. But how I could ever have actually done that as a hardcore stutterer I cannot imagine. It was a totally unrealistic ambition. But early one morning while I was shoveling snow at the First Wisconsin National Bank to pay for grad school, a woman passed by with a brisk "good morning." "G-G-G-Good morning," I responded. She stopped in her tracks, walked back and started talking with me. It turned out that she was

a speech therapist working at the university speech clinic, which occupied the floors just above the bank. She invited me to her office that afternoon, where she introduced me to Tom Peters, a speech therapist who was experimenting with a new method of speech therapy that was half psychological counseling and half electronic. Peters used a reel-to-reel tape recorder with a continuous loop of recording tape. I would speak into the microphone and then hear my words spoken back to me through the earphones as the tape loop ran full circle. He started the tape on slow speed, instructing me to speak each syllable into the microphone until I heard it merge through the headphones, making a single continuous syllable. This was very slow going in the first weeks and months, as we discussed how I came to be a stutterer and the fears that caused my verbal blockages. In the course of many months of this half psychological counseling and half speech therapy, Peters gradually increased the speed of the tape, so that by year end I was talking with good fluency at a near-normal rate. I had effectively re-learned to speak from the very beginning and, for the first time in my life, I was able to control my speech. At the end of that year, I left Madison and began what would become my three-year round-the-world journey, during which I continued to record my speech patterns in a small notebook and periodically reported back via blue aerogram to Tom. This continued for another couple of years until I felt more comfortably in control of my stuttering. I sent my final report to Peters on arriving in Hong Kong in 1972.

Q: There was a very well-received movie called “The King’s Speech” about George VI, who had a heavy stutter. It shows some of the things he went through.

HUSKEY: Yes, but I could not watch that movie. It hit too close to home, bringing back too many painful memories of my years as a stutterer. My wife Joanne keeps urging me to see the movie. But it makes me uncomfortable and brings to memory so much of the pain of growing up as a stutterer.

Q: Yeah, that is a real conflict. Well, after high school, you went to college from when to when?

HUSKEY: From ’65 to ’69 right at the height of the civil rights movement in Birmingham and as the Vietnam War was heating up.

Q: OK, well talk about your college.

HUSKEY: Samford University is a Baptist college built on a surpassingly beautiful campus in the Appalachian foothills that run through Birmingham.

Q: It always gets mixed up with Stanford.

HUSKEY: It does. But the original name, Howard College, was even more problematic. When Howard grew into a university it could not simply become “Howard University,” because that name had already been taken and, perhaps more to the point, this was a lily white and quite racist Southern Baptist college! So they changed the name to “Samford University,” named after Frank Park Samford, the insurance magnate who

was the college's largest donor. Good southern Baptist reasoning there. We used to joke that Samford should change its school colors to green and gold. So, Howard College became Samford University, deeply conservative, lily white, no Blacks on campus except for janitors, gardeners and cooks. I became active in student government and formed the Literary Club and Forum, in which we discussed controversial books and issues like the Vietnam War, religion, race relations, and southern segregation.

As president of the Literary Club, I invited a group of Black students from Miles College on the west side of Birmingham to visit our campus one evening to discuss the racial situation in the South and, in particular, in Birmingham. When President Leslie Wright got wind of this invitation, he called in the Pinkertons, our campus security police, and instructed them to blockade the campus entrance so the Black students could not enter. It was a real standoff. As dusk descended on the campus, I could see the lights burning in Wright's corner office across campus, and I could see the police at the entrance to the university preparing to block the Black students from entering. So, I called the Birmingham News and WBRC, the largest local television station, and told them what was happening. They rushed reporters to the campus, and when Wright learned the media had arrived, he quickly pulled the Pinkertons back and allowed Blacks on campus for the first time in a non-servile capacity. A small but very gratifying victory.

Q: During these years, Birmingham was quite active in the civil rights movement. What about the bombing of the school children?

HUSKEY: The four beautiful little girls at Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in 1963. The reverberations of that tragedy continued decades afterwards. Martin Luther King and his dramatic letter from the Birmingham Jail was the same year. The same year that Bull Connor, Birmingham's infamous Public Security Chief, directed the police to use water canons and electric cattle prods against civil rights demonstrators.

Q: Yeah I saw all that on TV. It was quite a violent confrontation.

HUSKEY: That was the Birmingham in which I arrived in 1965, a very tense and wholly segregated city. The first efforts at actual school integration took place around 1967. At that time, I joined with a group of Samford students to set up a tutorial program for black children integrating Phillips Junior High School to help them overcome their huge educational gap.

Q: Well this group of blacks and whites, how did that go?

HUSKEY: Really well. This group of Samford students, including Kerry Buckley, Carolyn Johnson, Ed Wheeler and others, was mentored by Prof. Wayne Flynt, an extraordinary teacher who subsequently became the "Conscience of Alabama" on issues of race, poverty and education. Our goal was to help black children overcome the huge deficit which Alabama's separate but highly unequal school system had saddled them with, leaving them far behind their white peers in the newly integrated Phillips Junior High School. Years later I mentioned this to my boss, Secretary of State Condoleezza

Rice. "Oh yes," she said, "I remember that tutorial program." She had not participated herself, she explained, because her parents had ensured her own education, but some of her classmates had and it helped them "survive" in the new school.

Our group also reached out to the local black college, Miles College, and to liberal students at other area colleges, such as Birmingham Southern. We met together at the only place in Birmingham where black and white races could mingle -- the Birmingham Unitarian Church. It was a lovely building, a great "A" frame structure set in the woods with glass walls, a place where we could meet and have rational discourse.

Q: Well, you see a movie like "To Kill A Mockingbird" and you think of people descending from the backwoods with their rifles to get these pesky liberal kids. Did you feel any threats, were there problems?

HUSKEY: Not at Samford because Samford was a safe redoubt. I was, however, relatively liberal for Samford, but I was tolerated, in part because I was in a fraternity. In my freshman year I pledged Sigma Nu fraternity and was part of the Greek system, counterbalancing my other aspects in student government and in liberal politics working against the Vietnam War and racial segregation. So I lived two different lives, which offered a modicum of protection, or cover.

Q: Were you sort of confronted by segregationists?

HUSKEY: Well, in 1966 a photograph of me appeared on the front page of the "Alabama Independent," the state newspaper of the far-right John Birch Society. The photo showed me standing at the front door of a "Negro home" over the caption "Fellow traveler registering Negro voters." That shook me, as it was potentially dangerous in Birmingham in those tense days to be known as a "fellow traveler," i.e., Communist Party member. Whereas, I had never even met a Communist!

Q: So how did the university deal with you?

HUSKEY: Often at arms' length. I remember the day I graduated from Samford in June 1969. President Wright called out my name in a loud voice, and when I stepped onstage to receive my diploma from him, I had never seen him smile quite so broadly and with such enthusiasm. He was happy . . . not so much for me as to be rid of me. I guess I had caused him quite a lot of trouble over the course of my four years there. There were many nights on which he was kept late working in his office because of some meeting I had organized to discuss the Vietnam War, racism or other controversial topic. Dr. Wright was never happier with me than the day I left Samford.

Q: How did the professors deal with you?

HUSKEY: I had wonderful professors and close relations with many of them. Most were moderates, a few closet liberals. They had to be very careful what they said because we lived in the very conservative environment of Samford set in the "Heart of Dixie."

My mentor, really the mentor for all of the more open- and liberally-minded students, was Professor Flynt, our peerless history professor and one of the finest southern historians. Wayne was a close friend of Harper Lee, author of "To Kill a Mocking Bird," and after her death, he published a collection of his correspondence with her, which provided the only intimate view of this notoriously private woman. Wayne was not only a premier historian, but also a Baptist minister, which he was able to use along with his vast understanding of southern history and culture to off-balance hardline segregationists. I would watch him throw beautiful historical and theological counter punches. He was enormously effective as a scholar, historian, and Southern Baptist minister. The reason that I changed from pre-med to history, in fact, was because of that wonderful and most gentle man.

Q: How did it go with your family? Particularly with your father and all when you switched?

HUSKEY: My father died when I was 13, so my mother raised my brother and me. She came from a long line of doctors and dentists. In small town Dothan, to be an "intellectual" meant you were a doctor or a dentist. Or maybe a lawyer. So, when I dropped out of pre-med, it really devastated Mother, because she so wanted me to be a doctor. I did eventually become a doctor, but not the medical kind.

Q: Well, at university did foreign affairs cross your radar?

HUSKEY: Yes, and, again, it was Prof. Flynt who opened the door to that lifelong passion. One of the foremost historians of the American South, Flynt had also studied Asian history under O. Edmund Club at Columbia. His broad-gauged course "Far East" provided this boy from Dothan with his first contact with Asia -- Asian history, culture, religion. It was an eye-opening experience. Little could I have imagined then that I would end up circumventing the globe, living in Hong Kong and Taiwan, and eventually becoming a Sinologist, or China specialist, and finally a U.S. diplomat..

Q: Yes, I went to a small New England college, Williams, where I was a history major. Until June 25, 1950, the year I graduated, I don't think I had ever heard of South Korea. A few years later, I ended up in South Korea wearing a helmet. I don't think Williams had an Asian history major or even a course on China.

HUSKEY: Neither did Samford. Amazing. But it was Wayne Flynt, a small town southern boy himself, who had studied China at Columbia and who aroused my interest in things international and Asian.

Q: As you grew up and went through university, where did you get your news, and how much did you follow it?

HUSKEY: In high school, I read every issue of the conservative weekly, "U.S. News and World Report," cover to cover, including the international section. We did not watch television, however. When I was in elementary school, I had been an unremarkable "C"

student, much more into football and basketball. My father was very unhappy with this state of affairs, and one day when I was in the fifth grade he came home from work and announced that we would no longer be allowed to watch TV on school night. My brother and I thought he was joking, but when we realized he was serious, we protested and cried. It was so unjust, so inhumane. But Dad stuck to his guns. My next six-week report card had all B's and only one C, the best of my life thus far. The next six weeks, to my surprise, I had all B's with two A's. The third six weeks I had all A's with one B, and from then on through grad school, I was a straight-A student. My father's decision and determination really changed my life.

Q: So, you graduated in '69.

HUSKEY: From college.

Q: Then, where did you go?

HUSKEY: I went to Washington as a White House Intern that summer. This was a new, non-partisan youth program created by the incoming Nixon Administration, presumably to demonstrate President Nixon's outreach to college students, who were then demonstrating in the streets against the Vietnam War. After a long vetting process in spring 1969, I was designated as the White House Intern for Alabama. I flew to Washington in June for an amazing summer in which I had my first taste of government service and policy making. It was a fascinating summer. Our "Mentor" was Vice President Spiro Agnew, a man detested by college students for calling them "nattering nabobs of negativity." But, in person, Agnew proved unexpectedly cordial and quite an elegant gentleman (at least before he was forced to resign over charges of corruption). The fifty White House Interns were assigned to interesting positions throughout the Executive Branch of the government in Washington. It was a magical experience.

Q: What did you do?

HUSKEY: I was assigned to the Department of the Interior, working in the office of Secretary Walter Hickel, the former Governor of Alaska. I chose that position because of my fledgling interest in ecology. The fifty interns spent the summer going to daily meetings arranged by the White House, with all federal departments and with military leaders, Supreme Court justices, and prominent senators and congressmen. One day, for example, we met with both Ted Kennedy and Barry Goldwater, but were miffed that our liberal hero Ted Kennedy gave us short shrift – only 10 minutes – while arch conservative Barry Goldwater, cordially detested by most students, spent a full two hours with us. He was an elegant gentleman and open to discussing everything on our minds. So many fascinating people we met that summer. At Interior, I completed a project for the Bureau of Mines investigating the pollution impact of mines in western Pennsylvania, where I descended deep in a honeycomb of coal mines. It was a fascinating summer of living in Washington with some very bright students from across the United States and with access to everything that Washington had to offer.

Q: Did you come away with a positive feeling about government.

HUSKEY: I did. My roommate, Gary Shubert from UCLA was assigned to the Department of State, which gave me my first inkling of diplomacy and diplomats. Gary was having such fun doing all kinds of things international, that I began thinking that, gosh, I would love to do that.

Q: Well, after Washington what did you do?

HUSKEY: In September, I flew to Madison where I matriculated at the University of Wisconsin, beginning my doctoral program in U.S. History. I chose Wisconsin because the American History program there was very strong, with Merle Curtis, Merrill Jenson, William Appleman Williams and other premier historians. But a nice fellowship helped in the decision over UCLA and University Pennsylvania, though I was probably most impressed by the 25-cent beer in the Student Union, after four dry years at Baptist Samford. That fall the U.S. Selective Service System held the first national lottery to determine the order of birth dates to be drafted to serve in Vietnam. Luckily I drew a good number, around 250 (I forget the exact number), which essentially immunized me from being drafted into the Army.

Q: In Wisconsin, of course, you were in the heart of German culture.

HUSKEY: Yes, beer country! But also not far from Canada, just in case I got drafted. I could just go north to Canada instead of west to Vietnam.

Q: All right, well let's talk about your courses. In the first place, what was the atmosphere like on campus, since the University of Wisconsin had a reputation like that of Columbia and Berkeley.

HUSKEY: It was quite a radical place when I got there. But that was actually a welcome change for me coming out of the restrictive atmosphere of conservative Alabama. Not that I was radical, rather just moderate-to-liberal, though I had become increasingly radicalized against the Vietnam War. But in Madison there were real radicals all over the place, including the far left SDS.

Q: Students for a Democratic Society.

HUSKEY: Yes, Students for a Democratic Society. And there were Marxist and Trotskyite groups, far left ideological radicals, but still for me liberating because all of a sudden I could say anything and nobody would mind. I didn't have to be careful about what I said. It was immensely liberating, socially and intellectually. After the Kent State massacre the following spring, in which four students were killed by National Guardsmen, campuses all across America erupted and students poured into the streets in protest, Wisconsin more than most. For a full week, Madison was closed down. The city was enveloped in tear gas and I had to keep my handkerchief wet when walking down the street. Students confronted the police, whom they called "pigs." And the police, in fact,

did look like pigs because they wore face masks with muzzles that resembled pig snouts. The anger was contagious. One morning when I was walking to the Wisconsin Historical Society Library to do research, a police car full of blue jacketed and muzzled police pulled over and stopped me, then pushed and shoved me. This only enraged and radicalized me, as it did other students. There were massive demonstrations every day, with mobs of students throwing Molotov cocktails at the police and the police responding with tear gas targeting the students. Initially peaceful demonstrations would often morph into riots as police pushed back and tear-gassed students. But every night at 6:00 all protest stopped, as students rushed into the sprawling Student Union building on the shore of Lake Mendota and into dormitories to watch the Evening News, especially Walter Cronkite, to see who got the most coverage -- Wisconsin, Berkeley, Michigan, Columbia, or Cornell. We were often "number one," to the great pride of demonstrating Badgers.

Q: So, I missed all of this because I was in a quiet spot. I was in Saigon.

HUSKEY: Were you Foreign Service then?

Q: Yes, I was Consul General in Saigon.

HUSKEY: So you were persuading the "hearts and minds" of Vietnamese.

Q: I know we actually had demonstrations of American students who came in and lit candles in front of the embassy.

HUSKEY: In Saigon?

Q: Yeah. People could get in there.

HUSKEY: Still, Wisconsin for me was a wonderfully liberating place.

Q: Well, did you find yourself examining mob psychology? There was a feeling that this time of radicalization was a real time for young people about your age testing out leadership, contesting who was going to be leading the mob or something like that.

HUSKEY: It did have that aspect to it, as some protestors later dropped out of society, but most seem to have later moved on into fairly regular lives and careers. For me, the most interesting thing was how the student movement broke down all barriers. In Wisconsin everyone was liberal and protesting against the war and, later, against police excesses and brutality. Civil rights was another motivating issue, environmental consciousness was just emerging, and the first sprouts of the women's liberation movement appeared. And most students were experimenting with smoking marijuana. Years later, by the way, when I joined the Foreign Service I had to detail how often I smoked marijuana and hashish and once even peyote. Anyway, in Madison I lived in a group house with four guys, quite smart guys -- one in med school, another law school, the rest in grad school. But each Friday night we stopped our studies and partied most of

the weekend. You would walk in the front door of our house on Brooks Street and the smell of marijuana and the din of rock music pervaded the place. In the center of our living room was a round cable spool hung from the ceiling with a “forever candle” burning -- a series of large candles that we kept always burning atop a growing mountain of multicolored wax rivulets flowing outward. It was, as we used to say, “far out!” On weekends our house was full of people -- smoking joints, listening to music, making love. It was the 60’s in every sense of the word.

Q: Well, did you find that you were questioning some of the movements — their motivations, where they were going?

HUSKEY: Two things, Stu. On the one hand, young people increasingly questioned authority, a breakdown of the trust that had characterized the 1950’s. In the early postwar years, when the government spoke, Americans listened and respected. When the president spoke, this was accepted as truth. People respected government, from local to national. That trust and respect disintegrated in the 60’s with the Vietnam War and government prevarication. Students were left with a deep distrust of government and a visceral hatred of the president -- “LBJ, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?” was the chant. Distrust of government and military came to characterize American youth consciousness. This distrust was a major watershed in American history, the impact of which we are still living today, five decades later. On the other hand, as you know, the extremes of the antiwar movement had their own absurdities. I mean some students at UW were insisting that only Marx could save us from evil capitalism. That made no sense to me because Marx had provided no answers or solutions. You could not say that all police were pigs, that they were all bad. They were not. And the government was not all bad. I had spent the summer before starting grad school working in the U.S. Government in Washington, where I saw firsthand that most government workers were good, dedicated people working in a government that did many good things.

Q: There was also this phrase going around, “Don’t trust anybody over 30.”

HUSKEY: Yes, that mantra came out of Berkeley in ‘63, from one of the leaders of the Free Speech Movement, who proclaimed in a speech in People’s Park “Never trust anyone over 30.” That became a mantra of the national student movement . . . that is, until we ourselves began turning thirty. Then, someone revised the mantra to, “Never trust anybody over 40.” Later, when I turned 50, I told my partying friends “Never, but never, trust anybody under 50.” And when I turn 70, 50 will probably become 70. But 30 was the watchword, then. It was a youth counterculture that distrusted the authority and expertise that had trapped America in the Vietnam War. This alienation was a real bonding experience for young people. When I hitchhiked several times across America, and up into Canada, everywhere I went, I met other “freaks,” as we called ourselves -- hitching rides, in encampments in the Rockies or along lakes and the Pacific Ocean, or in innumerable group houses where I would always be welcomed to “crash.” The most wonderful sight in the world was, when hitching in the middle of nowhere -- Montana or Arizona or other desolate place -- sighting a little box bouncing down the highway -- a VW van covered with painted flowers and filled with people, freaks -- and I knew it

would stop, give me a ride, feed me, pass around a joint, and drop me wherever our paths diverged. This was the national youth culture.

Q: Well I have to ask, what was the sex scene at this time?

HUSKEY: It was just part of life. A big part. There were always girls crashing in our Madison group house, for weekends or weeks on end. You never knew who was sleeping with whom. But it was awkward when I found my then-girlfriend in bed with one of my housemates . . . or vice versa. What goes around, comes around, or maybe sauce for the goose

Q: Well, I am 89 years old now. The pill and all the stuff that changed everything came in just about the time I had a job and was married and had a couple of kids. I missed the sexual revolution which was my one great regret in life. The fear of pregnancy kept us in line.

HUSKEY: When I reached Wisconsin in 1969, the sexual revolution was well underway, and I quickly adjusted to this new way of life, so different from Alabama. On campus, people just paired off sort of naturally, even effortlessly.

Q: Well how about your studies? What were you studying then?

HUSKEY: I was in a Ph.D. program in U.S. history at UW, which had one of the strongest U.S. history programs in the country. I was taking colonial history, Jacksonian America, Civil War, Gilded Age, Progressive Era, etc. -- the standard U.S. history courses. But I also took a course in U.S. diplomatic history and became interested in that facet of history. It just grabbed me because it was dealing with other countries. That was my first time dealing with things international since my Far East course at Samford. After completing my MA and taking my doctoral prelims (preliminary examinations), I decided to go to Europe for the summer before settling into my dissertation research and writing in the fall.

Q: Had you been overseas before that?

HUSKEY: Yes, one summer in my sophomore year of college I went on a two-month American Youth Hostel tour of Europe. This was my first experience with the world outside of America, or really even outside of the South, and it whetted my appetite. Four years later, in the summer of 1970, I went on what I thought would be just a relaxing summer traveling around Europe before returning to Madison to begin my doctoral program. In Paris, however, I met a couple, Dick and Susan, coincidentally from the University of Wisconsin, who had a VW van and were leaving the next morning for Morocco. So, I jumped at their invitation, along with Channing, a guy from Stanford, and we drove south through France and Spain to the port of Algeciras, where we caught a ferry to Ceuta, Morocco. Chan had a large bag of grass, on which we virtually "floated" south to fabled Marrakesh. There, we switched to the local preference, *kif*, an ancient Moroccan concoction which the host prepares by dicing marijuana and hashish and

packing it into a long slender pipe very much like the opium pipes of East Asia. This was always accompanied by a pot of steaming hot mint tea. Susan, however, being a female, was not allowed to directly partake of *kif*, but our host, with a twinkle in his eye, said that I could “blow smoke in her direction.” We spent days roaming through the complex and endlessly fascinating Marrakesh kasbah, or market. When we returned back north to Tangier on the Mediterranean, I parted company with my travel companions and spent a couple of weeks with my Uncle Jack and Aunt Francis Counihan in their lovely apartment overlooking the Mediterranean. Jack had been the U.S. Navy Commander at the Port Lyautey U.S. Naval Base and a close friend of King Hassan. In that week, I met and was enchanted by a beautiful Franco-American girl named Marie-Joelle. But as we dallied on the beaches and spent our evenings in the tea houses and hookah salons of the teaming kasbah, it hit me that there was nothing to stop me from continuing eastward across North Africa. So, Aunt Francis drove me out to the edge of Tangier and left me on the highway hitchhiking eastward. Three Peace Corpsmen soon stopped and gave me a lift to Chechaouen, a blue-tiled hilltop town in the foothills of the Atlas Mountains. After a couple of days there, I continued hitching eastward toward Algeria. At one point I was dropped off by a farmer in a remote valley in the heart of the Atlas Mountains, where I sat on my backpack, pulled out my harmonica and began playing all the folk songs I knew, including “Dixie.” It all seemed quite surreal. After a couple of hours, I spotted the first vehicle, a red Peugeot tooling at high speed down the highway toward me. Pierre, a Parisian about my age, pulled over and offered me a lift through the mountains toward Algeria. We talked nonstop and became friends, and he waited a full day for me at the border to obtain a visa for Algeria. We then drove on to Oran -- fabled Oran to me, as this was the setting for Camus’ great novel “The Plague” -- where Pierre invited me to stay in his parents’ palatial “villa” perched on a cliff high above the Mediterranean. In the course of my week in Oran, I got to know many of his childhood friends on sailing and snorkeling trips on the Mediterranean and elegant dinners on their sumptuous veranda. So, it was with mixed feelings that I bade goodbye to Pierre and continued my eastward journey, while he returned to his studies at the Sorbonne. I hitched along the hot northern edge of the Sahara, catching rides with oil tankers, farmers, and on one particularly hot afternoon, with a businessman in an elegant air conditioned Citroen that seemed to float over the dry, rolling landscape on a cloud of soft shock absorbers.

When I reached Algiers at dusk one evening, I went into a small cafe on the white sandy beach along the Mediterranean, where I hooked up with a friendly group of Algerians, young men and women about my age. We drank and danced and talked until midnight. Then, I walked down the beach and laid out my bedroll and went to sleep. I was awakened suddenly in the early dawn by a movement and instinctively sat bolt upright, wheeled toward the sound and shouted at the top of my voice, scaring off a man who was in the process of dragging my backpack away on the sand. Everything I possessed was in that backpack -- passport, money, maps, clothes -- so that what evolved into my grand global sojourn would have ended that morning and I would have returned as planned to graduate school, completed my PhD and moved on to the college teaching career that I had long envisioned. One split second and life veered serendipitously, jaggedly, into an alternate path.

I continued hitching eastward toward Tunisia and its lovely capital, Tunis, on the Mediterranean. Then, I caught local buses through southern Tunisia and on to Libya, where the searing desert, together with the unwelcome I received at the border, encouraged me to return to Tunis. I camped a few nights on the beach just north of the city in the lee of the ancient walled city of Carthage from whence came Hannibal. One morning I woke on the beach to see a large ship, entering the Tunis harbor a couple of miles south and hurried there and bought a ticket to Palermo, Sicily, just across the Gulf of Tunis and the Mediterranean Sea.

I hitchhiked through Sicily and across the boot of Italy where, one morning a carload of Italian college students stopped and gave me a lift to Taranto, on the heel of Italy. After hanging out with them for a few days, I hitched to Brindisi and took a ferry across the Adriatic to Corfu and the Greek mainland, then hitched to Ioannina, Mt. Olympus and the bustling seaside city of Thessaloniki. In early September, I finally reached Istanbul, my unspoken destination, after which I would return to Madison a semester late and resume my studies. At my spartan, but cheap hotel, I met a friendly Kiwi couple, who had traveled overland from Singapore and were heading west to London to look for work. Over a couple of days of touring around Istanbul with them, they regaled me with stories of their overland travels, making me realize for the first time that one could just keep on going eastward following the curvature of the earth. By then, it had already become apparent that I would not make it back to Madison in time for the fall semester. So, I wrote my major professor that I would return in January to begin my doctoral program and, so, continued traveling eastward toward the rising sun.

Over the next several weeks I traveled by local trains and rickety buses through the interior of Turkey, staying longest in Cappadocia and the town of Goreme with its cliff caves inhabited by early Christian refugees and hermits, then on eastward to Mt. Ararat, the towering conical peak of ark-ian fame. Day by day I acclimatized to Turkey and its very different eastern culture. One night I shared a compartment on a train with two young men and their elderly father. To my consternation, when it came time to turn in for the night, the two young men looked at the old man and pointed to the floor, whereupon he obediently knelt on the floor and went to sleep. I realized that I had much to learn about the new and different cultures toward which I was heading. From Erzurum I continued by bus into Iran and the city of Tabriz, then south to Isfahan and finally Tehran, where I stayed for a couple of weeks at the travel hotel, Amirkabir. The Amirkabir was filled with young people traveling between Europe and Asia, who congregated and exchanged experiences and travel lore going in each direction. At that time, Tehran was buzzing with preparations for the Shah's elaborate 2,500th anniversary of the Persian Empire, a massive celebration commemorating Xerxes, Darius and the longevity of the empire. I continued on eastward to Mashad with its majestic blue-tiled mosque, then through the desert to the border of Afghanistan. I vividly remember stepping off the bus at the Afghan border just after midnight and feeling that I was being watched, which drew my eyes upward to the coal-black sky and the myriad of stars that seemed as big as headlights. I had never seen so many stars and with such startling clarity. After a few days in Herat, the cross-roads of the ancient Silk Road through which Alexander the Great traveled on his eastern march, I caught a bus across the blistering Dast-e Margo

(Desert of Death) to Kandahar. We took on two guards armed with ancient long rifles -- to ward off tribal bandits who often attacked on horseback from the hills. By the time I reached Kandahar, it was already January and it was obvious that I could not make it back to Madison in time for the Spring semester . . . or perhaps ever. The freedom of the open road had become too compelling, the sense of illimitable possibility upon waking each morning and knowing that I could close my knapsack and go, literally, anywhere I wanted to go -- north, south, east or west -- and the daunting realization that whichever road I took would change my life forever. So, I continued on eastward toward Kabul. I don't think I even bothered to write to my major professor that I would not be returning that year after all. In fact, I never did return to the University of Wisconsin.

Backpacking through strange lands forced me to learn how to converse with locals through spontaneous, invented sign language. I vividly remember long "conversations" with farmers, peasants, students, and housewives via hand gestures. There was one elderly farmer over the course of a two-day truck ride across the Dasht-e Margo to Kandahar, with whom I had an extended "conversation," despite not sharing a common language. He told me all about his village, his neighbors, and his family, proudly describing each wife and child. Such a vivid conversation, and yet neither of us shared a common language. Rather, we used hand gestures, as I asked how many wives (hands showing skirts and breasts), how many children (their staggered heights), how many cattle ("moo-ing" and horns), what his house was like (doorway and roof), what crops he grew (pointing to passing fields), etc. So, I perforce learned to deal with other cultures in this rudimentary but functional way.

Traveling north from Kandahar, I caught a ride on a truck heading northeast through the village Gizab into the raw and rugged hills of central Afghanistan to the beautiful emerald blue lakes of Band-e Amir, where I camped and lived off of fish purchased from local Afghani fishermen. Then, on to Bamiyan Valley with its fabled statue of Buddha, reputedly the tallest in the world (later bombed into oblivion by the anti-idol Taliban). Continuing east, I reached Kabul, a welcome relief from rugged mountain roads. There, Western youths congregated in rambling hotels at this trans-continental stopping place where they rested up, drank hot tea and passed around fragrant pipes of fresh hashish. I consumed innumerable sweet honeydew melons and threaded my way through the maze of bazaars shopping for a lambskin coat and karakul cap so that I could survive the Afghan winter. After surviving a hard bout of dysentery in a free -- socialized medicine -- but less-than-sanitary Afghan hospital, I caught a bus eastward through the narrow, bandit-infested Khyber Pass to Peshawar and Islamabad, which appeared as -- comparatively -- modern cities. The city of Lahore in eastern Pakistan was a particularly interesting city, with its majestic mosque and a comfortable travelers' hotel, where I rested and exchanged travel information with westward-bound travelers. But with the war clouds gathering over India and Pakistan in Fall 1971, I hurried on to the isolated border crossing on the old British Grand Trunk Road that was now the last thread connecting these two South Asian feuding behemoths. The road east toward India ran for many miles just above the vast sawgrass sea now inundated by the torrential monsoon downpours. In the center of the sea, the single lane road broadened into a small island on

which Indian and Pakistani immigration stations sat glaring at each other, a vivid personification of the fragile thread that linked the two giants.

When war broke out a few days after I reached Amritsar in northwest India, I headed north to Kashmir, a verdant jewel of a valley set deep in the Himalayas. The road to Srinagar wound through steep mountain passes running along the edge of vertical cliffs. Riding in the rear seat of the rickety bus, I would be flung far out over empty space with each hairpin curve, looking straight down on the rocks, rapids and occasional twisted buses far below. At one point driving much too fast down the muddy road, the bus started to slide, coming finally to a halt a couple of feet from the edge. I stayed in beautiful Srinagar for several weeks, living on a lace-trimmed houseboat on Lake Dal, which I shared with Hillary and Richard, a British couple from Cornwall. We three took a bus east into the high Himalayas to the village of Pahalgam, the starting point for a mountain trail to the remote Kolhai Glacier. We trekked for several days with a pack horse through a majestic valley and huddled around our campfire at night, finally reaching Kolhai Glacier at the top of the mountain chain.

From Kashmir, I traveled south to Delhi, where I stayed for a couple of weeks, then on to the Taj Mahal in Agra, covered by a huge tarpaulin to protect it from marauding Pakistani jet fighters seeking to target its brilliant white marble dome as a beacon near the Agra Air Force Base. Then on to the ruins of the mountain top fortress Fetapur Sikri south of Agra, and east to Jaipur with its pink palace and Udaipur with its seemingly floating island palace hotel. I then turned back east and traveled down the broad Ganges River to Varanasi and its funeral pyres, and north into the mountains of Nepal. After several weeks trekking in the Himalayas, I reached the town of Pokhara in central Nepal, with its vast fields of rhododendrons against the backdrop of snow-covered Himalaya peaks.

Q: So how far did you get?

Huskey: Well, from Pokhara, I continued trekking north, skirting the foot of the majestic Matterhorn-like Mt. Annapurna, to Jomsom in the far north. There, I was blocked by Nepalese troops from continuing on to the fabled mountain town of Mustang, near the Chinese border, because of border troubles.

I returned to Kathmandu, where I settled into the traveler Matchbox Hotel on the banks of the Bishnumati River, where I shared a US \$1.50 room with several guys, including Juni, a Japanese man who first introduced me to Chinese food. Each evening sitting on the rooftop with other travelers, who were passing around their hashish pipes, we could hear the dreadful doomsday horn booming from Soyambu Temple. So, Juni and I finally got up the courage to climb up the steep hill to the temple, overrun with monkeys. When the 30-foot doomsday horn sounded off at worship time, it sounded like the gates of Hell opening, and you feared falling in.

Q: How did you get along in these very different cultures and languages?

I found the parade of cultures and languages endlessly fascinating. I would cross from one valley to the next and enter a wholly different world. I learned to quickly land on my feet and reconnoiter each new place with my practiced hand gestures. I vividly recall long “conversations” through the Middle East and South Asia where no one, not even the usual school headmaster, spoke a word of English.

I was particularly struck by the foreign communities in Kathmandu, as in Teheran and Kabul earlier. It was amazing to see how American and other foreign diplomats and business people lived privileged lives in spacious, Western-style homes, schools and cars amid crowded, impoverished cities. I remember walking down the broad boulevards of these foreign sections trying to imagine how the local population viewed the foreigners. I was amazed, too, that Americans were actually paid, and paid well, to live such fascinating lives. This realization influenced, first, my dissertation research on the Shanghai foreign community and, later, my decision to become a U.S. diplomat.

Q: Where did you get funds for your years of travel?

HUSKEY: I left the U.S. in July with \$700 in traveler’s checks tucked inside my money belt, expecting to return to Madison by September. I traveled on a “shoe string” and was able to somehow stretch my funds very thinly over six months until I reached Delhi.. There, I received a desperately-needed infusion of funds from my Mother at the Poste Restante window of the main Post Office. I had averaged spending \$2.00-3.00 per day and was down to my last \$20 traveler’s check. Through this nearly year of traveling, I stayed in cheap hotels, many on the youth traveler circuit across Asia. Lots of Western students -- Germans, Americans, Canadians, Dutch -- were traveling from Europe through the Middle East and South Asia, Singapore and Australia in those years – many inspired by the Beatles’ India experience and music, others in search of adventure, or cheap drugs (grass and hashish), others searching for “enlightenment.” But, at 50 cents for a bed and a dollar for food each day, I traveled on a “shoe string.”

Q: What happened after Kathmandu?

HUSKEY: I returned to India and spent several months, criss-crossing India by train, using my UW student ID to purchase third class tickets half price on massively crowded trains (once in a while, I would manage to slip into the relatively elegant Second Class compartment for some peace and quiet until kicked out). I visited amazing places, such as the 9th century jungle temples of Khajuraho, covered in erotic carvings of various styles of sexual congress. I would just lie on my back and look up at the temple with the brilliant blue sky in the background and try to disaggregate the intertwined bodies of people and gods. A few days later, I disembarked at a small station in the central highlands and traveled to the valleys of Ajanta and Ellora, which were rimmed with caves cut in the rock face and containing ancient Hindu and Buddhist carvings and paintings.

Bombay proved an overwhelming experience, with its masses of people and deep poverty. Staying at a cheap traveler hotel near the Gateway of India arch, I woke up one

morning in a bunk room with three German youths shooting heroin between their toes. Quite a few of these druggies never made it home. I would stress to people I met that I was not part of the Western drug culture inundating India, but rather was one of the “seekers” trying to understand India and its religions. Anyway, from Bombay, I took a coastal steamer south to the former Portuguese colony of Goa, where I stayed in a guest house on the beach filled with westerners, many participants in the twice yearly Kathmandu-Goa migration axis, ironically mirroring the New York-Miami axis. I went on to Bangalore and Madras, the British colonial port city on the Bay of Bengal in eastern India. Little did I know then that Madras would play a major role in my life. Well, Madras was blisteringly hot, so hot that I visited the USIA Library at the U.S. Consulate for air conditioned respite. While I was sitting at a table reading the *New York Times*, a man in a suit sat down across from me. We started talking, and it turned out that he was the Political-Economic Counselor of the Consulate. He invited me up to his palatial office on the fourth floor overlooking the city. This office would play a large role in my life, because twenty-one years later, I would occupy that office as the Pol-Econ Counselor for South India. As they say, what goes around, comes around.

Returning to Madras, I took a freighter across the Bay of Bengal to the island of Penang in Malaysia, an emerald in the aqua Strait of Malacca, then hitchhiked south along the coast of Malaysia. I vividly remember camping on the beach along the Strait of Malacca on Christmas Eve 1972. I was alone and lonely, with no idea where I was going and wondering where I would ever end up. But, I was already building a life and a fascinating career, one that would be international and rewarding beyond imagination.

When I arrived at the bridge connecting Malaysia to the diamond-shaped island of Singapore Island, I went through customs, where the immigration officer ordered me to go next door to a barbershop and “get a haircut.” My hair had indeed grown long, and Singapore is a rather autocratic and conformitarian island country. So, I conformed, entered Singapore and “landed” a job on a freighter, nothing exciting or even romantic, just scraping paint, but enough to pay for a berth on the S.S. Taipooshan to Hong Kong. We sailed through rough seas off the coast of Vietnam and north through the South China Sea as the ship rolled incessantly and violently. I loved standing at the prow of the ship, holding on for dear life, and rising far up into the sky above the waves then plunging straight down until the waves towered above. Most passengers were thoroughly sea sick and remained in their cabins, so that a handful of us had the galley all to ourselves and ate to our heart’s content. I became friends with a British sailor who had been working and roaming the ports of Asia for years with, as he put it, “a girl in every port and a little port in every girl.” He had just finished a stint on a freighter out of Singapore and was heading up to Korea, where a girl was waiting for him. But I bade him farewell in Hong Kong, where I had my first real taste of China and things Chinese – the people, the cuisine, and the language, which I began studying because it seemed such a fascinating language.

After a few weeks, and with the last of my money, I bought a ticket on a small steamer and sailed across the Taiwan Strait to the port of Keelung at the northern tip of Taiwan, or Formosa (“Beautiful Island”), as the Portuguese called it. Arriving by bus in Taipei

virtually broke, I went to National Taiwan University (NTU), where a group of students invited me to crash in their dorm room. The next morning, I found a job teaching English and then began to study Chinese in earnest. And, once again, little did I realize that Taiwan and China would play such an important part in my life. I guess you could say that I ended up as a China specialist instead of, say, a Hindi or Middle Eastern specialist, because that is where I finally ran out of money.

Q: OK, today is 17 August 2017 with Jim Huskey. Jim, which Chinese dialect did you study?

HUSKEY: Mandarin, which the PRC (People's Republic of China) calls *putunghua*, or "Standard Chinese." I did not study any of the regional dialects, including the local Taiwanese, which is a regional dialect just like Cantonese or Sichuanese. Mandarin, or *putunghua*, is now spoken universally in China and Taiwan and is the common dialect of everyone. I became decently fluent in Mandarin in my year living in Taiwan, but studied the complex traditional characters instead of *jiantizi*, the simplified characters used on the mainland. Much later, when I was in the Foreign Service and serving in Beijing, I quickly picked up *jiantizi*.

Teaching English paid well enough for me to travel all over the island – to the sacred Buddhist mountain of *Shitoushan* (Lion's Head Mountain), covered in temples where the monks would invite me to stay overnight and join their 4 am worship ceremonies; to the 14,000-foot peak of *Yushan* (Jade Mountain) in the center of the island; to the marble-walled Taroko Gorge on the east coast; to *Lanyu* (Orchid Island), with its breech-clouted aborigines.

Q: What was Taipei like in 1971?

It's hard to believe how rudimentary and undeveloped Taiwan was in those days. Back then, the buses were old and ramshackle, passengers would push and shove to get on board, most streets had open sewers running down each side, and people openly spit in the streets. Today, of course, Taipei is an ultra modern, world-class, technologically advanced city.

Having just spent three years "on the road" from Africa across to East Asia, with only a backpack, I was awed by the splendor and privilege of the relatively luxurious life led by Americans living in Taipei — serving in the military and at the U.S. Embassy, teaching at Taipei American School (TAS), and working in business. Seeing such comfort and American "normality" seemed almost bizarre. Here I was an erstwhile student living on a shoestring, studying Chinese and teaching English to keep alive, while all these regular Americans were living in beautiful homes inside walled compounds with cars and access to the U.S. Navy PX and to their private American beaches connected by bus to the American School. This foreign community, like those I had seen in Teheran, Kabul,

Kathmandu, and Madras, made me wonder what this strange exogenous presence meant to the local inhabitants. I could only imagine how odd it seemed to them.

Q: What particularly struck you about Chinese culture and language?

HUSKEY: Boiled peanuts. Have you ever had boiled peanuts?

Q: Yeah. They are pretty blah.

HUSKEY: Well, when I first arrived in Hong Kong, I walked past an old Chinese peasant pushing a cart selling – to my astonishment – boiled peanuts. Boiled peanuts! It was like being back home in Alabama again after three years on the road. I believe China and Taiwan are the only places in the world outside of the Deep South where you can find boiled peanuts. I felt right at home. But, more seriously, Stu, I discovered that Taiwan is a highly traditional society, much like the Deep South. When Chiang Kai-shek retreated from the Mainland, he brought traditional China with him to Taiwan — traditional clothing, Confucian philosophy and ethics, and fine cuisine from every province, at a time when the cuisine of Mainland China had been wrecked by the Cultural Revolution. I found the etiquette and social courtesies of traditional Chinese culture — the exaggerated politeness, the indirectness — so familiar and reminiscent of the South, where you similarly don't criticize people . . . at least, not to their face!

I felt such a sense of familiarity in Taiwan that I ended up staying for two years. I then felt confident enough of my spoken and written Chinese to return to academia to complete my doctorate.

Q: Had you already considered a career in the Foreign Service?

HUSKEY: No, I could never have imagined that I, a boy from the peanut fields of South Alabama, might ever have a career as a U.S. diplomat, and, besides, I was still intent on the academic life of teaching, researching, and writing — and had not begun to think beyond this known quantity. As I mentioned earlier, I had seen in Birmingham what academicians can do to positively affect social change and social justice. I saw my history professor Wayne Flynt making a major impact on race relations and civil rights in Alabama, and dreamed of doing the same.

I still expected to return to academia after my years bumming around the world, and in fact I did return in 1973, but this time to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a town that calls itself, not without reason, “The Southern Part of Heaven.” There, I continued my study of U.S. history, but now focused on U.S. diplomatic history rather than the Jacksonian or Progressive Era, after which I would pursue the professorial life of teaching and research. I was just beginning to realize how much and how irrevocably my years of wandering around the globe had changed me and my life's trajectory.

Q: While you were in Chapel Hill, did you find you were an odd-man-out as a graduate student, given your years' of traveling around the world and living in Taiwan?

HUSKEY: Good point, Stu. Returning to the world of academia was something of a culture shock after years of experiencing, rather than studying, international relations. Those three years had so changed my life that I would eventually “jump ship,” from teaching to practicing diplomacy by joining the U.S. Foreign Service.

After passing my doctoral prelims in Chapel Hill in 1975, I returned to Taiwan on a Ford Fellowship to research and write my dissertation. With this prestigious and very generous fellowship, I was financially comfortable for the first time in my adult life, and able to live and travel for three years in Taipei, 1976-1979. I lived in a lovely traditional Japanese house, a remnant of Taiwan’s half century as a Japanese colony, 1895-1945, with tatami mat floors, sliding rice paper walls, hanging scroll paintings, and a great wooden bath tub heated by coal fire.

Q: So, you were pursuing your doctoral dissertation research on this, your second time in Taiwan?

HUSKEY: Yes, I was appointed a Visiting Fellow at the Academia Sinica in Taipei on a beautiful campus tucked in the foothills on the eastern edge of the city. I also taught a class in American Studies at NTU and a U.S. history class at the University of Maryland program on the U.S. Naval Base in Taipei.

Q: Yes, I have attended some of these programs.

HUSKEY: Oh, really? Well, the students at both NTU and the Maryland program were some of the best I ever taught. It was largely due to the students that I so enjoyed teaching in Taipei.

Q: How did you find the students that you were teaching?

HUSKEY: The students at NTU, often called the “Harvard of Taiwan,” were exceedingly bright and worked nose-to-the-grindstone hard. Traditional Chinese education did not encourage students to think creatively or independently, but more along the lines of rote memorization and repetitively learning the complex Chinese written language. But I taught as an American, encouraging my students to think for themselves and to question everything, including me, which was just not done in Taiwan or China. I watched as my students began to think independently and to question and speak out forcefully. It helped prepare those of my students who continued on to graduate study in the U.S. At the University of Maryland program, most of my students were soldiers and sailors, who were good students, because most had not been able to go to college on their own. But my best students were the American housewives — wives of officers and soldiers at the base and of diplomats at the U.S. Embassy. Many had not been able to go to, or to finish, college, and being older and with deeper experience than the average college student, they were excellent students.

Q: How were relations between Japan and Taiwan at that time?

HUSKEY: At the government level, the KMT government remained embittered toward Japan for both the 1895 Sino-Japanese War, in which Japan had taken Taiwan from China, and the 1937-45 Second Sino-Japanese War, most unforgettably the Nanking Massacre. But the Taiwanese people had a very different historical experience from that of the Mainlanders, and had a much warmer attitude toward Japan, based on their half century as a Japanese colony from 1895 to 1945. While the Japanese had indeed been heavy-handed colonialists, forcing everyone to study and speak Japanese, the Taiwanese people did absorb elements of Japanese culture. When I first arrived in Taiwan in 1971, I was surprised to find older Taiwanese very proud of their spoken Japanese and identifying with Japanese culture. Both Japan and Taiwan are volcanic islands with a vibrant hot spring bathing culture, an element of the strong *guanxi* — the Chinese word for personal ties — between Taiwanese people and Japan.

Q: What was your impression of the Government of Taiwan at that time?

HUSKEY: That was the KMT Government under Chiang Kai-shek, who had died in 1975, the year before I returned to Taiwan, in step with his old adversaries Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong, who died in quick succession. Chiang's son, Chiang Ching-kuo, succeeded his father and began the long liberalization process that evolved into a thoroughgoing, world-class democracy by the mid 1990s. Promoting the democratization of Taiwan is one of the great success stories of U.S. foreign policy.

Q: What was the subject of your doctoral dissertation?

HUSKEY: The Shanghai foreign community during the interwar years — from the May 4th Movement in 1919 to Chiang Kai-shek's unification of the nation in 1928. In the process, I evolved from an exclusively U.S. historian into a budding sinologist, or China specialist.

My research topic was actually rooted in my three-year round-the-world-trip in which I saw many international communities from the outside, a poor wayfarer gazing in at the palaces of the rich, the same way local populations saw them. I would see foreigners, mostly Western diplomats and business people and their families, living privileged lives in each of the cities I visited — Tangier, Istanbul, Teheran, Kabul and Kathmandu, Delhi and Madras (now Chennai). These were still very poor countries at that time, and I tried to imagine how the local populations viewed these rich foreign enclaves in their midst and what impact the foreign communities had on the host nation societies. I found it both awesome and awful watching these privileged foreigners living their relatively opulent lives far beyond the means of the host country populations. That inspired me to focus on perhaps the preeminent foreign community in world history — Shanghai.

Q: Shanghai was nothing until the five treaty ports opened in the mid-nineteenth century..

HUSKEY: Yes, Shanghailanders (Shanghai foreign residents) pointedly referred to pre-Western Shanghai as a “mud flat” of peasants and fishermen. By the twentieth century, Shanghai had developed into the primary commercial center of China, with a huge foreign community living in the French Concession and the British International Settlement in the heart of Shanghai. The effort by American businessmen to establish an “American Community” in the 1860’s had been foiled by an unwilling and anti-imperialist U.S. Congress. Shanghai foreigners controlled their areas of the city via extraterritoriality, the treaty right to govern and police foreign enclaves as virtual foreign countries. The Japanese later carved out their own concession along the Huangpu River on the north side of the city.

Q: What about the Japanese factor?

HUSKEY: That came later, in the 1930’s, beginning in 1932 when Japanese troops ran roughshod over Shanghai. The Japanese militarily dominated Shanghai through the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945, during which the Shanghai foreign community kept a low profile and offered little help in defending the Chinese population. The Chinese have never forgotten or forgiven the Japanese for this war and, especially, for the Nanking Massacre. The war still drives Sino-Japanese relations today.

But I was focused on the impact that foreigners and the juxtaposition of their cultures and wealth had on the attitudes of the Chinese people, who lived in and around the Shanghai foreign community. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese, both rich and poor, had moved to Shanghai for protection from civil wars and warlordism that wracked post-imperial China. They lived, ironically, as second-class citizens under the aegis of this foreign community *d’extraordinaire*. Living in foreign-controlled China was a daily dose of humiliation for Chinese, most notoriously the infamous “No Dogs or Chinese” sign at the entrance to the Bund Garden on the Huangpu River.

So, I began studying the impact this unequal relationship in Shanghai had on the local populace and on modern Chinese history, since Shanghai was the birthplace of the Chinese Communist revolution. The fledgling labor movement in Shanghai after World War I was the proving ground for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which was formed in 1921 by Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. The CCP was actually allied with the KMT under the leadership of Republic of China (ROC) President Sun Yat-sen in Canton (Guangzhou).

Q: What was your impression of Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist regime during this post-World War I decade?

Chiang had worked closely with Sun Yat-sen in the early twenties, when Chiang was something of a liberal-minded reformer. When Sun died in 1925, Chiang Kai-shek succeeded him and launched the Northern Expedition to reunify China after years of warlordism and civil war. Reaching the halfway mark of the Yangtze River in January 1927, Chiang turned east toward Shanghai, where he quickly married Sung Meiling, the American-educated daughter of the wealthy, American-educated Charlie Sung. He made

a secret alliance with the local Chinese commercial elite — the “bourgeoisie” — of the city and the Shanghai foreign community, both of which held the wealth that had attracted Chiang to stop over in the city on his march north to Beijing. On April 12, Chiang’s troops turned on and massacred the Communists, with Mao and Zhou narrowly escaping and literally “heading for the hills” of Jiangxi, thus changing the course of the Chinese revolution and setting off a twenty-year civil war between the Chinese Nationalist (KMT) and Communist (CCP) forces. The local Chinese bourgeoisie and the Shanghai foreign community played a pivotal role in this transformation. The former had vacillated back and forth between their national identity as Chinese under foreign occupation and their commercial and class identity as bourgeoisie. When push came to shove, most chose the latter identity — aligning with the foreign community against communist revolution. So, I focused my research on the privileged and powerful Shanghai foreign community and its anti-communist alliance with the city’s Chinese bourgeoisie.

Q: Did you draw any conclusions from this?

HUSKEY: While Chiang Kai-shek went on to complete Sun’s dream of reunifying China in 1928, the April 12 massacre irrevocably split the Chinese revolution into the one-party KMT government under Chiang Kai-shek and the Communist movement under Mao Zedong, which became an anti-industrial peasant revolution with Shanghai as its *bete noire*. When the CCP finally won the civil war in 1949, the revolutionary China that emerged was totally different, again due in part to the role played by the Shanghai foreign community and its partnership with the local Chinese bourgeoisie.

Q: Did you feel restraints looking over your shoulder in Taipei. You had to be a bit careful, or were things already changing?

HUSKEY: I had to be careful in any discussion of the KMT and Chiang Kai-shek, even though he had died a year earlier, because it was still a one-party government focused on the goal of “retaking the Mainland.” But these three years in Taiwan, 1976-1979, offered the first glimmerings of a more open atmosphere and an emerging political opposition movement.

Q: Was there division between the native Taiwanese and the descendants of the Kuomintang?

HUSKEY: Well, the basic clash in Taiwan was between Mainlanders (*waishengren*, or “other province people”) and Taiwanese (*benshengren*, or “this province people”). The Mainlanders had retreated from China in 1949, when Chiang and the KMT lost the civil war to Mao and the CCP. The Taiwanese, while ethnic Chinese whose ancestors had migrated from Fujian Province in the 17th-19th centuries, had lost most of their ties to and identity with Fujian and had developed a separate cultural and linguistic identity.

This division was expressed politically in the emerging Blue-Green conflict — blue being the color of the KMT’s Republic of China (ji) flag and green representing the verdant

green island of Taiwan and its separate identity. The “Blues” sought to maintain cultural ties to Mainland China, which they hoped to retake, while the “Greens” identified as Taiwanese with few ties to the Mainland. That cultural division had grown over the decades of KMT rule, from “2/28,” the February 28, 1947 KMT massacre of some 18,000 Taiwanese, through the ensuing three decades of the “White Terror” under heavy-handed KMT rule. Thus, when Chiang Ching-kuo began to relax military law and allowed some political breathing room, “Green” identity surged, as did support for Taiwan independence, a direct threat to both KMT rule and Mainland China’s claim of sovereignty over Taiwan. Since the mid-90’s, the Green movement has oscillated between separate identity from China to outright support for independence.

Q: What were the views of the people there about the mainland?

HUSKEY: The chasm between Taiwan and the Mainland was deep in the wake of the chaotic Cultural Revolution. There was virtually no interaction, and anyone who did so would be arrested. When referring to Mainland Chinese, people in Taiwan spoke of the “*Gongfei*,” or “Communist bandits.” That is how they were taught from childhood to think about Mainland China. The coincidence of Chiang and Mao dying in 1975 and 1976, respectively, made it possible for cross-strait relations to slightly thaw, or at least to lower the level of military confrontation. The younger generation began to consider that maybe Mainland China was not immutably evil. But the full effect of that mellowing did not emerge until the 90’s, and more fully in the early 2000’s, when I returned to Taiwan as a U.S. diplomat.

Q: So, at this time, was there real concern in Taiwan about the Communists invading the island?

HUSKEY: There was certainly residual fear of that, for Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT had kept that threat percolating to reinforce their one-party rule. There was, however, little chance of that happening at this time, given, first, the chaos of the Cultural Revolution in China and, after 1978, the reforms of Deng Xiaoping. Prior to 1979, the U.S. maintained diplomatic relations with the ROC Government and had a substantial military presence on the island, with both naval and air bases. There was even a National Security Agency (NSA) listening post at Linkou on top of a mountain facing China across the Taiwan Strait, which monitored Chinese military communications. The main U.S. military presence was in the heart of Taipei on Sun Yat-sen Boulevard (*Chung-shan Pei-lu*), where I would go on weekends to get my fix of American food. Americans with passports could enter the base and use the library and cafeteria, where I would have a full American breakfast, replete with grits.

This, my second sojourn in Taiwan, 1976-79, coincided with both the beginning of the democracy movement in Taiwan and the traumatic U.S. break in relations with Taiwan. There were parallel, but unrelated, democracy movements in Mainland China and Taipei, each with its own *minzuqiang* (“democracy wall”) and *dazibao* (big character posters). The two movements directly challenged the autocratic ruling parties — CCP and KMT. In fall 1977, I watched students demonstrating in the streets around NTU, giving

pro-democracy speeches and posting *dazibao*, as police watched from the sidelines. Coincidentally, these student demonstrations in Taipei mirrored those in Beijing two years earlier following the death of Premier Zhou Enlai. Then, on December 15, 1978, President Jimmy Carter suddenly announced that the U.S. would sever diplomatic relations with the ROC on January 1, and shift its diplomatic recognition to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Beijing. Carter completed the shift begun by Nixon and Kissinger in '72, when he peremptorily broke relations with Taiwan and shifted our diplomatic relations to Beijing. This hit Taiwan like a thunderbolt that ricocheted across the island. I vividly remember walking down the street the next morning with people staring at me and mouthing "*weishema?*" (why?). I could only say "*Duibuqi. Buguo women Meiguoren buhui wangji Taiwan*" (I'm sorry. But we Americans will never forget Taiwan).

Q: Well, did you see any early signs of the KMT and Taiwanese coming together?

HUSKEY: Not coming together. That would have been difficult, given the deep Taiwanese bitterness over the "2/28" massacre followed by the three decades of KMT autocratic rule. The divisions were deep, even though the Taiwanese people are ethnically Chinese.

Q: So, what happened when Jimmy Carter broke relations with Taiwan?

This was a traumatic event for the people of Taiwan, who felt utterly deserted by their longtime ally. To deal with this shock, Carter dispatched Undersecretary of State Warren Christopher to Taipei a few days later to explain our action.

Q: I think he was Deputy Secretary of State.

HUSKEY: Yes, you're right, Deputy Secretary. When DepSec Christopher landed at the Taipei Airport, he was met by a huge crowd of enraged protestors demonstrating against the U.S. move. I was teaching at NTU, which supplied many of the demonstrators, and some of my students told me privately that the KMT had chartered the buses that transported the student demonstrators to the airport to express KMT anger over the U.S. move. I watched the live broadcast showing Christopher sitting alarmed in the backseat of the U.S. ambassador's black Cadillac limousine, which the protestors were stoning and rocking violently, breaking one of the side windows. This clearly expressed the fear and the anger of the people of Taiwan.

Q: How did things go there, after Christopher left and things calmed down.

HUSKEY: A semblance of normality returned, but it remained uncomfortable for Americans residing in Taiwan, because the people of Taiwan just could not comprehend why the U.S. would "betray" them. How could America turn from "Free China" to embrace "Communist China"? (Of course, it took another two decades before Taiwan evolved into the full-fledged democracy that it is now.) This was a severe shock after the decades from Truman through Carter with the U.S. in lockstep with Nationalist China.

My last months in Taiwan in 1978-79 were still rather awkward, as the people of Taiwan came to terms with the new reality that they were no longer “China” and no longer occupied China’s seat in the UN. They were now just a small island known as Taiwan, instead of the ROC. It was a difficult reality for them to swallow.

Q: In a way, this change made things easier for us.

HUSKEY: Yes, actually it did. Even though we spoke of “Free China,” the ROC was not really “free.” It was free economically and socially, but not politically. This top-down political control now began to change and open up.

Q: Now, just to piece together the chronology, you got your Ph.D. and then what.

Well, after leaving Taiwan in summer 1979, I spent six months as a Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, where I had a research carrel down the hall from Alexander Solzhenitsyn — he was rarely there — and continued my dissertation research in the Hoover’s unrivaled Chinese Communist archives, probably the finest collection in the world outside of China. I then flew to Washington, D.C. to complete my dissertation research at the Library of Congress and the National Archives. I had a wonderful research carrel on the top floor of the Library with a view of the Capitol, which I shared with Neil Sheehan, the New York Times reporter who was hard at work on his Pulitzer Award-winning book on Vietnam, *A Bright and Shining Lie*. I then spent half a year working in the China Section of the Congressional Research Service in the Library of Congress, where I drafted research papers about China and Taiwan for Senators and Congressmen of both parties and very different political persuasions, from the liberal Ted Kennedy to far right Jesse Helms of North Carolina. I finally received my Ph.D degree in 1982, after nearly a decade of doctoral research and teaching at Chapel Hill, University of Maryland, and NTU.

After receiving my degree, I took a job as Managing Editor of Lambert Publications, Inc., a small Washington publishing house that was later acquired by McGraw-Hill. We published specialized international directories on defense forces and economic institutions. My *Worldwide Directory of Defense Authorities*, published in early 1983, was the first comprehensive, one-volume analysis of defense forces around the world. The research challenge was huge: to catalog and analyze the defense forces of every nation. Imagine the challenge—diving into the defense forces of countries as diverse as Argentina, Zimbabwe and Nepal and deciphering their structure, bases, and strategies. The skepticism, often suspicion, I encountered from Defense Attaches in Washington embassies was palpable. Who was this man investigating their national defense secrets, they wondered? My research strategy was rather out of the ordinary. I took my five-person research team into the Library of Congress stacks where we scoured the telephone directories of over a hundred capital cities to compile rudimentary organizational charts of defense ministries. We then took these charts to Defense Attaches at many embassies and requested corroboration of our information and any additional information they could provide. In some cases the Attaches were cooperative. The Chilean Defense Attache, for example, was unusually welcoming and cooperative and

gave us a full directory of Chilean defense forces, personnel and bases. We then leveraged his full list to coax comparable information from recalcitrant Argentinian, Bolivian, and other neighboring Defense Attaches, playing the Latin countries against each other to foster a spirit of competitive transparency. This “diplomatic” strategy yielded a comprehensive set of defense data that we published in the 1983 *Worldwide Director of Defense Authorities*. I had not realized how innovative this research was until one morning when three men showed up at my office, a CIA agent and two FBI agents, inquiring how Lambert had obtained the information in the *Directory*. Our data, they explained, was suspiciously close to that in the CIA archives, so how did I, as a private citizen, obtain this information? I was caught off guard by this query. Then, the absurdity of it hit me, and I just started laughing. “I really appreciate your back-handed compliment, but we did it all ourselves.” I then detailed step-by-step how we had obtained our large trove of global defense data, using publicly available information fleshed out through “creative diplomacy.” They were open mouthed in amazement and one said, “Boy, you really pulled off a coup to get this information.” And that, Stu, was my first taste of “international diplomacy,” a useful lesson in the art of diplomacy, demonstrating how tact, and strategy can weave together a tapestry of seemingly unattainable information.

After publication of the *Directory*, I was promoted to Vice President of Lambert. A few weeks later, however, I happened to see a job listing in a Washington foreign policy magazine for a China Analyst in the Office of Research at the U.S. Information Agency (USIA). Although the job was at a lower salary level, it made me wistful: I could see my years of working on China slipping away, so that I would soon be out of touch. So, on the spur of the moment, I sent in an application for the position. I was invited for an interview and, to my surprise, received a job offer from USIA. So, now I had to decide who I was and where I was going. I had in hand a hard-earned Ph.D. in U.S. Diplomatic History but had ended up serendipitously in the business world, in a career I had never intended. So, I resigned from Lambert and returned to the China field.

In September 1983, I started working as the China Analyst in the USIA Office of Research. For the next three years, I updated and augmented my knowledge of contemporary China, focusing largely on Chinese “images of America,” in order to help USIA hone its exchange and information programs to fit the newly reforming China of Deng Xiaoping. In that job, I traveled back and forth to China on research trips.

Q: What were your impressions on visiting Mainland China in those years?

HUSKEY: This was still the old China, with remnants of Mao’s mass society. There were millions of bicycles in the streets and precious few cars, mostly 1940’s-vintage Red Flag limousines squiring CCP high cadres on their appointed rounds. There was precious little economic activity or development visible in the cities. But there was a kind of “equality,” that is, everyone was equally poor. Visiting Shanghai for the first time had special meaning for me, because of my doctoral dissertation on Shanghai. It was a kind of *deja vu*, because I knew every street and major building in the city from my research. Since the Shanghai of 1983 was little changed from the 30s because of Japanese

aggression. Then Mao's anti-Shanghai prejudice had stalled development in the city. The Bund promenade along the Huangpu River was virtually unchanged since 1949, and had just one new post-liberation building, the Bank of China. I visited the old American Club with its "first elevator in Asia," the British Club with its famous "longest bar in the world," and the Shanghai American School, the last word in secondary education after WWI. But today, as you know, Shanghai has changed beyond recognition and is filled with the most *avant garde* architecture.

Q: I saw a movie recently based in Hong Kong, where I used to overnight when I was serving in Vietnam.

HUSKEY: As fast as Hong Kong has developed, this is exceeded by the revolutionary change in Chinese cities in recent decades. In fact, every city in China has been completely transformed and continues to transform every few years.

Q: Had American movies penetrated China?

HUSKEY: Not yet. I don't think there were any American movies in China during my 1983-87 years in USIA.

Q: This is how we are viewed in most parts of the world.

HUSKEY: Yes, it is. But at this time in China, things American were considered "spiritual pollution" or, as Deng picturesquely put it, "when you open the windows, the flies will get in." American movies and books were the "flies."

My most interesting experience at USIA was serving as a member of President Reagan's delegation to Beijing and Shanghai in September 1983. I was part of the advance team that flew to Beijing a few days before Reagan arrived.

Q: Was that your first time in Mainland China?

HUSKEY: Yes, and it was exhilarating after my years of long-distance research on China and Shanghai to actually be there. I spent the first few days at the embassy establishing contact with my PRC government counterparts to organize the Great Wall visit for the President and a large delegation of press and Secret Service. Then, on arrival day, I went to the Beijing Capital Airport as part of the American welcoming delegation. It was a very moving experience. Standing on the tarmac, we saw a tiny speck appear in the eastern sky and grow larger and larger. Then, the gleaming baby blue and white 707 with an American flag proudly emblazoned on the tail landed and taxied majestically to the terminal. Premier Zhao Ziyang stood at the foot of the ramp to welcome President and Mrs. Reagan. It was a very moving experience. Though I was not a supporter of Reagan, his arrival made me immensely proud. He was an impressive and elegant gentleman. He was President of the United States. He was my President. It sent shivers of pride through me, and all Americans present, to watch my president land in that beautiful aircraft and

step on to Chinese soil. This was the United States of America come to China. It was a deeply moving experience.

The next day I was standing on the Great Wall with the large American press corps waiting for the President's motorcade to arrive. It was a beautiful, slightly chilly day. I overheard ABC journalist Sam Donaldson tell his viewers via satellite, "We are standing on the Great Wall waiting for President and Mrs. Reagan to arrive. As one of the astronauts stated, 'The Great Wall is the only manmade object visible from space.'" I laughed to myself, because this statement was actually made in 1848 by the Scottish botanist Robert Fortune, but has often been misattributed to "one of the astronauts."

On his last night in Beijing, President Reagan hosted a formal banquet at the Sheraton Great Wall Hotel. Since the visit occurred just before Thanksgiving, the White House had flown a plane load of turkeys to Beijing for the dinner. The day before the President arrived, I was assigned to meet the plane load of turkeys and an identical jet carrying the traveling press corps. The guessing game making the rounds at the airport was "Which plane is carrying the real turkeys?" The Thanksgiving dinner at the Great Wall Hotel was as grand as a turkey dinner can be.

This presidential visit was my inauguration into the real world of diplomacy. It was exciting to work at the U.S. embassy for a few days -- to see the lives our diplomats were living, and to work and negotiate with Chinese officials in organizing the presidential visit.

Q: You were looking at the way American diplomats lived in China at that time. I mean this must have been a shock to you.

HUSKEY: Well, by 1983 our diplomats were living much better than in 1972 when George H.W. Bush opened diplomatic relations with China as Chief of the U.S. Liaison Office. Then, our diplomats lived in small rooms in the dilapidated Beijing Hotel. Now, they lived in large, relatively modern apartments. Embassy Public Affairs Officer Lynn Noah invited a group of delegation members for dinner in his lovely apartment in one of the high rise Jianguo apartment buildings, where diplomats were sequestered behind fences to keep out Chinese people. I was very impressed with the elegance of the diplomatic life that Lynn was living.

Anyway, I spent three years at USIA focusing on Chinese attitudes toward the U.S. in order to guide USIA cultural exchange programs and its public information outreach through the Voice of America. So, it was while working at USIA that I first began to seriously consider the possibility of joining the U.S. Foreign Service -- practicing, instead of teaching, diplomacy, as I had done in academia. Meanwhile, in May 1986, I married Joanne Grady, whom you have already interviewed.

Q: She is an amazing woman.

HUSKEY: She *is* an amazing woman, who has lived and traveled all over the world and speaks a number of languages. She had lived in Nicaragua, where she worked with the Peace Corps, then returned to the States for grad school at Harvard and to Washington to work with the Kennedy family at the John F. Kennedy Center.

Q: How did you meet her?

HUSKEY: I met Joanne at 8:05 pm on December 9, 1984, at a Christmas party near DuPont Circle. It was a cold but enchanted evening when I entered and saw an elegant Auburn-haired lass across the room and “somehow I knew, I knew even then, that somewhere I’d see her, again and again” (with apologies to Rodgers and Hammerstein). With our years of peripatetic international living, we hit it off immediately and married in May 1986. I married into an amazing Irish-American family. Brother-in law Robert Grady was George H.W. Bush’s Budget Director and brother-in-law Dr. Anthony Fauci, was the renowned NIH immunologist. Though a stellar family, none excelled Joanne – quite simply, the most awesome person I have ever known.

Q: Anyone who is reading this should listen to my oral history with Joanne.

HUSKEY: Yes, Joanne actually detailed our years serving overseas in her popular book, *The Unofficial Diplomat*. She was Director of international programs at the Kennedy Center here in Washington when I met her. She had a wonderful career working with the Kennedy family, particularly with Jean Kennedy Smith, with whom she traveled all over the world meeting kings, queens, presidents and a pope. She established arts exchange programs with more than fifty countries, with her multi-language fluency — French, Spanish, Italian, American Sign Language, and later Chinese. So, Joanne had a rising career at the Kennedy Center, while I was just a newly minted Ph.D. working as an analyst at USIA, who entered and “upset the apple cart.”

Q: When did you take the Foreign Service exam?

HUSKEY: One Saturday morning in April 1987, a year after we were married, I drove across the Key Bridge to the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) and took the Foreign Service exam, having told Joanne that I was making my usual Saturday run Hechinger’s Hardware Store

Q: A hardware store. Hmmm.

HUSKEY: A few weeks later, I was informed that I had passed the exam and was invited for the day-long oral interview, the final step in the FS application process, which I also passed. I ended up passing both written and oral exams with a high enough score that I was offered my choice of “cones” (specialties) in the Foreign Service. I chose the Political cone as the closest to my professional experience and my academic study of diplomatic history.

But there was a catch. I now had a wife. And one with a highly successful career and rising in the Washington firmament. When I received the formal offer of a place in the next “A-100” orientation class beginning in September, I telephoned Joanne. Coincidentally, she had just arrived in Beijing, leading a Kennedy Center delegation. I caught her in her Beijing Hotel room at midnight, worn out from a long day of meetings.

Me: “Sweetheart, how do you like Beijing?”

She: “It’s interesting.”

Me: “Well, how would you like to live there?”

She: “What do you mean?”

Me: “Well, I’ve just been offered a position in the U.S. Foreign Service.”

She: “Wait a minute. What is this all about?”

I explained about my FS application (omitting my duplicity about going to Hechingers). This was clearly a shock for her, and one for which she had not signed on when we married. After further discussion, I told her that I understood her reservations and would inform State that I regretfully declined the offer, to which she responded, “Don’t do that. Ask them if you can postpone your decision so we can talk about it.” The FS Board of Examiners graciously agreed to hold its offer open for the November A-100 entering class. When Joanne returned to Washington, we spent the following month discussing our future nonstop. This would be a sea-change in our lives. Joanne was highly successful and well known in Washington, certainly more “successful” than I. And here I was, impertinently requesting her to give up everything and go overseas with me. But she did not dismiss the idea out of hand. She understood that this would be a dream opportunity for me and that I would never be content if I turned down the Foreign Service offer. So, she — not me — made the decision to sacrifice her career at that time, probably thinking it would just be for a couple of years. And that is how I “Shanghaied” Joanne to Beijing — you know, the old term for kidnapping drunk sailors onto merchant ships bound for Shanghai.

Q: So, when did you actually enter the Foreign Service?

HUSKEY: November 1987. I joined the 44th A-100 class at FSI. It was a fascinating experience — a two-month orientation with the 42 people who would form my Foreign Service cohort for the rest of my FS career. In the Foreign Service, I learned “what goes around comes around,” literally. So, you should be very careful, because the colleague you dislike now might be your next boss, and vice versa. To this day I still have contact with many of my A-100 classmates, even after retiring. I often see A-100 classmates in the halls of Main State and we recall our varied careers and mull over the state of the world, which has worsened since we retired — “because” we retired, I like to think. Last year, Joanne and I flew to Madras — now Chennai — for the 25th anniversary of the American International School in Chennai, which Joanne founded. And who was the Consul General there but my A-100 classmate Philip Minn, the youngest member of our class. I earlier served at that same U.S. Consulate General in Madras with my classmate Doug Kelly, and Doug now works just down the hall from me at Main State as a WAE Freedom-of-Information Act (FOIA) reviewer. Such meetings are not always joyous. At

10:34 am on August 7, 1998, I was working upstairs from another A-100 classmate in Embassy Nairobi, Michelle O'Connor, when al Qaeda bombed our embassy, killing her.

Q: WAE stands for . . . ?

HUSKEY: "When Actually Employed." This is a contract position at the State Department that allows retired FSO's to work pretty much at will. I usually work for a month or two, then we travel willy-nilly all over, but these days mostly to Europe where we never actually served. As a WAE, I am assigned to the FOIA review team: a hundred or so retirees who review reporting cables from all of our posts worldwide for declassification and public release under the FOIA — necessary and extremely interesting work. From time to time, I will be reviewing a cable that sounds eerily familiar, only to realize that I wrote that cable! Several members of my A-100 class are among my retired colleagues now working in the FOIA division.

Q: How was your A-100 Class?

The A-100 course was an excellent introduction to the art of diplomacy and overview of Washington. Of course, I already had four years experience in Washington working in the government, but that was on the research side. Our A-100 coordinator, John Tkacik, a Sinologist, or China specialist, like me, laced his presentations with humor and "war" stories. (Our careers kept crossing: thirteen years later, John was my boss in the China Group of the Intelligence and Research Bureau at Main State, and later he was a visiting Inspector when I was serving at the American Institute in Taiwan, AIT, our de facto embassy there. We had excellent speakers from CIA, FBI, the National Security Council (NSC), Defense and Commerce Departments, Congress, and numerous branches of the State Department.

Q: I want to talk a bit about the A-100 course, the basic Foreign Service Officer course. What was your impression of the people there and the training?

HUSKEY: My A-100 Class was excellent, a superb introduction to the Foreign Service. It consisted of corporate lawyers bored with their jobs, college professors expanding their horizons, returned Peace Corps Volunteers, business people, and even musicians. Course Director John Tkacik covered the full spectrum of FS careers, and life and service at our overseas embassies and consulates. While I already knew the basics of government service, the A-100 course delved into the structure and workings of the State Department and its interaction with other government agencies, including other departments, NSC, White House, intel agencies, and Congress. But the best part of the course was the 41 other members of my class, who became my cohort through my Foreign Service career.

At the end of the course, we "bid" for our first post in the Foreign Service. I was assigned to Guangzhou, China, which was devastating for me, because I would have to spend six months studying Cantonese, while I was already fluent in Mandarin and did not want to spend time learning a single-province dialect. Fortuitously, however, a

six-month. “Bridge assignment” suddenly opened up on the “China Desk” (Office of Chinese Affairs) at Main State. John Withers had curtailed his assignment there by six months so he could accompany his wife, my A-100 classmate Ruth, to Lagos, Nigeria. So, Assignment Officer Hugh Williams obligingly agreed to change my assignment to Beijing in September. (Ten years later, BTW, I served with Hugh at the U.S. Consulate in Madras . . . again, “what goes around, comes around” in the Foreign Service.)

So, I lucked into a dream first job on the premier China Desk at Main State, probably unprecedented for a brand new FSO. I assumed John’s position as Human Rights Officer on the Desk and spent my first half year in the Foreign Service learning how the Department operates prior to leaving for overseas.

The China Desk was the best possible introduction to the Foreign Service for me, as a Sinologist. I was given a highly substantive portfolio: human rights. In the process, I learned how the Department operates and how to work with other State Department bureaus and agencies across the U.S. Government.

Q: I thought we would talk a little about this first job you had before you went out. Then, I think we will call it adequate for the day. What was this job?

HUSKEY: On the China desk?

Q: Yeah.

HUSKEY: It was, again, an incomparable opportunity, the best possible introduction to the Foreign Service, and one that every FSO should have. The opportunity to work, even a short time, on the home “Desk” before going out to Post overseas to begin assignment is simply invaluable. I had a full six months on the China Desk before I transferred to Beijing for my first overseas assignment. I had excellent mentors working on the Desk — Director Richard Williams, who later became ambassador to Mongolia, and Deputy Director Jeff Bader, who became ambassador to Botswana and then NSC Asia Director.

As the Human Rights Officer, I was directly involved in one of the fundamental elements of U.S. foreign policy. I learned how the Department operates and how to work with other bureaus in State and agencies across the U.S. Government — FBI, CIA, DOD, NSC, White House. Perhaps the most important skill I learned in those first six months, Stu, was how to write effective reporting cables “from the field,” cables that would actually be read and make a policy difference. When you sit in Washington with a deluge of cables pouring in from around the world each day, only a limited number attract attention. So, cables must be short, clear and to the point, with catchy titles — the exact opposite of my training as a Ph.D! That knowledge proved a huge advantage when I reached “the field” (Beijing), as I will describe later.

Q: When were you on the China Desk?

HUSKEY: From January to August 1988, one year before the Tiananmen massacre, at a time when China was opening up and people were beginning to write critically, or were at least obliquely critical of the government. A time when human rights was becoming a prominent issue in America's China policy. Ironically, however, my first assignment on the Desk was to coordinate, with a counterpart in the Chinese embassy, the purchase of a hundred mules in Kashgar, the fabled ancient Silk Road way station in China's far western Xinjiang Province. This was when we were still cooperating closely with China against the Soviet Union, a product of the 1972 Nixon-Kissinger rapprochement with Maoist China. During that decade and a half, we actually had National Security Agency (NSA) listening posts in western Xinjiang tracking Soviet military communications, a level of cooperation which seems almost a dream today. Anyway, these mules were for a U.S. – probably CIA – caravan to transport weapons across the Hindu Kush into Afghanistan to arm the Mujahideen in its fight against the Soviet occupation. A rather contradictory mix of responsibilities — promoting human rights in China while cooperating with China to arm the Mujahideen. But, it was a great experience and preparation for the diplomatic life before actually moving to Beijing.

Q: What was the Human rights situation in China at this time?

HUSKEY: The political situation had relaxed considerably in the decade since the Cultural Revolution ended, under the reform movement led by Deng Xiaoping beginning in 1978. But it was a roller coaster of opening and closing, relaxing and tightening government control. The more relaxed political atmosphere under CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang in the mid 1980's retrenched after his dismissal in 1987 as punishment for his relative liberalism.

Q: Was the Party fully in control of China at this time?

HUSKEY: Yes, in the post-Hu Yaobang years the Party had tightened control. "Yellow" literature (the color for eroticism) was confiscated and anyone who voiced political disagreement would be punished or imprisoned. But, as I noted, there was a constant opening and closing, relaxation and tightening up, which the people of Beijing monitored very closely and acted accordingly.

Q: This is when they were putting up placards at the so-called Democracy Wall.

HUSKEY: Well, the Democracy Wall Movement, often called "Beijing Spring," actually occurred in 1976, when thousands of university students demonstrated and hung *dazibao* (wall posters) in Tiananmen Square lamenting the death of Zhou Enlai. Those demonstrations foreshadowed the rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping, who launched China's great economic reforms two years later. A second protest movement erupted in 1986 in Tiananmen and across China calling for political reform, which was tolerated by the reformist CCP General Secretary Hu Yaobang, leading to his downfall the next year. By late 1988, when Joanne and I arrived in Beijing, the political situation was once again beginning to relax a bit and controls were loosening.

Q: So they were getting ready for you.

HUSKEY: Sort of seems so, Stu. I arrived at Embassy Beijing in August 1988, as a first-tour Junior Officer, but with unusual baggage — expertise in Chinese student movements from my Ph.D. research, which included the student movements in the interwar years, notably the 1919 May Fourth Movement and the 1925 May 30th Movement. So, I was ready for the unexpected political discontent I found on arrival in Beijing, and which erupted seven months later in April 1989 in the “Beijing Spring” student protest movement. The next ten months seemed almost a continuation of that earlier era of student activism that similarly spread across China. So, I felt privileged to be in the right place at the right time, fully aware that I was witnessing history in the making.

Q: So we will pick it up next time. Let’s take a look at the calendar.

Q: Today is 25 August 2017 with Jim Huskey. Jim, you recall where we were?

HUSKEY: We were just about to discuss the 1989 student protest movement, which my friends in the CCP feared might restart the chaos of the Cultural Revolution.

Q: What did you know about the Cultural Revolution, which was before you went there.

HUSKEY: Yeah, the 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution. Where do you start with the chaos and terror of the Cultural Revolution? It was in full force during my first two sojourns living in Taiwan, 1971-72 and 1973-76, which deepened the anticommunist fervor of the people on the island. But after the Cultural Revolution ended, China began to open up under Deng Xiaoping, and Chinese people began to speak out about the trauma and devastation of the Cultural Revolution. In fact, the CCP had difficulty keeping a lid on this public airing of its very dirty Cultural Revolution laundry, in part because of the head of the CCP, General Secretary Hu Yaobang. Hu was supportive of reform and more open to public criticism of the Cultural Revolution and even of the CCP itself – a “sin” for which he was removed from office in 1987 (more about Hu later, Stu). After this setback, the Party alternately cracked down and loosened up on political discussion, a roller coaster of closing and opening.

Q: What were the human rights issues during this period?

HUSKEY: We closely monitored the level of political and religious repression, the harsh one-child policy implemented with forced abortions, the degree of religious repression, and the treatment of political prisoners. I had already been following the warp and woof of political opening and closing in China through my years of graduate study and teaching and later as China Analyst at USIA. But moving to Beijing in August 1988 provided an opportunity to gauge close-up the level of political repression. I found the best indicator of the level of repression-openness in Beijing to be the magazine stalls in

the streets and alleys of Beijing. There were so many new publications popping up and constantly testing the limits of authoritarian control. When the censors would begin to relax control, magazines and novels quickly “tilted yellow” – yellow being the Chinese color for eroticism. This “yellow” scale proved to be a quick way to calibrate the warp and woof of CCP political repression vs. openness.

Q: Did the language allow this subtlety? I mean usually when you are criticizing a government that doesn't want you to criticize it, you learn to use the language.

HUSKEY: No language in the world has more nuanced subtlety than Chinese, with its thousands of years of history and literature and its intricate writing system. Chinese conversation and literature are laced with *double entendres* and historical allusions, allowing endless opportunity for subtle political commentary and oblique criticism. China analysts must be well versed in Chinese language, culture and history so as not to miss these telltale allusions. Creative and wily Chinese intellectuals are adept at slipping all kinds of things past the troglodyte censors. So, I was always trying to decode magazine articles to decipher the political situation in Beijing – to understand the hidden meanings contained in magazine articles, short stories, and newspaper articles, even in the People's Daily. If you could decode these indicators, Stu, then you could begin to comprehend what was going on in the government and in the society at large.

Q: So, you served in the U.S. Embassy in Beijing from when to when?

HUSKEY: Joanne and I arrived in Beijing in August 1988 and departed in June 1991. I was originally assigned to the usual two-years as a consular officer, because first-tour FSO's are required to do their first tour on “The Line,” interviewing visa applicants. But Tiananmen intervened and changed that scenario.

Moving to Beijing was an enormous transition. I had ripped Joanne out of her contented life in Washington and our beautiful new home on Capitol Hill, and from her many friends, professional contacts and fast-rising career. When we landed first in Shanghai around midnight, I was exhilarated. I was finally in China, my long-studied and researched Shanghai, and it was wonderful again to hear people speaking Chinese, though with a heavy Shanghai accent. But for Joanne, it was devastating. The airport was dingy, dark and unkempt. Everyone was wearing dark baggy Mao clothing, except the green uniformed People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers carrying rifles and watching us suspiciously. Joanne began to cry, “What have I done to my life? This place is unlivable.” When she went to the women's restroom – which was gratifyingly easy to find because of the stench – she had to pass many soldiers, who jeered at and joked about her. She didn't speak a word of Chinese then, but she knew they were talking about her. It was an awful arrival for her. If she could have, she would have turned around then and returned to Washington. And it only got worse.

After an hour's flight, we arrived at the rundown, unkempt, Beijing Airport. But there was no one there to meet and greet us. We were left standing alone, Joanne in tears. I went in search of transportation and finally found a taxi driver of sorts, though they didn't

actually have private taxi drivers then. He drove us to the U.S. Embassy, but the marine guard curtly said, “I don’t know who you are. Go to the Jianguo Hotel. That’s where most people go when they arrive.” So, we drove to the nearby Jianguo, one of only three modern hotels in Beijing then. But the Jianguo did not have a reservation for us either. Then, the desk clerk said, “Oh, I see you have a room reserved for tomorrow night.” Somehow our arrival time had gotten mixed up, so that the embassy didn’t know we were arriving and did not meet us at the airport or have a room for us. The hotel was able to give us a room that night which was a small improvement on the devastating start of our Foreign Service life. It took a long time before Joanne recovered from that arrival trauma.

Beijing was a very different and difficult place for foreigners then. There were broad boulevards around the city, the several Ring Roads, but no traffic because there were no private cars, just a few 1940’s vintage Red Flag limousines ferrying CCP high cadre, and millions of bicycles. Everyone wore *de rigueur* blue Mao jackets and kept their heads down. No one smiled. It was not a happy time to be in Beijing, which just made it so much more difficult for Joanne, who is effervescently warm, outgoing and sociable. I went off to the embassy the next morning to begin my career in the Foreign Service, while Joanne was left alone, friendless, a stranger in a strange land.

Q: This is one of the untold stories of the Foreign Service. The wife is sort of tossed out on her own, while the husband is protected in an office cocoon.

HUSKEY: Yes, Stu, each time we arrived in a new country, Joanne was a “nobody.” She had to start from scratch – reconnoitering the city, making friends, orienting to the local culture and language, and then finding something to do. Each place we moved to — Beijing, Madras, Nairobi, Taipei — I was “Somebody” from the outset. I was important, I was a United States diplomat. But after a few months, I was known as “Joanne’s husband.” That’s the kind of person she is. She is the consummate “unofficial diplomat,” which, by the way, is the title of her popular memoir of our life abroad, *The Unofficial Diplomat*.

Q: Well, I can understand. She certainly made the best of wherever she went. Can we talk a little bit about the embassy and also your quarters at that particular time?

HUSKEY: Beijing was short of living quarters because all embassies were growing, as China opened to the outside world. The diplomatic housing complex, called Jianguo, was full. We were assigned to a new compound called Taoyuan, which the Chinese government was constructing. Since it was unfinished, we had to remain in our hotel for three months, with our 12 huge air shipment boxes that soon arrived. But the Jianguo Hotel proved to be a welcome respite from our awful arrival and during the winter harshness of Beijing. It had excellent French, Swiss and American restaurants and chamber music concerts in the main lobby on Sundays. Just before Christmas, we moved into our eleventh floor Taoyuan apartment, with a commanding view of Beijing. But it was wintertime when all residences were heated by coal, leaving hazy air and a film of coal dust covering the city. You could barely breathe or see outside of windows. We had

to tape our windows shut to keep the coal dust out. So, it was a trying time for us. But we at least finally had a nice apartment to live in.

Q: What was your work like?

HUSKEY: I went straight to “The Line” and started interviewing long lines of visa applicants. Our Consular Section, responsible for interviewing applicants for non-immigrant visas to the U.S., had three Consuls and eight or nine local Chinese employees. The latter were warm, lovely people, though we knew full well that every Saturday morning they had to go to the Foreign Affairs Bureau, which oversaw their employment, and report everything we FSO’s said and did. In fact, we lived with a sense of constantly being spied on and would often glance up at a light fixture and converse with our assumed observers. In those days, America was the El Dorado for Chinese students. So, they were lining up every morning for visas to study in the U.S. They had already studied English and taken the TOEFL – the Test of English as a Foreign Language.

Q: Well, at least they had English as a second language.

HUSKEY: Yes. Most of these students had acceptances to graduate schools, because China did not then allow students to go to the U.S. for high school or undergraduate study. The CCP wanted to educate them through college, then send them abroad to gain expertise so they could return to help China develop. The applicants were mostly stellar students and most applied with full fellowships from U.S. graduate schools. But issuing student visas was a real dilemma for visa officers, because Section 214b of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA) requires that the interviewing consular officer must be convinced the applicant “intends” to return home upon completion of his/her studies. The problem was that in those years some 97% of Chinese students stayed in America. It was a rare occurrence to meet a Chinese-returned student, one who had received a graduate degree in the U.S. and actually returned to live in China. We — and most Chinese — would be surprised and wonder *why* they had returned. Those who did so would tell me that they were often considered failures for having returned. So, with an effective return rate of only 3% , how could a consular officer ever approve a student visa to the U.S.? How do you give visas to people who are highly unlikely to return home?

Q: Even the ones that might really intend to return home weren’t actually returning.

HUSKEY: Yeah, many who initially intended to return home would end up finding a nice job and remain in the U.S. Career and lifestyle prospects were far better in the U.S. than in China. Those who did return home, usually did so for specific reasons. Maybe they had a good job waiting for them, or had family reasons, or were *gaoganzidi* (the “princeling” children of CCP high cadres) with bright career prospects in China. So, this reality made consular work in China difficult. How could we issue *any* student visas at all, given the astronomical non-return rate and given that the very purpose of the U.S. student visa program was to help educate foreign youths so they would return home and help their country develop. The pragmatic work-around that we consular officers in

Beijing contrived was scholarships: if an applicant had a full fellowship to a college or university, we tended to issue the visa on the house-of-cards logic that such a student would not need to work to pay tuition and living expenses, and, thus, would complete the graduate degree more quickly and, thus, would maybe, just maybe, return to China.

Visas are the drudge work of the Foreign Service to which every entering FSO is subject and subjected. And visa work in Beijing, as in Manila and other “visa mills,” was a real grind. You arrived each morning at 8:00 and immediately began interviewing as fast as you could because the lines were so long. It was a tough job. Using my left hand during visa interviews made me widely known in Beijing as *Zuopiezi*, or “Left hoof,” the Chinese term for southpaw. I would walk down the street and hear people say “*Ta shi Zuopiezi Xiansheng*” (“That’s Mr. Left Hoof”). Walking through the market or down the shopping Wangfujing Street, Joanne would hear people say “*Ta shi Zuo Piezi de Furen*” (That’s Mrs. Left Hoof). So I was widely known in Beijing, but not feared because I was less rejectionist on visas than other consular officers, or at least as easy as I could be given our consular regulations.

For me, however, working on the line proved unexpectedly rewarding because I could already speak Chinese and was able to turn the tables and use the interviews to inquire about conditions in the applicants’ colleges and hometowns. China was a “denied country” that limited contact between foreigners and Chinese citizens. Our political officers, for example, had a very difficult time meeting Chinese other than Foreign Ministry officials. But if you were a consular officer, no problem. You were welcomed, because everybody wanted to meet American consular officers, the source of all visas – high government officials, CCP cadres, scholars, researchers, and commercial people, all wanted their children to go to America to study. One evening I was at a banquet hosted by Minister of Culture Ying Ruocheng, the renowned actor in the movie “The Last Emperor.” He was sitting at the head table with Ambassador Lilley on one side and me as the consular officer on the other side. During the course of the meal, Minister Ying leaned over to me and said, “Consul Huskey, do you realize that you are one of the most powerful men in China.” “Why do you say that, Minister?” I responded, mystified. “Because,” he said, “you have the power to grant visas to the United States.” The point is that what most people valued most of all was an American visa, whether you were the Minister of Culture or a bank clerk who wants your child to study in America. So, during my first year working in Beijing as a consular officer, I could talk with almost anybody.

Q: Now, the visas you were issuing were all non-immigrant?

HUSKEY: Yes, I was issuing only Non-Immigrant Visas (NIVs). Immigrant Visas were done at the U.S. Consulate in Guangzhou, I believe. Visas are a rough road, as you know. I mean, Beijing was a visa mill then. But the work certainly provided me with great access to the Chinese people. And provided the fodder for a lot of interesting reporting cables that I wrote.

Q: Well, I imagine many of your visa applicants were part of the elite, the high cadres.

HUSKEY: Very good point, Stu. That was one of the first things I noticed working on “The Line.” Page two of our visa application required a detailed family background, and I quickly realized that a substantial percentage of applicants were the children or grandchildren of important Chinese leaders. (I was already well versed on Chinese leaders, both Party and government, because of my years of research on China and as USIA China Analyst.) When I looked carefully at the family data of one “Ms. Xiao,” for example, I realized that she was the granddaughter of President Yang Shangkun. I approved her visa application and gave her my *mingpian* (business card). A few days later, I was invited to dinner at the Yang family compound, an unprecedented occurrence for a U.S. embassy officer. After approving the visa application for the daughter of the deputy editor of the national newspaper *Renmin Ribao* (People’s Daily), I similarly offered my *mingpian*, explaining that I was a great admirer of her father and his columns in *Renmin Ribao* and would love to meet him someday. Three days later we had lunch together at the Beijing Hotel and he told me all about the political pressures on his and other newspapers from the CCP Central Committee. When I interviewed a young artist, I learned, in the course of our conversation, that he was a friend of Deng Nan, Deng Xiaoping’s daughter, herself an artist and patron of young artists. After I approved his visa, I handed him my *mingpian*, suggesting that we get together for dinner one night and discuss the Beijing art scene (Joanne and I had purchased a number of paintings in Beijing). Perhaps, I added, Deng Nan might be able to join us. A few days later, the three of us met for dinner in a small Chinese restaurant on *Hou Hai* (Back Lake), just north of the Forbidden City. We had a nice conversation about contemporary Chinese art and the Beijing art community. In response to my query about her father, Deng Nan told me things that he had said the previous night at the dinner table about U.S.-China relations and about America, all of which I dutifully reported. I mean, what other officer in the embassy had ever had access to Deng Xiaoping’s family? Anyway, I saw a steady flow of *gaoganzidi* applicants, each of whom I would query about their family members, their views of America, and other topics of interest.

Q: The “Princelings.”

HUSKEY: Yes, the *gaoganzidi* were the “princeling” children of Party and government leaders. In fact, I immediately began compiling a database on all applicants I deemed to be *gaoganzidi* while working on “The Line.” A few months later I drafted the first of a series of *gaoganzidi* reporting cables detailing which PRC leaders had children studying in the U.S. These reports stirred considerable interest in Washington readers. Nobody had ever taken any interest in this facet of visa applications, but I felt the information I was accumulating just might be useful to the embassy. Perhaps, for example, knowing that a Chinese leader had one or more children studying in the U.S. might be a point of contact, a bridge, as, indeed, proved true later during the Tiananmen crisis.

Q: Was your work appreciated? In other words, was your work recognized by the Political Section?

HUSKEY: No, it was not, to my surprise and chagrin. Political officers are known for a certain hubris, seeing themselves as the elite of the Foreign Service, whereas I was just a

first-tour Consular Officer. If they ever used my information in their own political reporting, they never mentioned or credited it. This was a useful lesson for the rest of my FS career, because I had actually entered the Foreign Service designated as a Political Officer, and was only assigned to the Consular Section for my first tour. So, later when I was a regular Political Officer, I was careful, hopefully successfully, to avoid the “sin” of arrogance.

Q: Did you feel a social hierarchy in the life of the embassy? I am speaking, by the way, as a career Consular Officer.

HUSKEY: Yes, I did. This condescension from my future PolOff colleagues was odd because I was not a neophyte. I had years of experience with university teaching and China analysis in Washington, and my Ph.D. was on the history of U.S.-China relations. But all FSOs start off at the bottom of the pecking order, as did I and without complaint.

Q: Were you picking up other things about aspirations or where these applicants were coming from?

HUSKEY: Really, they were all looking to get out of China and to get an American education. In those days, there was very limited professional opportunity in China. I mean people were assigned, usually for life, to a *danwei* (work unit), with housing tied to the work unit, which severely limited any possibility for mobility or advancement. The only way to end this calcified system was to leave the country. So, the U.S. embassy was an escape, a way out and up.

Q: What sort of American schools were they going to?

HUSKEY: Most went to very good colleges and universities. As I mentioned, our Consular Section tended to look favorably on applicants with full scholarships, relying on the colleges themselves to determine the best students. The logic, again, for this informal understanding was that a full fellowship meant a student was more likely to focus completely on his/her studies and return quickly to China. That was our logic and our hope, as we genuinely wanted students to come back and help China develop, which was, of course, the *raison d'être* of the student visa program in the first place. We consular officers had a tacit understanding so that we rarely denied visas to outstanding students. If an American university had vetted that person and said that person is somebody they were willing to sponsor, we would usually go along with it.

For other applicants for student and visitor visas, it was more touch and go. For many, America clearly was their Eldorado, their one great hope for a new and more productive life. For some, it seemed almost life and death. One woman applied to take a two-week beautician course in Los Angeles, which would have cost more than her annual income. I will never forget the look on her face, Stu, when I said, “I am sorry, but I am denying your visa because I am not convinced you actually intend to return to China after completing the beautician course.” She was devastated and cried, because this was her long-held dream. Several weeks later I went to the Kunming Hotel for a haircut. The

female barber lathered my face for a shave, then moved the straight-edge razor up my throat, stopping just above my Adam's apple with a sudden pressure. "*He Xiansheng, ni jide woma?*" ("Mr. Huskey do you remember me?") "*Bu jide,*" (I don't remember"), I squeaked in a falsetto, as the razor bore into my throat. "You denied my visa last week to study in Los Angeles." "Oh! Really? I am so sorry, but I was so busy that day. Please come in tomorrow morning and we'll see what we can do about this." She relaxed the razor and removed it from my throat. The next day when she came in and reapplied for a visa, one of my colleagues interviewed and denied her visa. I never went back to that hotel for a haircut. Another day, an applicant walked unsteadily up to the interview window and said, in a shaky voice, "If you don't approve my visa, I am going to kill myself," holding up a small vial of liquid. One of the consular Chinese assistants heard her statement and, while I was talking her down, brought in one of our Marine Security Guards, who sneaked up behind her, reached out and knocked the bottle from her hand, then removed her from the consular waiting area. Life, I realized more than ever, is unfair.

Q: Many of them did come back later.

HUSKEY: Yes, but much later, early in the next century as China itself began to develop rapidly. Still, our goal at the time was to approve visas for those we hoped would return.

Q: I was Consul General in Seoul in the 70s. I remember one of the file clerks named Lee asked which of two scholarships her brother should accept, one at MIT and one at CalTech. Depends on the weather, I told her. What about your life outside the embassy at this time?

HUSKEY: Joanne and I arrived in Beijing determined to break through the isolation of most foreigners in Beijing, and not to spend our lives with just the American embassy community or even the wider foreign community, the way most foreigners lived. Joanne immediately reached out and met many Chinese in parks and through friends. She met one young man who became her *taiqi* (Chinese shadow boxing) teacher. Every morning at 7:00 they practiced *taiqi* in Ertan (Temple of the Sun) Park, and through him she met many young people, most recent college graduates with few job or career prospects. One became her Chinese language teacher and her entree into Chinese youth culture and rock music. Rock music was just beginning to develop in China at that time, and was an integral part of Beijing youth culture. Joanne learned all of the popular rock songs. We would go to Karaoke bars and she would stand on stage and sing popular rock ballads, and the audience would marvel at her Chinese linguistic skill, especially her skill at reading the Chinese characters under the little bouncing ball. In truth, she could not read a single Chinese character and, instead, had memorized all of the songs. (I had advised her to focus her "ear" for music and languages on spoken Chinese rather than spend time on the complex written system.) This proved exceedingly important when the Beijing Spring student movement erupted, because rock music played a central role in the student movement, whereas no one else in the embassy had an inkling of this cultural dimension.

So, unlike our more isolated embassy colleagues, Joanne – and me through her – had lots of Chinese friends. I was deemed acceptable, probably because I was a consular officer and, again, everyone “loved” an American consular officer. So, we developed many friendships. We would hop on our Flying Pigeons and pedal through the *hutongs* (alleys) of old Beijing to visit friends who lived in *siheyuan* (traditional courtyard houses). The young people we were meeting were amazingly open and would talk without inhibitions. They were angry, frustrated, and gave us broad access to Chinese society, especially youth culture.

Joanne also had unique access to Chinese society through her earlier cooperation with the China Disabled Persons’ Federation (CDPF), when she was working at the Kennedy Center in Washington. CDPF was founded by Deng Pufang, the paraplegic son of Deng Xiaoping. During the Cultural Revolution, he had been harassed, beaten and finally pushed out of a window, rendering him paraplegic. After his father returned to power, Deng Pufang founded the CDPF to improve the life and treatment of disabled people in China, creating a veritable revolution in the treatment of disabled people, who heretofore had been a shame to their families and shunted into back rooms. When we arrived in Beijing, Joanne was able to work as a volunteer at CDPF, teaching how to use the arts for the disabled – blind, deaf, and wheel-chair bound (whom she taught how to dance). Through her volunteer work she got to know people all over Beijing and, indeed, China. Joanne also founded Beijing International Volunteers (BIV) and organization of foreign volunteers to work with children in orphanages in Beijing. Where, by the way, she helped arrange one of the first, if not *the* first, foreign adoptions of Chinese orphans — Anna, the lovely and amazingly accomplished daughter of Mike Meserve, a fellow embassy officer. Thus, through Joanne’s volunteer work and my own consular world, we were able to make lots of friendships with local Chinese people, beyond that of anyone else in our embassy.

Q: Well I think this is probably a good place to stop.

HUSKEY: Yes, this sets the stage for Tiananmen.

Q: So, if you will note where we are today, we will pick it up there next time.

Q: This is September 1, 2017, with James Huskey. James, we are in Beijing to discuss the events in Tiananmen Square.

HUSKEY: Before we discuss that, I need to make a few more comments about Beijing

Q: Please do.

HUSKEY: Because this sets the stage for the democracy movement which erupted in Spring 1989.

Q: And I would like you to start at the very beginning, what you were seeing and your work at the embassy.

HUSKEY: When Joanne and I arrived in Beijing in August 1988, we found the city to be bleak and depressed. Despite ten years of opening up and reform under Deng Xiaoping, the city and people were still largely stuck in the old Maoist China. They all wore blue Mao jackets and kept their heads down as they rode their ponderous black bicycles. The broad boulevards were empty of vehicles except for Red Flag limousines carrying high party cadres, ancient rattle-trap buses, and the millions of bicycles filling the roads and bike lanes. Joanne and I bought Flying Pigeon bikes to try to fit as inconspicuously as possible into the throngs of cyclists. The whole country moved in lockstep with every one of the hundreds of millions of black bikes having the identical gear sprocket so that everyone rode at the same speed — a vast tide of humanity flowing in sync along the boulevards and alleys. Accidents were rare, as people just moved in unison in a constant ebb and flow that seemed to set the pace of life across China. Thus, when you mounted your bicycle each morning, you instinctively synchronized your pace, probably even your heart beat, with the millions of other commuters in Beijing and throughout China, all flowing to and from work at the same moment in this vast, single time zone nation. It was total uniformity and conformity, synchronized and depressingly colorless.

Q: How could they tell one bike from another?

HUSKEY: I never quite figured that out. But no one complained. There was no theft in those days because there was little to steal in this uniform and uniformly poor country. But consumerism was slipping into China on cat's feet, as people worked and saved to buy the "four rounds" -- bicycle, wristwatch, radio, and washing machine.

Q: I imagine a rice cooker is round.

HUSKEY: Yes, but there were few electric rice cookers in those days. Rather, a pot of water went on the coal fire and that was it. But the point is that Beijing was really very bleak when we arrived, and not just because of the harsh winter and the biting icy north wind coming down from Mongolia. This made it challenging to meet and make friends with Chinese people, because they turned inward and kept their distance from years of propaganda that foreigners were evil. It was difficult to make contact, as everyone watched us with suspicious eagle eyes.

Diplomats were kept apart from the Chinese people. We were housed in walled compounds to keep us separate, presumably so that we did not "infect" their thinking with crazy ideas like democracy or freedom. We bought our groceries and supplies at the Friendship Store, which was run by the Chinese government. You would request a bottle of milk at the long counter and the staff as often as not would simply ignore you. They had no incentive to serve, for they had lifetime sinecure and would even laugh at or glare indifferently at customers. There was nowhere to go in Beijing, no restaurants, no stores, no bars. We did find one or two small restaurants that young entrepreneurs had bravely

opened. There, you could have a basic, but decent meal of noodles or *jiaozi* (dumplings). Otherwise, there was nowhere to go except the hotels – Beijing, Great Wall, and Jianguo, the last where we lived our first few months in Beijing. Foreigners were rigidly cut off from China.

Q: Like Kimchi. I served in Korea.

HUSKEY: Sort of like kimchi. Food was hard to come by and expensive. So *Beijingrun* (Beijing inhabitants) were living the old peasant life. Every family had its hole in the ground filled with cabbage for the long hard winter ahead. As the weather turned cold, the city was covered in heavy coal dust and thick polluted air. Again, Beijing in 1988 was a very bleak and unhappy place.

Q: Did you wear a face mask when you were out bicycling?

HUSKEY: No. I saw a few face coverings. People did not have a sense of the polluted air being a health problem in those days, because health care in Beijing was still quite rudimentary. It is excellent now, but rather primitive in 1988.

Q: Did you find that your use of Chinese and willingness to listen to stories was resented by other Consular Officers? Was that an issue?

HUSKEY: Well, all of our consular officers were quite fluent in Chinese. But the Chief of the Visa Section would get impatient with me for my too-long interviews. She was not particularly happy in or fond of China. Occasionally, she would help interview applicants when our lines grew too long. Once I heard her shouting at an applicant, “You’re lying. All Chinese lie. You lie, lie, lie.” It was embarrassing because applicants could hear her outside through the loudspeaker, and our Chinese consular staff could hear her harangue.

Q: Yeah. I was in Yugoslavia.

HUSKEY: Similar, I’m sure.

In the fall of 1988, Joanne and I traveled to Shanghai so that I could exchange jobs and apartments for a couple of weeks with a Shanghai consular officer. I had proposed this to the Consular Chief as a way to better synchronize our visa practices in embassy and consulate. My counterpart’s apartment was located in the pre-1949 French Concession, a beautiful area of tree-lined streets and grand old European homes. The U.S. Consulate was in one of those mansions, just around the corner from the old Shanghai American School (SAS), which had been converted into a CCP training school. SAS, founded before WWI, was at the heart of the American community there in the 20’s and 30’s. In the evening, we would go to the Peace Hotel on the Bund, the waterfront park along the Huangpu River, to listen to its 1940s jazz band, replete with some of the original elderly members still playing the same jazz pieces they played before liberation.

One evening, we passed a movie marquee emblazoned with the title “*Aizibing*” (“Love Sickness,” the Chinese term for HIV-AIDS). So, we bought tickets and entered the theater. The movie was about a young girl who met an American man in Shanghai, had a love affair, and contracted AIDS. She was excoriated by her family and local community and ended up committing suicide. The moral of the story was, of course, do not associate with foreigners, who are carriers of AIDS. When the movie ended, we stood up, only to realize that we were the only foreigners in the theater and everyone was staring at us. When we started to exit, the audience parted like Moses and the Red Sea, to allow us space to leave. This was just one more way in which Party and government worked to keep Chinese people separate from foreigners – more to prevent ideological and political, than medical, infection.

Q: So, when did the student movement begin?

HUSKEY: Well, upon arriving in Beijing in August 1988, I realized that a black mood had taken hold in Beijing. Interviewing large numbers of Chinese students applying for visas to study in the U.S. and strolling around Beijing each evening, I had picked up on this surprisingly dark mood, a simmering discontent among *Beijingren*. They were upset over rising inflation and the growing economic inequality that accompanied Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms. But most of all, I found a deep anger at widespread corruption in the CCP – the Chinese Communist Party – and at the haughtiness of Party cadres who lorded it over the populace. I set my findings down in a number of memos, which I regularly sent over to the Political Section in the main embassy building across the street. One was specifically entitled “Dark Mood in Beijing,” reporting the widespread discontent and anger I was finding. But the political officers ignored my reports and never used them in their reporting to Washington, either because they disagreed with my finding of a “dark mood” or because I was just a first-tour consular officer. Ironically, though, I had better access to *Beijingren* precisely *because* I was a consular officer. People who shied away from U.S. Embassy officers were quite willing to talk with me. The Political Section, however, did not agree with my reports and did not see the growing discontent in winter 1988-89. So, when the student-led Beijing democracy movement erupted on April 15, 1989 (which I will describe later), the Political Section was caught off guard. They had no inkling of the anger bubbling among students, workers, housewives and others in Beijing.

[Note: this interview was conducted at a later time with David Reuther as the interviewer]

Q: Today is March 22, and we're returning to a conversation with James Huskey. James was an eyewitness to the events of June 1989.

Let's start in April. Hu Yaobang dies.

HUSKEY: Let me back up here, because in my last two sessions, I described the surprise I experienced when my wife Joanne and I arrived in Beijing in August 1988. As a first tour Foreign Service Officer, I was assigned to be a consular officer on “The Line,” where I interviewed hoards of Chinese students applying to study in the U.S. Already fluent in Chinese, I was able to pick up a lot of information, both in interviewing and in strolling around Beijing each evening.

What I found, David, was a surprisingly dark mood, a simmering discontent among *Beijingren* (people of Beijing). They were upset over rising inflation and the growing economic inequality that accompanied Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms. But most of all, I found a deep anger at widespread corruption in the CCP – the Chinese Communist Party – and at the haughtiness of Party cadres who lorded it over the populace.

I set my findings down in a number of memcons, which I regularly sent over to the Political Section in the main embassy building across the street. One was specifically entitled “Dark Mood in Beijing,” reporting the widespread discontent and anger I was finding.

But the Political Section disagreed with my assessment of a “dark mood” in Beijing, and never used my memcons in their reporting to Washington, perhaps because I was just a first-tour consular officer. Ironically, though, I had better access to *Beijingren* precisely *because* I was a consular officer, since everyone wanted to know an American consular officer, the source of visas to America. (At dinner one evening, Minister of Culture Ying Ruocheng leaned over to me and said in his impeccable English, “Dr. Huskey, do you realize you are one of the most powerful men in China?” Surprised, I responded, “Why do you say that, Minister Ying?” “Because,” he replied, “You have the power to issue visas.”) I was widely known in Beijing as “*Zuopiezi*” (left hoof, Chinese slang for southpaw) from my interviews on “The Line.” When Joanne walked down crowded Wangfujing Street or through Ertan Park, she would hear people whispering “*Ta shi Zuopiezide furen*” (That’s Southpaw’s wife). So, people who shied away from U.S. Embassy officers were more than willing to talk with me. But the Political Section did not agree with my reports or see the growing discontent in winter 1988-89, so were caught off guard on April 15th.

On April 15, everything changed. That day, Hu Yaobang died. The deposed former General Secretary of the CCP, Hu was deeply beloved by the Chinese people, especially students, as a reformer who pushed the Party to open up and become more responsive to the people. For this, he was fired in 1987 by Party hardliners and replaced by Zhao Ziyang.

That night after work, I drove out to Beida (Beijing University), having heard from Michael Hunt, my UNC prof who was Fulbright teaching at Beida that spring, that a student commemoration was underway on campus. Michael and I strolled over to “The Triangle,” the plaza at the heart of Beida, now festooned with flowers and people conversing quietly, many crying. There was a sense of despair, even hopelessness, over the passing of the one man who had brought hope to young people. That evening some students dared to hang *dazibao* (big character posters) around the plaza, for the first time since the 1986 student demonstrations that had caused Hu’s downfall. The next day, a couple of hundred Beida students left The Triangle and marched nine miles south to Tiananmen Square in the heart of Beijing and laid wreaths commemorating Hu at the Monument to the People’s Heroes in the center of the Square. They publicly praised and memorialized Hu, then marched back to the Haidian university district in northwest Beijing. The next day, over a thousand students set out on the march to Tiananmen, including contingents from neighboring Qinghua and People's Universities

Q: These universities are actually the premier universities of China, where the sons and daughters of the party elite are being educated. I mean, they are not some small colleges.

HUSKEY: Good point. Beida is often called “the Harvard of China” and Tsinghua “the MIT.” Many of the students were *gaoganzidi*, “princeling” children of high Party cadres. Others were simply very, very smart.

The mourning continued night after night, with the marches growing by the day – from hundreds, to thousands, tens of thousands and finally hundreds of thousands of marchers and even larger crowds of supportive *Beijingren*. The students shifted their route from returning straight back to Haidian, to marching around the broad Second Ring Road that encircles Beijing, before returning to Haidian. The nightly marches aroused popular support all along the parade route, as *Beijingren* turned out by the tens and hundreds of thousands to, first, to watch, then increasingly to applaud and cheer, the students carrying placards protesting inflation, economic inequality and, increasingly, Party corruption. The numbers grew exponentially night by night, marchers from tens to hundreds of thousands, and observers reaching over a million.

Joanne and I were out in the streets every night – circulating, talking with people gathered on street corners, and watching the river of marchers flowing along the Second Ring Road. When they would see us, students and workers would shout, “*Lao wai, lao wai*” (foreign friend, foreign friend), as if we were a beacon of hope. Increasingly, the students were being joined on the march by workers, employees, teachers and even journalists and government workers, carrying placards proudly proclaiming their *danwei* (work unit). All the while, the police stayed on the sidelines, just watching, not daring to

interfere in this commemoration of the third CCP General Secretary.

In early May, students began to overnight in the Square, unwilling to leave the heart of protest. Then they started pitching tents on the hard pavement, which became, by mid-May, a sprawling tent city of thousands of students. As the numbers on the Square surged day by day, the police continued to keep their distance, leaving the students effectively in charge of Tiananmen Square. Student leaders, especially Wuer Kaixi, Wang Dan, and Chai Ling, nightly called for the authorities to accede to the demonstrators' demands.

Q: Now, what did you understand about the background of those three people?

HUSKEY: They were students. I had seen Chai and Wang earlier at Beida. They were smart and motivational leaders, who gave speeches about *minzhu* (democracy). Most people had little sense of this new idea but, rather, were exercised about inflation and corruption. But students, particularly at Beida, were aware of *minzhu* and saw it as a way to a more open and responsive CCP.

By mid-May, however, the protest fervor had begun to wane and the numbers of demonstrators dwindled. Student leaders in the Square turned to the idea of a hunger strike as a way to reinvigorate the protest movement. Launched on May 13, the hunger strike quickly ricocheted through Beijing and across China. People's Daily, CCTV, and other Chinese media began reporting sympathetically on the hunger strike. People across the nation were inspired by the hunger strike and were full of admiration for students who were putting their lives on the line.

Students from universities across China began pouring into Beijing, marching straight to the Square and setting up their own campsites under university name plates. Each evening I would go to the Square and talk with demonstrating students and listen to the speeches around the Monument. Then I would take the midnight-to-7:00 graveyard shift on the embassy's daily watch in the Square. My partner, embassy officer Don Yamamoto, and I would take turns all night reconnoitering the tent city, then trying to get some shut eye under the watchful gaze of Mao's portrait.

As the tent city burgeoned, doctors and nurses from the Beijing hospitals volunteered to help, setting up tent clinics to care for the fasting students. As the hunger strikers weakened day by day, they were placed on stretchers with IV rigs. They had become national heroes.

Q: By the time the tents began to show up, I presume the general public was being

supportive by bringing in food.

HUSKEY: Yes, there was tremendous public support from the citizens of Beijing. But there was an ominous development : the nearly invisible government proclaimed martial law on March 20. Then, each evening around 7:00, squads of unarmed soldiers would double-time march from the eastern suburbs toward Tiananmen Square in an attempt to retake the Square. But this was surrealistic . . . and rather pathetic. The soldiers were peasant boys of seventeen or eighteen from the countryside, who had been sent, leaderless, by their commanding officers to retake the Square from the students. And night after night, large crowds of *Beijingren* poured into the streets to block the soldiers. Groups of people would surround each soldier and urge them to leave, explaining that *Beijingren* were their friends. After the soldiers had been turned back each night, the people celebrated their victory in the streets. I remember the night of May 29, when the nightly phalanx of soldiers was, as usual, blocked and turned back. One young boy, who looked about fifteen, desperately, frantically cried “Please let me go! I have to reach Tiananmen!” As he was pushed back, he dropped his little knapsack. I walked over and looked inside; there was a spoon, a pair of chopsticks, and a half bowl of noodles. It was pitiful; that's all they had. We later learned that these boys had been propagandized to believe the students and *Beijingren* were enemies of China.

Q: Well, I remember a couple of times watching the students march out of Tiananmen Square. And at one point, they were joined by identifiable groups, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

HUSKEY: Yeah, absolutely.

Q : And these groups were carrying signs and walking with the students. Do you have a timeframe for that? Because that really, in my eye, made the mark that this was really something special. That was when the public and the businesses and whatnot really joined the students.

HUSKEY: That began happening before the hunger strike, but it redoubled after May 13. You're right, every *danwei* (work unit) was becoming supportive. It was society-wide. Groups marching into the Square included journalists from *People's Daily* and other publications, as well as CCTV reporters. There were even small groups of PLA soldiers in uniform joining the demonstrations. But what most impressed me was the number of average *Beijingren*, including many housewives, who offered food and encouragement – *zhayou!* (“step on the gas”) – to the students as they passed.

For the Party, this was a dangerous development, because by June 1, it was clear to all

that the Party had lost control of government and people. The students were running the city. I mean, any traffic direction was by students. There were no police on the streets. CCP leaders Zhao Ziyang, Deng Xiaoping, and others lived in the privileged leadership compound Zhongnanhai, just west of the Forbidden City, whose doors were now locked shut. You never saw them open because they would have been mobbed by protestors. The CCP and the government had lost control.

I remember saying to embassy colleagues on June 1 or 2 that the situation had become existential for the CCP. Either the Party would resort to violence, or it would collapse. It had to be one way or the other. The current *diulian* (loss of face) was unsustainable. Obviously Deng Xiaoping saw that.

So let me turn to Saturday, June 3, because the actual massacre took place on the night of June 3-4. On June 3rd, like every other night, Joanne and I drove to the Square around 7:00 pm, where I drove right up to the Great Hall of the People (GHOP) and parked our dilapidated old Toyota – purchased from the gardener at the Egyptian Embassy for “camouflage” – at the foot of the grand staircase of the darkened GHOP. We toured the tent city talking with students and workers, and noted their joy and idealism. They were in a celebratory mood, because the PLA troops had once again been turned back, many hoped for the last time.

I was curious about the state of the student leadership in the Square, because there were rumors of discord within the student community and I wanted to get a sense of who was really in charge. Some students were urging that it was time to go home, as the demonstrators had made their point. Others countered that, no, they must get full satisfaction. Around 9:00, Joanne departed and returned to our apartment in the Tayuan diplomatic compound, taking a taxi and leaving the car for me. Around 10:00 – I think it was 10:00. I'm looking at the reporting cable that I wrote the next morning after the massacre, David. You see, all night long I carried a small pad in which I jotted everything I observed that night, and which I entered into my reporting cable the next morning back at the embassy. So, I'm just checking that report for the exact time. Actually, it was 9:00, by which time all other embassy officers had left the Square and returned home, since the day's demonstrations had apparently ended. A hundred thousand or so people remained in the square, milling around in a celebratory mood.

Q: At this point, let me thank you.

You were saying that the embassy was very tuned to these demonstrations, and they were sending Chinese-speaking officers to cover the Square on a regular schedule. My impression was that the embassy had rented an apartment or room in the Beijing Hotel

and were sending officers down from that. Do you recall, can you give us a sense of who those officers were?

HUSKEY: Yes. The embassy had a room on the 17th floor of the Beijing Hotel from which you could see pretty clearly into the Square. You could not see as far south as the Monument of the Revolutionary Heroes obelisk, I think it was an obelisk, but you could see across to the GHOP on the west side of the Square. Officers could go to that room, though I don't know of anyone there that night. As far as I know, all the other officers had left and gone home. One more thing, Dave. As you mentioned, embassy officers were assigned 24/7 to cover the Square, mostly political officers, but I expect some of you econ officers were included. I guess I was the outlier, the only consular officer. Probably for that reason I was assigned to the graveyard shift from midnight to 7:00 am each day, with another junior officer, Don Yamamoto. But I think this 24-hour embassy coverage may have stopped a night or two before the massacre. Does that make sense to you?

Q: No, I was under the impression. Well, when do you think that program started? Having the room in the Beijing Hotel and watching the demonstration and going down into the demonstration. What do you think was the start of that program?

HUSKEY: I don't know. I would guess it started after martial law was declared on May 20, in anticipation of violence in the Square. I know it didn't exist before that. So it must have been about then, yeah. Embassy officers were usually hanging around the embassy hotel room. I actually went there only once, and rather spent all my time in the Square. When I had to call the embassy, I would use a payphone in front of the Beijing Hotel, rather than in the embassy room.

So what happened the night of June 3? After Joanne left, I just circulated around the Square. And then, at 10:00. No, my cable says 10:30. At 10:30, I walked over to the northeast corner of the Square, where some 10,000 people had gathered to listen to the speakers. When I got there, Wang Dan was proclaiming democracy had come to China; now, the CCP would certainly reform. Then, Chai Ling spoke. There were still a hundred thousand or so people in the Square, most around the tent city. But the real action was at the northeast corner. People in the Square were celebrating their apparent victory that night, and I started moving away, thinking it was over for the night. I guess I was going to call in to the embassy from the payphone before returning to the GHOP to get my car.

When I telephoned the embassy, the embassy operator transferred me upstairs to the Political Section. To my surprise, Ambassador Lilley answered and barked, "Jim, tanks are coming in from the west. Get Americans out of the Square." So, I returned to the Square and began looking for Americans, while keeping one ear on the loudspeakers for

information. I found a number of Westerners – don't really know if they were really Americans – and warned them to leave before violence started. Then, I returned to the northeast corner to see what was happening. At 11:30, the loudspeakers stopped, then there was a crackling noise and a voice came on and announced "PLA troops have reached Fushingmen" (a quarter of a mile west of Tiananmen Square).

With that announcement, the crowd of people broke and ran . . . not away from, but toward the gunfire. Were they thinking they could block the soldiers? I ran westward with them, past Mao's grand portrait and the GHOP. I ran a hundred yards past the GHOP when I heard a loud, grinding noise behind me, like a race car revving. The crowd parted and an APC (armed personnel carrier) came roaring at full speed, 35 or 40 miles per hour, past the Zhongnanhai gate heading west to meet the tank column. It had apparently lost its way. The crowd was outraged. Out of nowhere rocks, pieces of concrete, iron railings rained down on the APC, which ground to a halt, its tracks crammed with debris, engine still rumbling. The crowd froze, then circled the APC and began throwing tree branches, pieces of wood, benches at the APC. Then, someone ignited the pile, and the APC became an oven. You could just imagine inside. After half a minute, the back door flung open and a soldier jumped out and began running. The crowd grabbed and beat him and, I believe, killed him. I'm pretty sure he was killed. Then two more men jumped out, and some people, students or workers, encircled them and protected them from attack, shouting, "*Tamen bshi nimende diren*" (They are not your enemy). A fourth man jumped out, on fire. I believe he died. This was the first violence I saw that night.

I continued with the crowd westward on Changan Dalu (Boulevard of Everlasting Peace). The sky was lit a brilliant orange. You could see bonfires all along Changan, as *Beijingren* gathered everything flammable to build barricades. They overturned buses and cars and piled tree limbs, benches and other debris to build barricades to block the PLA column. They set these on fire creating a huge orange glow in the sky. As far as I could see down Changan were pairs of lights – headlights of oncoming tanks and APCs. You could see them, every block or so, climbing high into the air over the barricades, then crashing down and continuing forward. As they got closer and closer to us, I could see PLA soldiers on both sides under the cover of the tanks. The column came relentlessly on. And then, gunfire. But everyone knew they were just rubber bullets and kept running toward the tanks.

We reached Xicheng, several blocks west of Tiananmen. A young man running beside me shouted, "*Nimen waiguoren xuyao bangzhu women!*" (You foreigners must help us). Moments later, he was hit in the head. That's when I first realized the soldiers were using real bullets. People began shouting, "*Zhendan, zhendan!*" (Real bullets, real bullets), and started running, as others fell to the ground. I ran behind a tree at the side of the road for

cover. I remember vividly an elderly woman running into the street toward the tanks crying, "*Zhongguoren buneng sha Zhongguoren! Zhongguoren buneng sha Zhongguoren!*" (Chinese must not kill Chinese. Chinese must not kill Chinese). There was a tremendous rage at the PLA.

At that point, I turned back and ran along the sidewalk under the trees, toward Tiananmen. I reached the Square at 1:45. As I moved south toward the center of the Square, the column of tanks was entering the northwest corner and forming a crescent line from the GHOP to Mao's portrait. They halted in place and all you could hear was their deep rumbling. The whole Square vibrated from the tanks and APCs just sitting there waiting, headlights boring into the Square. It was such an ominous sense of foreboding, of evil.

I threaded through the tent city, now in shambles. People were removing stuff and running. I looked inside many tents to make sure they were empty; they were. That's important because I later heard people say that some students had been crushed by tanks. I could not verify that charge, as the tents appeared largely empty to me.

Hundreds of students had gathered around the foot of the Monument. When I asked them what they were going to do, they responded, "We are waiting for the soldiers to arrive." The tanks continued rumbling and, fearing they might open fire at any moment, I moved to the northeast corner of the Square. There were hundreds of people on Changan in front of the Beijing Hotel. A group of vehicles and soldiers drove across the Square and formed a line vertically crossing the street in front of the Hotel. And as I recall, the Jeeps turned around and backed into the line with their machine guns pointing at the crowd. I mean, like 50 caliber machine guns. And there was a line of soldiers lying on the ground with their guns pointing at the demonstrators, who were shouting angrily at the soldiers. These were, I think, mostly workers and citizens, because the students were either still in the Square or had left. The crowd was really angry and began to push westward toward the line of soldiers and jeeps.

Let me get my time correct here. Okay, it was about 2:00 am, when the first shooting started, according to my timeline. The soldiers opened fire on the large crowd of demonstrators who were enraged at them for having invaded the Square. Everyone who could, ran away, into side streets and behind trees. I ran once again behind a tree and waited for the shooting to stop. I saw people falling. Then the shooting stopped, and there was silence. There were bodies lying in the street, maybe 20 or 30, I don't remember exactly, some dead, some moaning and calling for help. Then people began to come out to the street and help the wounded. Soon, rickshaws, three-wheeled rickshaws with platforms behind, arrived and began loading bodies, dead and wounded, and taking them

to the hospital, nearby Peking Union Hospital I would guess. And then there was silence. This was the first of the five waves of massacre I witnessed that night.

The crowd of protestors began coming back out into the street. Over the next half an hour, hundreds came out, and they were angry and began to do the same thing again. Shouting at the PLA, the crowd moved toward the jeeps, and when they got close enough, within 50 yards, the soldiers opened fire again. This pattern of massacre was repeated a third time. At 4:20 am, the lights in the Square came back on. They had been turned off, probably for days. I think the government had turned them off. But at 4:20, the lights came on in the Square. From the street in front of the Beijing Hotel, we could see into the Square – the soldiers and line of “Jeeps,” and the tanks and APCs behind. And then we could see smoke rising over the Historical Museum coming from where the tent city was located. The demonstrators assumed, people kept saying, you know, they're killing the students, they're burning their bodies. They were enraged. There had already been three waves of massacre, and the crowd was enraged and began pushing once again towards the soldiers, shouting angrily. (We later learned that the students had been allowed to leave the southwest corner of the Square and, as far as I know, none were killed in the Square.) The crowd assumed the students were being killed, leading to a fourth wave of massacre at 5:30. Around 6:00, a column of APCs came roaring in from the east, outraging the demonstrators in front of the Hotel. When the APCs had passed, the soldiers opened fire once again. It was 6:20 am.

At 7:30, the loudspeakers on the Square and in the streets came alive and played the elegiac Chinese national anthem. Then, a mellifluous female voice came over the speakers, “Good morning, comrades. Happily, the anti-revolutionary elements have been defeated.”

I walked back to the embassy and went straight into “the tank,” the secure chamber on the third floor, and typed my report of the night's events. I captioned it : “Tiananmen, June 3-4, A Personal Account.” I handed the four-page, minute-by-minute narrative to the Political Counselor, Ray Burkhardt, and went home to sleep. The cable was not transmitted, however, until 10 days later, and then only because Washington kept pressing for more detailed information on the events of June 3-4. When Ambassador Lilley learned of the existence of my report, he directed that it be sent in immediately. (The Ambassador later took the unusual step of transferring me from the consular section to the political section, so that I finally became a “real” political officer.)

Well, I do want to talk more about the aftermath, though, but are there other things that I need to talk about on the actual massacre?

Q: I think that's well covered. What I'm interested in is, you mentioned that Don Yamamoto was one of the young officers on the embassy 24-7 Tiananmen watch. Yeah, because we want to make sure they get kudos here. But can you talk about the embassy's reaction in the next day or two? I mean, because the embassy had a major evacuation.

HUSKEY: Absolutely. That's what I want to talk about now. And I have a lot to say about that.

The embassy's response to the crisis is a fascinating story. The entire embassy quickly went into action, full steam, 24-7. Most spouses volunteered to work the telephones, calling all Amcits (American citizens) for whom we had telephone numbers, not just in Beijing, but across our North China consular district. They queried how the Amcits were doing and whether they needed help leaving China on one of our charter flights. We were extremely active on "Amcit Services."

At the same time, a number of us drove *mianbaoche* ("bread trucks," the embassy's 10-passenger vans) to central and northwest Beijing where most students and tourists were located. We had to transit many PLA roadblocks manned by trigger-happy soldiers, who delighted in putting their rifles to our heads and growling "*Ni gan shemma?*" (What are you up to?). We were very polite – diplomatic, even – explaining that we were the American Embassy and going to help American citizens who needed assistance. But it was touch and go. The frustrating thing, Dave, is we would often drive to a place with many American tourists or students, only to be told that they had decided not to leave after all, but then to be called to please come back because there was shooting around the hotel or school. But day by day we were able to get most Americans out of Beijing. The most disappointing thing was when some Americans arrived in San Francisco and told the press that the American Embassy did not help them. Well, there were several thousand Americans in Beijing on June 4, and we worked our tails off with as many people, vans, and telephones as we had. But we simply could not get to every single person, just the great majority.

Q: Let me ask, talking about barricades. Was that only in one part of town or all of it? I mean, when you went out to the airport, was that a problem there?

HUSKEY: There were barricades on the road to the airport, but we didn't have much trouble there, perhaps because the PLA troops assigned there were of higher caliber than the peasant soldiers who had tried to reach the Square.

Two days after the massacre, on June 6, Ambassador Lilley called all spouses into the embassy and told them that the situation had calmed down and things were safe again.

So, they could relax and know the embassy was carefully monitoring the situation. While he was speaking, gunfire sounded from the direction of our Jianguo diplomatic compound. A Marine guard rushed in and told the Ambassador that our apartments were under fire by PLA soldiers. Mothers and children were hiding under their beds. Ambassador Lilley turned on a dime and announced that Voluntary Departure had now become Ordered Departure. Everybody must return home, pack a small bag, and prepare for pick up and transport to the airport. Joanne was taken to the Lido Hotel where she would stay overnight and then fly out the next morning. So, that night after driving a “bread truck” all day, I went home, showered, and drove my car to the Lido. Oh, no, I didn't take my car. My car was still parked in Tiananmen Square! I borrowed a friend's car. I reached the Lido near midnight, surprised Joanne, and we spent a precious night together, not knowing when we would see each other again. When Joanne arrived in San Francisco, CBS News Anchor Dan Rather was at the airport and recognized her – from his weeks in Beijing covering the Tiananmen protests – and asked her for an interview. They had a half hour interview about all that had happened in Beijing. She was very forthcoming, but concerned because I was still in China and feared I might face consequences from the Chinese government.

A week after the massacre, we reopened the visa lines and I returned to my visa work and the long line of applicants roping around the block. But that work proved quite fruitful, because applicants were eager to tell me what was happening in their area. And so I wrote many reporting cables about the post-Tiananmen crackdown that summer based on my unique source : visa interviews. Also, many student and labor activists contacted me directly through the summer seeking help leaving China. Walking to the Jianguo Hotel for lunch one day, for example, a young man called to me from behind a tree called to me and pleaded for help leaving China because the police were looking for him. So, I grilled him on what he had done during the protests, who he knew, etc. When I was convinced of his protest bona fides, I approved his visa to the U.S. In fact, I gave numerous visas to people I concluded were genuinely in danger. Not to everybody, of course, but to those I was convinced were in danger. Since this contravened the visa regs – and probably the immigration law – I never revealed my transgression, until now. Several years ago, a man called me from Hong Kong and said, “He Zhenmo (my Chinese name), I finally found you. I've been looking for you for years to thank you for helping me get out of China and avoid prison.” He had been a student activist at Qinghua University. So, I got a lot of people out that way, “by hook or by crook,” as they say.

Q : Let me interrupt for a moment. You mentioned that you left your car in Tiananmen Square. What happened to it?

HUSKEY: Interesting story . In fact, let me give you two footnotes to the Tiananmen

Massacre. First, my car. Having left it in the Square the night of the massacre, I was curious what happened to it. So, ten days after the massacre, I took a taxi to the Beijing Hotel to see for myself. The Square was ringed with hundreds of rifle-bearing soldiers standing several feet apart. I stepped gingerly between two of them, and just kept walking. And I could feel every eye on me as I crossed the vast plaza to the GHOP. There, I found my little Toyota parked snugly between two tanks, none the worse for lots of wear. I got in, turned the key (thankfully, it cranked for a change), backed up, made a “K” turn and drove slowly, ever so slowly, across the Square, through a pair of soldiers, and back to the embassy. But after that, Dave, my Toyota was “known” and I was regularly followed, either because of my now-marked car or because I later became the embassy Human Rights Officer.

The second footnote involved revisionist history. Two weeks after the massacre, I drove out to the Military History Museum, which is on Changan Road three miles west of Tiananmen. I had heard there was a display there of PLA vehicles and equipment that had been damaged in the – what did they call it? – the “counter-revolutionary rebellion.” Sure enough, the plaza in front of the ponderous Stalinesque building was filled with rows of burned-out tanks and APCs, showing how horrible the students and workers had been that night. I walked into the vaulted atrium of the museum straight into a three-story tall photograph – the already-famous picture of a column of tanks blocked by a lone man standing with his arms out-stretched. Remember? “The tank man”? I was shocked to see that photograph which was now plastered all over the international press. Until I saw the caption under the photo : “The PLA so loves the people of Beijing that it would not harm even one person.” Truth, it seems, is in the mind of the beholder. So much so that a few years ago, I met a young man from Shanghai studying in the U.S. After talking for a while, he tilted his head quizzically and asked, “What happened in Tiananmen? I heard something happened there years ago.” And it hit me. The CCP had completely rewritten history. The Tiananmen massacre did not happen. It's not even history. It's *tabula rasa*.

Beijing was a very depressed place over the following year after the massacre. Most chilling was witnessing Stalinist, or Maoist, autocracy being re-imposed on the country. I continued to meet in parks and underground bars with dissidents, who were still hoping for change.. Later, as the embassy Human Rights Officer, I visited “house churches,” underground Christian churches that met in homes and were coming under increasing pressure from the government, which saw them as “bourgeois pollution.”

Q: Okay. Remind me, had Kentucky Fried Chicken opened?

HUSKEY: Yeah, and it was very popular.

Q: Was it still open?

HUSKEY: I really don't remember, not being a KFC aficionado. I know it was open before the massacre and very popular, and seen by *Beijingren* as an upscale restaurant, you know. Because in those days – this was still the old Maoist China – restaurants did not prioritize customer service, because employees had sinecure, lifelong employment. So, McDonald's was utterly unique, because it trained its employees on customer service. That was one of the building blocks of the Chinese commercial revolution then getting underway.

Q: Now, was there much turnover in embassy staffing or did people leave at their normal pace?

HUSKEY: I personally don't know anyone who curtailed. That is the Foreign Service way, stick it out. People stayed in place. (Similarly, after the 1998 Nairobi bombing, which devastated our embassy – I lost many colleagues and my whole staff – only a few people curtailed.) I don't know anybody who curtailed in Beijing; people stayed in place and continued working. Deputy Chief of Mission Lyn Pascoe, Econ Counselor Jim Larocco, Pol Counselor Ray Burkhardt, FCS Chief Lynn Edinger, etc., all stayed and finished their tours. Ambassador Lilley stayed. Indeed, this was his forte, as a former CIA Officer. He and I did a lot of traveling out west over the next year..

Q: Now, let me ask you.

The months after this event, what were your embassy colleagues saying about their ability to get out and make contacts?

HUSKEY: Oh, it was very difficult. Few people dared to meet with us. Again, I was the exception because initially I was still a consular officer, and able to maintain my many contacts with whom I regularly met. The former editor of *People's Daily*, for example, who had been fired for his positive coverage of the demonstrations, detailed the ongoing media crackdown. And, you know, I reported this and other meetings to Washington. I mean, the embassy did not have many contacts like mine. One morning I interviewed a young artist applying for a visa, who, it turned out, was a close friend of Deng Xiaoping's artist daughter Deng Nan. After I – of course – approved his visa, he invited me to lunch in a restaurant and brought his friend Deng Nan. She freely discussed her father's views on the crackdown, on America, and other salient issues, my report on which made interesting reading.

Q: How big was the visa section?

HUSKEY: There were three of us visa officers, all of whom were generally fluent in Chinese. Dee Robinson was Consul General, Karen Stanton Visa Chief, and Fabio Saterni Chief of American Citizen Services. Visa interviewing is generally considered the drudge work of the Foreign Service. So, to make it interesting and useful, I early on started compiling dossiers on *gaoganzidi*, the princeling children of senior CCP leaders. Then, I drafted a series of reporting cables about top leaders who had children in America. This data proved useful when, after the massacre, America became the virtual “enemy.”

For example, after Tiananmen, State Council spokesman Yuan Mu daily attacked the U.S. for “stirring up trouble” in China and holding Chinese students “hostage” in America. So, I reminded the Ambassador of my *gaoganzidi* cables, one of which referenced Yuan Mu’s very own daughter. Ambassador Lilley then requested a meeting with Yuan, to which he carried my cable “in his back pocket” – just as Truman had carried the atomic bomb “in his back pocket” to his meeting with Stalin at Potsdam. After presenting his demarche protesting Yuan’s false charges against America, the Ambassador then said, “Oh, by the way, how is your daughter doing in her studies at [such-and-such] college?” Yuan’s shock was visible, and his anti-American rhetoric palpably toned down. So, this reporting from “The Line” made a difference.

Q: Right, right.

HUSKEY: Let’s see. I remember traveling to Xinjiang with Ambassador Lilley on an official visit to reconnoiter the region economically and politically. He was particularly interested in the Xinjiang oil industry, perhaps because of –I surmise – his friendship with oil men George H.W. and George W. In Urumqi and Kashgar, I would slip out late at night, with Lilley’s blessings, and go to restaurants and tea houses to meet Uyghurs, the Muslims native to the region, to understand the state of affairs with the Uyghurs, who lived under great suspicion from the Chinese authorities.

One night, Lilley and I were having dinner with the Governor of Xinjiang, one of those banquets where you have to repeatedly toast each other and our two great countries. I had arranged to meet a Uyghur leader at the same time as our banquet. Halfway through the meal, Lilley leaned over and whispered, “Go ahead and leave, now. Just say you have to go to the bathroom, and I’ll cover for you.” So, I slipped out of the banquet, leaving him to explain why I was taking so long in the bathroom. I met the Uyghur man, from whom I got a full briefing on what was happening with both the Uyghur resistance and the ongoing PLA crackdown on Uyghurs. The Uyghur situation was rather pitiful, because the power imbalance was overwhelming. Uyghur tribesmen, deeply resentful of Chinese

control over their homeland, would attack a PLA convoy or outlying camp, riding on horseback with antiquated rifles, to which the PLA would respond with tanks, machine guns, and jets, a very asymmetric relationship. Now, of course, it has gone far beyond this, and the Uyghurs have been completely squelched.

Q: Now, you mentioned that you moved out of the consular section. I have to assume that after Tiananmen Square, there wasn't much visa business.

HUSKEY: Oh, no, quite the opposite. Everybody wanted to leave China quickly, before the government rescinded exit permits. So, after the massacre, our visa lines were of historical proportions, and we worked long hours interviewing applicants. So much so that I had trouble getting away to do my “bread truck” runs across Beijing.

Q: Well, that means that the Chinese government allowed people to have passports.

HUSKEY: Most people had gotten their passports before the massacre and were rushing to apply for visas before there was a crackdown. I don't think there ever really was a travel crackdown. Students continued going to America to study, and the numbers just grew exponentially, until recent years.

Q: Now, the visas you were issuing were all non-immigrant?

HUSKEY: Yes, I was issuing only time-limited Non-Immigrant Visas (NIVs). Immigrant Visas were done at the U.S. Consulate in Guangzhou, I believe. You're right, we didn't do any IVs. Visas are a rough road, as you know. I mean, Beijing was a visa mill then. But the work certainly provided me with great access to the Chinese people. And provided the fodder for a lot of interesting reporting cables, you know.

Q: Now, let me ask you, you must have met consular officers from the other Western embassies around town and perhaps shared stories afterwards. What's your impression of them?

HUSKEY: I really did not, Dave. We worked nose-to-the-grindstone focused on U.S. visas, and the unique U.S. immigration system. When I moved over to the political section, however, I reached out to and organized a group of like-minded embassy political officers. We worked in concert on human rights to reinforce each other observing the trials of Tiananmen demonstrators.

As a consular officer, I guess our situation was so different from other nations that we saw little benefit in inter-embassy consular cooperation, at least at my consular officer

ground level. I mean, we have our own unique consular regulations and America's unique attraction to foreign students. One thing I did do though, soon after arriving in Beijing, I requested, and Visa Chief Stanton agreed, that, if I could find a willing consular officer in our Shanghai Consulate, we could exchange positions for a couple of weeks. The way I sold it to her was that this would help ensure our missions in China were operating with uniformity in our approaches to visa issuance. For example, how we enforced the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA) Section 214 requirement that every consular officer must believe that a non-immigrant visa applicant "intends" to return to his/her home country by the expiration of the visa. Of course, in those days some 97% of students did not return to China, a situation that has almost reversed today. But we needed guidelines for a believable myth about why we believed the applicant actually might "intend" to return. The way we were doing this in Beijing was we would issue the visa if the applicant had a full U.S. scholarship, meaning the student at least would not be working and might, just might, someday return to China when they completed their studies. And some, just some, did.

Anyway, Joanne and I flew to Shanghai and worked in the beautiful old consulate building there for two weeks, which for me was a special treat, because my PhD dissertation at UNC Chapel Hill had been on Shanghai in the 1920s and '30s. I knew every street and older building in the city. So, for me, this was like going home. One day, Joanne and I were walking on Nanjing Road, the main street in Shanghai, and saw a huge movie theater marquee : "*Aizibing*" (Love Sickness, the Chinese term for HIV-AIDS). So we bought tickets and went in to watch the movie. It was a bizarre movie about Chinese youths who hung around and had affairs with Americans, contracted AIDs, then sickened and died. The unspoken moral of that story was, of course, keep away from foreigners, especially Americans. When the movie ended, the lights came on and we stood up, looked around, and realized we were the only foreigners in the theater. The audience quickly parted and made ample room for us to exit. The parting of the wave.

Q : When you came to China, did you participate in the Australian Friday night gathering?

HUSKEY: I participated in the Hash House Harriers, the Asian running group made up of Aussies, Brits, French, Germans, Kiwis, and Americans. I ran every week with the Hash. But I did not go to the Aussie pub. Must have been pretty good beer.

Q : Well, with that, I really thank you for your contribution here. I think you're going to like it. Let me stop right now.

On April 15, everything changed. That day, Hu Yaobang died. The deposed former General Secretary of the CCP, Hu was deeply beloved by the Chinese people, especially students, as a reformer who pushed the Party to open up and become more responsive to the people. For this, he was fired in 1987 by Party hardliners and replaced by Zhao Ziyang.

That night after work, I drove out to Beida (Beijing University), having heard from Michael Hunt, my UNC prof who was Fulbright teaching at Beida that spring, that a student commemoration was underway on campus. Michael and I strolled over to “The Triangle,” the plaza at the heart of Beida, now festooned with garlands of flowers and people conversing quietly, many crying. There was a sense of despair, even hopelessness, over the passing of the one man who had brought hope to young people. That evening some students dared to hang *dazibao* around the plaza, for the first time since the 1986 student demonstrations that had caused Hu’s downfall. The next day, a couple of hundred Beida students left The Triangle and marched nine miles south to Tiananmen Square in the heart of Beijing and laid wreaths commemorating Hu at the Monument to the People’s Heroes in the center of the Square. They publicly praised and memorialized Hu, then marched back to the Haidian university district in northwest Beijing. The next day, over a thousand students set out on the march to Tiananmen, including contingents from neighboring Qinghua and People's Universities

Q: These universities are actually the premier universities of China, where the sons and daughters of the party elite are being educated. I mean, they are not some small colleges.

HUSKEY: Good point, David. Beida is often called “the Harvard of China” and Tsinghua “the MIT.” Many of the students were *gaoganzidi*, “princeling” children of high Party cadre. Others were simply very, very smart.

The mourning continued night after night, with the marches growing by the day – from hundreds, to thousands, tens of thousands and finally hundreds of thousands of marchers and even larger crowds of supportive *Beijingren* along the way. The students shifted their route from returning straight back to Haidian, to marching around the broad Second Ring Road that encircles Beijing, before returning to Haidian. The nightly marches aroused popular support all along the parade route, as *Beijingren* turned out by the tens, then hundreds of thousands, first, to watch, then increasingly to applaud and cheer, the students carrying placards protesting inflation, economic inequality and, increasingly, Party corruption.

Joanne and I were out in the streets every night – circulating, talking with people gathered on street corners, and watching the vast river of marchers flowing along the Second Ring Road. When they would see us, students and workers would shout, “*Laowai!, laowai!*” (foreign friend, foreign friend), as if we were a beacon of hope. Increasingly, the students were being joined on the march by workers, employees, teachers, even journalists and government workers, carrying placards proudly proclaiming their *danwei* (work unit). All the while, the police stayed on the sidelines

watching, not daring to interfere in this commemoration of the third CCP General Secretary.

In early May, students began to overnight in the Square, unwilling to leave the heart of protest. Then they started pitching tents on the hard pavement, which became, by mid-May, a sprawling tent city of thousands of students. As the numbers on the Square surged day by day, the police continued to keep their distance, leaving the students effectively in charge of Tiananmen Square. Student leaders, especially Wuer Kaixi, Wang Dan, and Chai Ling, nightly called for the authorities to accede to the demonstrators' demands.

Q: Now, what did you understand about the background of those three people?

HUSKEY: They were students. I had seen Chai and Wang earlier at Beida. They were smart and motivational leaders, who gave speeches about *minzhu* (democracy). Most people had little sense of this new idea but, rather, were exercised about inflation and corruption. But students, particularly at Beida, were aware of *minzhu* and saw the protests as a way to a more open and responsive CCP.

By mid-May, however, the protest fervor began to wane and the number of demonstrators to dwindle. Student leaders in the Square turned to the idea of a hunger strike as a way to reinvigorate the protest movement. Launched on May 13, the hunger strike quickly ricocheted through Beijing and across China. People's Daily, CCTV, and other Chinese media began reporting sympathetically on the Tiananmen hunger strike. People across the nation were inspired by the hunger strike and were filled with admiration for the students who were putting their lives on the line.

Students from universities across China began pouring into Beijing, marching straight to the Square and setting up their own campsites under university name plates. Each evening I would go to the Square and talk with demonstrating students and listen to the speeches around the Monument. Then I would take the midnight-to-7:00 graveyard shift on the embassy's daily watch in the Square. My partner, embassy officer Don Yamamoto, and I would take turns all night reconnoitering the tent city, then trying to get some shut eye under the watchful gaze of Mao's portrait.

The number of fasting students grew quickly, and doctors and nurses from Beijing hospitals arrived, volunteering to help and setting up tent clinics to care for the fasting students. As the hunger strikers weakened day by day, they were placed on stretchers with IV rigs. They had become national heroes.

Q: By the time the tents began to show up, I presume the general public was being supportive by bringing in food.

HUSKEY: Yes, there was tremendous public support from the citizens of Beijing. But there was an ominous development: the nearly invisible government proclaimed martial law on March 20. Then, each evening around 7:00, squads of unarmed soldiers

double-time marched from the eastern suburbs toward Tiananmen Square in an attempt to retake the Square. This maneuver was surrealistic . . . and rather pathetic. The soldiers were peasant boys of seventeen or eighteen from the surrounding countryside, who had been sent, leaderless, by their commanding officers to retake the Square from the students. And night after night, large crowds of *Beijingren* poured into the streets to block the soldiers. Groups of people would surround each soldier and urge them to leave, explaining that *Beijingren* were their friends. And each night after the soldiers had been turned back, the people celebrated their victory in the streets. I remember the night of June 1, when the nightly phalanx of soldiers was, as usual, blocked and turned back, one of the boys, who looked about fifteen, desperately, frantically cried “Let me go! I have to reach Tiananmen!” As he was pushed back, he dropped his little knapsack. I walked over and looked inside; there was a spoon, a pair of chopsticks, and a half bowl of noodles. It was pitiful; that's all they had. We later learned that these boys had been propagandized to believe the students were enemies of China.

Q: Well, I remember a couple of times watching the students march out of Tiananmen Square. And at one point, they were joined by identifiable groups, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

HUSKEY: Yeah, absolutely. That was part of the expansion of the demonstrations.

Q: And these groups were carrying signs and walking with the students. Do you have a timeframe for that? Because that really, in my eye, made the mark that this was really something special. That was when the public and the businesses and whatnot really joined the students.

HUSKEY: That expansion was happening before the hunger strike, but it redoubled after May 13. You're right, every *danwei* (work unit), it seemed, was becoming supportive. It was society-wide. Groups marching into the Square included journalists from *People's Daily* and other CCP publications, as well as CCTV reporters. There were even small groups of PLA soldiers in uniform joining the demonstrations. But what most impressed me was the number of average *Beijingren*, including many housewives, who offered food and encouragement – *zhayou!* (“step on the gas”) – to the students as they passed.

For the Party, this was a dangerous development, because by June 1, it was clear to all that the Party had lost control of government and people. The students were running the city. I mean, any traffic direction at all was done by students. There were no police on the streets. CCP leaders Zhao Ziyang, Deng Xiaoping, and others lived in the privileged leadership compound Zhongnanhai, on the west side of the Forbidden City, whose doors were now locked shut. You never saw them open because they would have been mobbed by protestors. Simply put, the CCP and the government had lost control.

I remember saying to embassy colleagues on June 1 that the situation had become existential for the CCP. Either the Party would resort to violence, or it would collapse. It had to be one way or the other. The current *diulian* (loss of face) was unsustainable. Deng Xiaoping obviously saw that, too.

So let me turn to Saturday, June 3, because the actual massacre took place on the night of June 3-4. On June 3rd, like every other night, Joanne and I drove to the Square around 7:00 pm, where I drove right up to the Great Hall of the People (GHOP) and parked our dilapidated old Toyota – purchased from the gardener at the Egyptian Embassy for “camouflage” – at the foot of the grand staircase of the darkened GHOP. We toured the tent city talking with students and workers, and noted their joy and idealism. They were in a celebratory mood, because the PLA troops had once again been turned back, many hoped for the last time.

I was curious about the state of the student leadership in the Square, because there were rumors of discord within the student community and I wanted to get a sense of who was really in charge. Some students were urging that it was time to go home, as the demonstrators had made their point. Others countered that, no, they must get full satisfaction. Around 9:00, Joanne departed and returned to our apartment in the Taoyuan diplomatic compound, taking a taxi and leaving the car for me. Around 10:00 – I think it was 10:00. Let me look at the reporting cable I wrote the next morning after the massacre, David. You see, all night long I carried a small pad in which I jotted everything I observed that night, and which I entered into my reporting cable the next morning back at the embassy. So, I'm just checking that report for the exact time. Actually, it was 9:00, by which time all other embassy officers had left the Square and returned home, since the day's demonstrations had apparently ended. A hundred thousand or so people remained in the square, milling around in a celebratory mood.

Q: At this point, let me thank you.

You were saying that the embassy was very tuned to these demonstrations, and they were sending Chinese-speaking officers to cover the Square on a regular schedule. My impression was that the embassy had rented an apartment or room in the Beijing Hotel and was sending officers down from that. Do you recall, can you give us a sense of who those officers were?

HUSKEY: Yes. The embassy had reserved a 17th floor room on the southwest corner of the Beijing Hotel, from which you could see clearly into the Square. You could not see as far south as the Monument of the Revolutionary Heroes obelisk, I think it was an obelisk, but you could see across to the GHOP on the west side of the Square. Emboffs used that room as a base, though no one was there that night because, as far as I know, all the other officers had returned home. One more thing, Dave. As you mentioned, embassy officers were assigned 24/7 to cover the Square, mostly political officers, but I expect some of you econ officers were included. I guess I was the outlier, the only consular officer. Probably for that reason I was assigned to the graveyard shift from midnight to 7:00 am each day, with another junior officer, Don Yamamoto. But I think this 24-hour embassy coverage may have stopped a night or two before the massacre. Does that make sense to you?

Q: No, I was under the impression. Well, when do you think that program started? Having the room in the Beijing Hotel and watching the demonstration and going down into the demonstration. What do you think was the start of that program?

HUSKEY: I'm not sure. I would guess it started after martial law was declared on May 20, in anticipation of violence in the Square. I know it didn't exist before that. So it must have been about then, yeah. Embassy officers were usually hanging around the embassy hotel room. I actually went there only once, but rather spent my time in the Square. I actually felt a little out of place, being a consular officer, so when I had to call the embassy, I just used a payphone in front of the Beijing Hotel, rather than in the room.

Anyway, after Joanne left, I just circulated around the Square for a while. And then, at 10:00. No, my cable says 10:30. At 10:30, I walked over to the northeast corner of the Square, where some 10,000 people had gathered to listen to the speakers. When I got there, Wang Dan was proclaiming democracy had come to China; now, the CCP would certainly reform. Then, Chai Ling spoke. There were still a hundred thousand or so people in the Square, most around the tent city. But the real action was at the northeast corner. People in the Square were celebrating their apparent victory that night, and I started moving away, thinking it was over for the night, and walked to the pay phone.

When I telephoned the embassy, the embassy operator transferred me upstairs to the Political Section. To my surprise, Ambassador Lilley answered and barked, "Jim, tanks are coming in from the west. Get Americans out of the Square." So, I returned to the Square and began looking for Americans, while keeping one ear on the loudspeakers. I found a number of Westerners – don't really know if they were really Americans – and warned them to leave before violence started. I went back to the northeast corner to see what was happening. At 11:30, the loudspeakers stopped, then there was the crackling noise of gunfire and a voice came on and announced "PLA troops have reached Fushingmen" (a quarter mile west of Tiananmen Square).

With that announcement, the crowd of people broke and ran . . . not away from, but toward the gunfire. Were they thinking they could block the soldiers? I ran westward with them, past Mao's grand portrait and the GHOP. I had run about a hundred yards past the GHOP when I heard a loud, grinding noise behind me, like a race car revving. The crowd parted and an APC (armed personnel carrier) came roaring at full speed, 35 or 40 miles per hour, past the Zhongnanhai gate heading west to meet the tank column. It had apparently lost its way. The crowd was outraged. Out of nowhere rocks, pieces of concrete, iron railings rained down on the APC, which ground to a halt, its tracks crammed with debris, engine still rumbling. The crowd froze, then circled the APC and began throwing tree branches, pieces of wood, benches at the APC. Then, someone ignited the pile, and the APC quickly became an oven. You could just imagine inside. After half a minute, the back door flung open and a soldier jumped out and began running. The crowd grabbed and beat him and, I believe, killed him. I'm pretty sure he was killed. Then two more men jumped out, and some people, students or workers, encircled them and protected them from attack, shouting, "*Tamen bushi nimende diren*"

(They are not your enemy). A fourth man jumped out, on fire. I believe he died. This was the first violence I saw that night.

I continued with the crowd westward on *Changan Dalu* (Boulevard of Everlasting Peace). The sky was lit a brilliant orange. You could see bonfires all along Changan, as *Beijingren* gathered everything flammable to build barricades. They overturned buses and cars and piled tree limbs, benches and other debris to build barricades to block the advancing PLA column. They set these on fire creating a huge orange glow in the sky. As far as I could see down Changan were pairs of lights – headlights of oncoming tanks. You could see them, every block or so, climbing high into the air over the barricades, then crashing down and continuing forward. As they got closer and closer to us, I could see PLA soldiers in single file on both sides of the tanks. The column came relentlessly on. And then, gunfire. But everyone knew they were just rubber bullets and kept running toward the tanks.

We reached the Xicheng intersection, several blocks west of Tiananmen. A young man running beside me shouted, “*Nimen waiguoren xuyao bangzhu women!*” (You foreigners must help us). Moments later, he was hit in the middle of his head. That's when I first realized the soldiers were using real bullets. People began shouting, “*Zhendan, zhendan!*” (Real bullets, real bullets), and started running, as others fell to the ground. I ran behind a tree at the side of the road for cover. I vividly remember an elderly woman running toward the tanks crying, “*Zhongguoren buneng sha Zhongguoren! Zhongguoren buneng sha Zhongguoren!*” (Chinese must not kill Chinese. Chinese must not kill Chinese). There was tremendous rage at the PLA.

At that point, I turned back and ran along the sidewalk under the trees, toward Tiananmen. I reached the Square at 1:45. As I moved south toward the student encampment in the center of the Square, the column of tanks was entering the northwest corner and forming a crescent line from the GHOP to Mao's portrait. They halted in place and all you could hear was their deep rumbling. The whole Square vibrated from the tanks and APCs just sitting there waiting, headlights boring into the Square. It was an ominous sense of foreboding, of evil.

I threaded through the tent city, now in shambles. People were removing stuff and running. I looked inside many tents to make sure they were empty; they were. That's important because I later heard people say that some students had been crushed by tanks. I could not verify that charge, as the tents appeared largely empty to me.

Hundreds of students had gathered around the foot of the Monument. When I asked them what they were going to do, they responded in English, “We are waiting for the soldiers to arrive.” The tanks continued rumbling and, fearing they might open fire at any moment, I moved to the northeast corner of the Square. There were hundreds of people on *Changan* in front of the Beijing Hotel. A group of vehicles and soldiers crossed the Square coming toward us, and formed a line across the street in front of the Hotel. The Jeep-like vehicles turned and backed into the line with their machine guns pointing at the crowd. They looked like 50 caliber machine guns. And there was a line of soldiers lying

on the ground in front of the “Jeeps” with their guns pointing at the demonstrators, who were shouting angrily at the soldiers. These were, I think, mostly workers and citizens, because the students were still in the Square. The crowd was increasingly angry and began to push westward toward the line of soldiers and jeeps.

Let me get my time correct here. Okay, it was about 2:00 am, when the first shooting started, according to my timeline. The soldiers opened fire on the large crowd of demonstrators. Everyone who could, ran away, into side streets and behind trees. I ran behind a tree. When the shooting stopped, there was silence. There were bodies lying in the street, maybe 20 or 30, I don't remember exactly, some dead, some moaning and calling for help. Then people began to come out to the street and help the wounded. Soon, rickshaws, three-wheeled rickshaws with platforms behind, arrived and began loading bodies, dead and wounded, and taking them to a hospital, nearby Peking Union Hospital I would guess. And then there was silence. This was the first of the five waves of massacre I witnessed that night.

The crowd of protestors began coming back out into the street. Over the next half an hour, more than a hundred came out, and they were angry and began to repeat the earlier scenario. Shouting at the PLA, the crowd moved toward the jeeps, and when they got close enough, within 50 yards, the soldiers opened fire again. This pattern of massacre was repeated a third time. At 4:20 am, the lights in the Square came back on. They had been off for days, I believe. I expect the government had turned them off. But at 4:20, the lights came on in the Square. From the street in front of the Beijing Hotel, we could see into the Square – the soldiers and line of “Jeeps,” and the tanks and APCs behind. And then we could see smoke rising over the Historical Museum coming from where the tent city was located. The demonstrators assumed, as did I, that the PLA was killing the students and burning their bodies. They were enraged. There had already been three waves of massacre, and the crowd was enraged and began pushing once again towards the soldiers, shouting angrily. (We later learned that the students in the Square had been allowed to leave by the southwest corner and, as far as I know, none were killed in the Square.) But the crowd assumed students were being killed, leading to a fourth wave of massacre at 5:30. Just after 6:00, a column of APCs came roaring in from the east, outraging the demonstrators in front of the Hotel. When the APCs had passed, the soldiers opened fire once again. It was 6:20 am.

At 7:30, the loudspeakers on the Square and in the streets came alive and played the elegiac Chinese national anthem. Then, a mellifluous female voice came over the loud speakers, “Good morning, comrades. Happily, the anti-revolutionary elements have been defeated.”

I walked back to the embassy and went straight into “the tank,” the secure chamber on the third floor, and typed my report of the night's events. I captioned it: “Tiananmen, June 3-4, A Personal Account.” I handed the four-page, minute-by-minute narrative to Political Counselor Ray Burkhardt and went home to sleep. The cable was not transmitted, however, until 10 days later, and then only because Washington kept pressing for more detailed information on the events of June 3-4. When Ambassador Lilley

learned of the existence of my report, he directed that it be sent in immediately. (The Ambassador later took the unusual step of transferring me from the Consular Section to the Political Section, so that I finally became a "real" political officer.)

Well, I do want to talk more about the aftermath, but are there other things that I need to talk about on the actual massacre?

Q: I think that's well covered. What I'm interested in is, you mentioned that Don Yamamoto was one of the young officers on the embassy 24-7 Tiananmen watch. Yeah, because we want to make sure they get kudos here. But can you talk about the embassy's reaction in the next day or two? I mean, because the embassy had a major evacuation.

HUSKEY: Absolutely. That's what I want to talk about now. And I have a lot to say about that.

The embassy's response to the crisis is a fascinating story. The entire embassy quickly went into action, full steam, 24-7. Many spouses volunteered to work the telephones, calling all Amcits (American citizens) for whom we had telephone numbers, not just in Beijing, but across our North China consular district. They queried how the Amcits were doing and whether they needed help leaving China on one of our charter flights. We were extremely active on "Amcit Services."

At the same time, a number of us drove *mianbaoche* ("bread trucks," the embassy's 10-passenger vans) to central and northwest Beijing where most students and tourists were located. We had to transit numerous PLA roadblocks manned by trigger-happy soldiers, who delighted in putting their rifles to our heads and growling "*Ni gan shemma?*" (What are you up to?). We explained very politely — "diplomatically" — that we were the American Embassy and going to help American citizens who needed assistance. But it was touch and go. The frustrating thing, Dave, is we would often drive a long way to a place with many American tourists or students, only to be told that they had decided not to leave after all, only then to be called to please come back because there was shooting around the hotel or school. But day by day we were able to get many or most Americans out of Beijing. The most disappointing thing was when some Americans arrived in San Francisco and told the press that the American Embassy did not help them. Well, there were several thousand Americans in Beijing on June 4, and we worked our tails off with as many people, vans, and telephones as we had. We simply could not get to every single person, just the great majority.

Q: Let me ask, talking about barricades. Was that only in one part of town or all of it? I mean, when you went out to the airport, was that a problem there?

HUSKEY: There were barricades on the road to the airport, but we didn't have much trouble there, perhaps because the PLA troops assigned there were of higher caliber than the peasant soldiers who had reached the Square.

Two days after the massacre, on June 6, Ambassador Lilley called all spouses into the embassy and told them that the situation had calmed down and things were safe again. So, they could relax and be assured that the embassy was carefully monitoring the situation. While he was speaking, gunfire sounded from the direction of our Jianguo diplomatic compound. A Marine guard rushed in and told the Ambassador that our apartments were under fire by PLA soldiers. Mothers and children were hiding under their beds. Ambassador Lilley turned on a dime and announced that Voluntary Departure was now Ordered Departure. Everybody must return home, pack a small bag, and wait for pick up and transport to the airport. Joanne was taken to the Lido Hotel where she would stay overnight and then fly out the next morning. So, that night after driving a “bread truck” all day, I went home, showered, and drove my car to the Lido. Oh, no, I didn't take my car. My car was still parked in Tiananmen Square! I borrowed a friend's car. I reached the Lido near midnight, surprised Joanne, and we spent a precious night together, not knowing when we would see each other again. When Joanne arrived in San Francisco, CBS News Anchor Dan Rather was at the airport and recognized her – from his weeks in Beijing covering the Tiananmen protests – and asked her for an interview. They had a half hour interview about all that had happened in Beijing. She was very forthcoming, but concerned because I was still in China and feared I might face consequences from the Chinese government.

A week after the massacre, we reopened the visa lines and I returned to my visa work and the long line of applicants roping around the block. But that work proved quite fruitful, because applicants were eager to tell me what was happening in their area. And so I began writing a series of reporting cables about the post-Tiananmen crackdown that summer based on my unique source: visa interviews. Also, many student and labor activists contacted me directly through the summer seeking help leaving China. Walking to the Jianguo Hotel for lunch one day, for example, a young man called to me from behind a tree and pleaded for help leaving China because the police were looking for him. So, I grilled him on what he had done during the protests, who he knew, etc. When I was convinced of his protest bona fides, I approved his visa to the U.S. In fact, I gave numerous visas to people I concluded were genuinely in danger. Not to everybody, of course, but to those I was convinced were in danger. Since this contravened the visa regs – and probably the immigration law – I never revealed my transgression, until now. A few months ago, a man called me from Hong Kong and said, “He Zhenmo (my Chinese name), I finally found you. I've been looking for you for years to thank you for helping me get out of China and avoid prison.” He had been a student activist at Qinghua University. So, I got a lot of people out that way, “by hook or by crook,” as Oliver Cromwell so vividly put it.

Q: Let me interrupt for a moment. You mentioned that you left your car in Tiananmen Square. What happened to it?

HUSKEY: Interesting story. In fact, let me give you two footnotes to the Tiananmen Massacre. First, my car. Having left it in the Square the night of the massacre, I was curious what happened to it. So, several weeks after the massacre, I took a taxi to the Beijing Hotel to see for myself. The Square was ringed with hundreds of rifle-bearing

soldiers standing several feet apart. I stepped gingerly between two of them, and walked out into the Square. I could feel every eye on me as I crossed the vast plaza to the GHOP. There, I found my little Toyota parked snugly between two tanks, none the worse for lots of wear. I got in, turned the key (thankfully, it cranked for a change), backed up, made a “K” turn and drove slowly, ever so slowly, across the Square, through a pair of soldiers, and back to the embassy. But after that, Dave, my Toyota was “known” and I was regularly followed, both because of my now-marked car and, later, after I became the embassy Human Rights Officer.

The second footnote involved revisionist history. Two weeks after the massacre, I drove out to the Military History Museum, which is on Changan Road three miles west of Tiananmen. I had heard there was a display there of PLA vehicles and equipment that had been damaged in the – what did they call it? – the “counter-revolutionary rebellion.” Sure enough, the plaza in front of the ponderous Stalinesque building was filled with rows of burned-out tanks and APCs, showing how barbaric the unarmed students and workers had been that night. I walked into the vaulted atrium of the museum straight into a three-story tall photograph – the already-famous picture of a column of tanks blocked by a lone man standing with his arms out-stretched. Remember “the tank man”? I was shocked to see that photograph which was now plastered all over the international press. Until I saw the caption under the photo: “The PLA so loves the people of Beijing that it would not harm even one person.” Truth, it seems, is in the mind of the beholder. So much so that a few years ago, I met a young man from Shanghai studying in the U.S. After talking for a while, he tilted his head quizzically and asked, “What happened in Tiananmen? I heard something happened there years ago.” And it hit me. The CCP had completely rewritten history. The Tiananmen massacre did not happen. It's not even history. It's *tabula rasa*.

Beijing was a very depressed place over the following year after the massacre. Most chilling was witnessing a Stalinesque, or Maoist, autocracy being re-imposed on the country. I continued to meet in parks and underground bars with dissidents, who were still hoping for change. Later, as the embassy Human Rights Officer, I visited “house churches,” underground Christian churches that met in homes and were coming under increasing pressure from the government, which saw them as “bourgeois pollution.”

Q: Okay. Remind me, had Kentucky Fried Chicken opened?

HUSKEY: Yeah, and it was very popular. Right at the southwest corner of Tiananmen Square.

Q: Was it still open?

HUSKEY: I really don't remember, not being a KFC aficionado. I know it was open before the massacre and very popular, and seen by *Beijingren* as an upscale restaurant, you know. Because in those days – this was still the old Maoist China – restaurants did not prioritize customer service, because employees had sinecure, lifelong employment. So, McDonald's was utterly unique, because it trained its employees to give good

customer service. That was one of the building blocks of China's commercial revolution then getting underway.

Q: Now, was there much turnover in embassy staffing after Tiananmen or did people leave at their normal pace?

HUSKEY: I personally don't know anyone who curtailed. That is the Foreign Service way, stick it out. People stayed in place. I don't know anybody who curtailed in Beijing; people stayed in place and continued working. Deputy Chief of Mission Lyn Pascoe, Econ Counselor Jim Larocco, Pol Counselor Ray Burkhardt, FCS Chief Lynn Edinger, etc., all stayed and finished their tours. Ambassador Lilley stayed. Indeed, this was his forte, as a former CIA Officer. He and I did a lot of traveling out west over the next year.

Q: Now, let me ask you. In the months after this event, what were your embassy colleagues saying about their ability to get out and make contacts?

HUSKEY: Oh, it was very difficult. Few people dared to meet with us. Again, I was the exception because initially I was still a consular officer, and able to maintain my many contacts with whom I regularly met. The former editor of *People's Daily*, for example, who had been fired for his positive coverage of the demonstrations, detailed the ongoing media crackdown. And, you know, I reported this and other meetings to Washington. I mean, the embassy did not have many contacts like mine.

But my reporting on *gaoganzidis* studying in the U.S. proved quite useful in the post-Tiananmen weeks in the face of vicious anti-American rhetoric from Beijing authorities. State Council spokesman Yuan Mu, for example, daily attacked the U.S. for "stirring up trouble" in China and holding Chinese students "hostage" in America. So, I reminded the Ambassador my *gaoganzidi* cable that reported on Yuan Mu's own daughter, who was studying in the U.S. Ambassador Lilley then requested a meeting with Yuan, to which he carried my cable "in his back pocket" – just as Truman had carried the atomic bomb "in his back pocket" to his meeting with Stalin at Potsdam. After presenting his demarche protesting Yuan's false charges against America, the Ambassador then said, "Oh, by the way, how is your daughter doing in her studies at [such-and-such] college?" Yuan's shock was visible. His anti-American rhetoric noticeably toned down. So, this reporting from "The Line" did make a difference, after all.

Q: Right, right.

HUSKEY: After Tiananmen, I traveled to Xinjiang with Ambassador Lilley on an official visit to reconnoiter the region economically and politically. He was particularly interested in the Xinjiang oil industry, perhaps because of – I surmise – his friendship with oil men H.W. and W. In Urumqi and Kashgar, I would slip out late at night, with Lilley's blessings, and go to restaurants and tea houses to meet Uighurs, the Muslims

native to the region, to investigate the state of affairs with the Uyghurs, who lived under great suspicion from the Chinese authorities.

One night, Lilley and I were having dinner with the Governor of Xinjiang, one of those banquets where you have to repeatedly toast each other and our two great countries. I had arranged to meet a Uyghur leader at the same time as our banquet. Halfway through the meal, Lilley leaned over and whispered, “Go ahead and leave, now. Just say you have to go to the bathroom, and I’ll cover for you.” So, I slipped out of the banquet, leaving him to explain why I was taking so long in the bathroom. (BTW, I fear I was well known in Beijing for taking long restroom breaks, because when I would meet with Chinese contacts or other diplomats, I would excuse myself to the restroom, where I would sit on the commode — when they had one — and jot down notes of conversation on my trusty pocket notebook. People must have wondered.) Anyway, I met the Uyghur man, from whom I got a full briefing on what was happening with both the Uyghur resistance and the ongoing PLA crackdown on Uyghurs. The Uyghur situation was rather pitiful, because the power imbalance was overwhelming. Uyghur tribesmen, deeply resentful of Chinese control over their homeland and pressure to conform and curtail the Islam practices, would attack a PLA convoy or outlying camp, riding on horseback with antiquated rifles, to which the PLA would respond with tanks and machine guns, a very asymmetric equation. Now, of course, it has gone far beyond this, and the Uyghurs have been completely squelched.

Q: Now, you mentioned that Ambassador Lilley transferred you from the Consular Section to the Political Section. I have to assume that after Tiananmen Square, there wasn't much visa business.

HUSKEY: Oh, no, quite the opposite. Everybody wanted to leave China quickly, before the government rescinded exit permits. So, after the massacre, our visa lines were of historical proportions, and we worked long hours interviewing applicants. So much so that I had trouble getting away to do my “bread truck” runs across Beijing.

Q: Well, that means the Chinese government allowed people to have passports.

HUSKEY: Most people had gotten their passports before the massacre and were rushing to apply for visas before there was a crackdown. I don't think there ever really was a travel crackdown. Students continued going to America to study, and the numbers only kept growing.

Q: Well, with that, I really thank you for your contribution here. Let me stop right now.

Q: Today is 30 November 2017 with James Huskey. We are going to start with your time after Tiananmen. There may be some repeats here but let's have at it.

HUSKEY: After the Ordered Departure, the embassy was left with a skeletal staff of officers identified as “essential.” We carried on, surrounded at all times by a platoon of armed PLA soldiers standing guard around the perimeter of our wrought iron fence, glaring at us and fingering their rifles. When we passed through the entrance gate they would taunt and occasionally point their rifles at us, at least once pulling the trigger, which is how we learned the rifles were not loaded. On July 4, one month after the massacre, all remaining officers gathered for the embassy flag raising ceremony, as the soldiers stood with their guns at the ready. Our small group of officers assembled around the flagpole in front of the embassy, with one of the marines standing at attention for the signal to raise the flag. Next to him stood Ambassador Lilley and me, standing hand over heart and in my jogging clothes, as I had run to the embassy since my car was still stuck in Tiananmen Square. And that is the picture that appeared on the front page of the New York Times the next morning — the marine hoisting the flag with the ambassador and me standing at attention with hand on heart. The ambassador spoke movingly of the horrendous experience we had all gone through and his hopes for the future, and then we raised the American flag to honor our country and freedom. It was a very moving experience.

Q: Were you able at that point to learn why PLA soldiers shot up our apartments?

HUSKEY: We never got the full story. At first the Chinese Foreign Ministry insisted the shooting was done by counter-revolutionary hooligans on the rooftop of buildings across from the street from the embassy apartments. However, our security people traced the trajectory of the bullets burrowed in the walls to the street where the armed soldiers had been milling around. We informed the Foreign Ministry, and they finally apologized and said it was just a group of uncontrolled PLA soldiers. We have always assumed this was not accidental, that rather intended to scare foreigners, especially Americans.

Q: I mean this would strike me as maybe a certain element that didn't like foreigners, in contrast to those who wanted to encourage relations and investment.

HUSKEY: This was a different situation. This was a crisis situation, and the CCP and the government had come close to collapse. Only through crackdown and massacre was the party able to survive and regain control. It would be another two years before Deng Xiaoping was able to retake control of the Party from Li Peng and the hardliners and resume the reforms. With his 1992 “southern sojourn” to the reformist Guangdong Province, he succeeded in reviving the reforms, but only the economic reforms, not the political reforms, then or ever again.

Q: Did we see this at the time, or is this in retrospect?

HUSKEY: We had no idea where things were going then. At this time, after the horror of the Tiananmen Massacre, many Chinese and many of us in the embassy assumed it was just a matter of time before Party and government collapsed. They had massacred their own people, just as my little old lady cried out on the night of the massacre. How could such a government survive? The popular anger was so intense and unforgiving.

But the CCP was able to reassert total control through its crackdown, from which it never let up. Today, of course, China is an autocracy wholly controlled by the Party. And it is a very effective control that employs the full security state – omnipresent surveillance and big data — to track and control the entire population.

Anyway, after Joanne was evacuated, I remained behind with a small coterie of “essential” officers working nonstop to assist Americans getting out of China. After one week, we reopened the visa lines, with the line of applicants stretching around the block — people desperately trying to get out of China. With so many friends and contacts in Beijing, I had a pretty good fix on what was happening in Beijing society. Many Beijing Spring activists managed to find or get in touch with me. They would be referred through friends or they would catch me on the way to or from the embassy. Sometimes they were some of the student leaders trying to get out of China, because they were being hunted down like lions. I talked to each person at length to get a good fix on who they were and what their experiences were during the Beijing Spring movement. When I was convinced they were truly at risk of imprisonment, I would help them leave by giving them a visa. I would tell them to come to the embassy on such and such a day. On that day, I would search through the stacks of visa applications and call that person to me for an interview and approve the visa. This was not kosher, and probably not legal. I was breaking all visa regulations and probably the law as well. But I managed to get a lot of people out.

Q: How did they get out?

HUSKEY: These were students who had passports. Chinese students who had been planning to go to America for grad school already had their passports. They would go to the airport where things were still quite chaotic and many managed to slip through the tight security. Recently, a man called me from Hong Kong, who said he had been looking for me for years. He just wanted to thank me for helping him escape China after the massacre, “otherwise I would still be in jail.” I can’t give his name because he has family in China, but he was one of the more than 35 people I helped exit China after Tiananmen. He went on to earn his Ph.D. and is now working for an American company in Hong Kong. So, that’s one of the things I did after the massacre: assisted people at risk to leave China. I have never told this to anyone. Hopefully, it is now beyond the Statute of Limitations!

Q: Well, the people you would see, the student leaders, were they children of the cadre or did they come from somewhere else?

HUSKEY: The children of the high cadre would have been safe. No, these were just average students who were very smart and able to gain admission to one of China’s highly competitive universities. There were also some laborers who had been active in the protest movement. But most were just regular youths.

Q: Well, these of course were the laborers who joined the student protests. Before that, the students were sort of a group apart.

HUSKEY: Yeah. They merged into a student-labor protest movement. There were also many, many common citizens – hundreds of thousands of *Beijingren* who joined the protests. And lots of outraged housewives!

A few weeks later, the all-clear was given for our spouses to return to Beijing by charter flights. One of the happiest days of my life was going to the airport to welcome Joanne back. After two bachelor months in a very unhappy time, her return brought sanity back to my life. Then, we were all given an extra R&R trip to anywhere. Joanne and I decided to go somewhere completely different from gloomy Beijing — Vienna, where everything works like clockwork. So, we flew Lott Airlines to Warsaw, then Vienna. The aircraft, however, was the pits – my seat wouldn't hold up and I had to virtually lie down across Siberia to Warsaw. In Warsaw, we went to see my A-100 classmate Tom Gibbons, who was serving at the embassy there. Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Daryl Johnson, a longtime Department "China Hand," had heard I was visiting and joined us to hear my first-hand account of Tiananmen. Joanne and I spent a couple of days seeing Warsaw, which was on the cusp of its post-Soviet revival and just beginning to percolate economically. We flew on to beautiful and elegantly civilized Vienna — for Viennese coffee, sacher tortes, and lots of Mozart. Then by car along the Danube to Salzburg and more Mozart, south through the Swiss Alps, over the snowbound Bremmer Pass, and into beautiful and much warmer Italy, with its Chianti wines and castle towns. A wonderfully relaxing time after months of trauma and tension.

When we returned to Beijing, the post-massacre crackdown was even more obtrusive, as people pulled in their heads like turtles and avoided conversation. Such a different Beijing from the ebullient and hopeful Beijing during the democracy movement, when everybody was outside in the streets, talking, smiling, hopeful.

Some of my closest friends were international journalists, Stu, despite having been repeatedly warned not to consort with journalists, who might end a diplomat's career. But the journalists I knew were people of great integrity and with whom I actually had much in common professionally. We were both reporting on and trying to decipher developments in China, but to different audiences — me to the Department of State and the U.S. Government feeding into U.S. foreign policy and directly to the American people. But we were all seeking to understand what was going on in pos-Tiananmen China. So, we often exchanged information and they carefully kept me out of the press. I was especially close to Dan Sutherland of the Washington Post, Nick Kristoff of the New York Times, and John of the South China Morning Post in Hong Kong (forgot his last name). We often had lunch and exchanged information. I remember one time when Nick stopped by the embassy and picked me up for lunch. As we drove over to the Jianguo Hotel, we exchanged war stories about constantly being followed by MSS goons. When we came to one corner, Nick said, "I can always tell who is following me," and, pointing to a man standing on the far corner, "Watch that man. He will be my follower." And, sure enough as we drove past, the man pulled out a walkie talkie and apparently relayed us to the next corner, where another man was waiting for us. So it continued at each corner. So, I thought I had it bad, since I was regularly tailed, first as an active consular

officer, then as the embassy Human Rights Officer. But Nick had it worse, plus he did not have my diplomatic immunity. When I would meet or visit many Chinese friends, they would often receive the proverbial MSS “midnight knock” and grilling about our meeting – why was I there, what did I say and ask? But it was interesting how many of my friends and contacts wanted to talk anyway. They wanted to get the message out about the Beijing crackdown, and I dutifully reported back to Washington.

Q: When you had dinner with your Chinese contacts, what were they saying?

HUSKEY: They would tell us everything, because they had grown accustomed to talking openly during the six-week “Beijing Spring.” Now, suddenly they had to pull their heads back in like turtles, but they were angry, angry at what had happened and dared to talk with me. They would tell me everything. What people were saying and feeling. They would give me CCP documents describing the party’s suppression efforts. And I reported this information, and now the embassy actually transmitted my reports to Washington, unlike my memos through the fall of 1988.

Q: So, once you uncork a people, you just don’t put the cork back in again.

HUSKEY: Well, Stu, it was like this. Every time we had dinner at somebody’s house or met them at a restaurant for dinner or coffee or whatever, I would spend an unseemly amount of time in the restroom because that is how I would write my notes of conversation.

Q: You would turn the water on?

HUSKEY: Well, I would just close and lock the door. I always carried a pen and notepad in my pocket, just as I did on the night of June 3-4. I would sit there and write down everything they told me as quickly as I could to ensure accuracy. All the while, I was still doing my daytime job, consular interviews, but I drafted and sent in a number of cables through Summer 1989.

Q: Just on an inter-service note, what sort of credit were you getting. I mean the fact that you are a fluent Chinese speaker gave you this information which was pretty unique. Were you getting credit for it within the system?

HUSKEY: Yes and no. Not in the consular section, because my consular bosses wanted me to work only on things consular. So, I did all of my reporting on my own time at home at night or early morning. The only reporting my consular bosses valued, however, was my reporting cables on the *gaoganzidi* applying for visas.

Q: I take it there were no restrictions on Chinese students coming and going as far as we were concerned.

HUSKEY: No, of course not. In fact, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) actually relaxed the requirement for Chinese students to return home after completing their studies, though I am not clear about the details, as I was in China at the time.

You asked if I was rewarded for the political reporting I was doing while still a consular officer. In a way, yes, I was rewarded. First, a week or so after the massacre, Ambassador Lilley wrote a long letter to President George H.W. Bush, his Yale classmate, detailing my actions, and those of two other embassy officers, during the massacre – getting Americans out of the Square and reporting on what happened that night. A couple of months later, Ambassador Lilley took the highly unusual step of transferring me directly from the Consular to the Political Section. As a Political Officer, one of my assignments was serving, appropriately enough, as the embassy Human Rights Officer. So, while I never really thought about it, I guess that, yes, I was rewarded for my extracurricular activities re Tiananmen.

Q: I don't want to interrupt you, but what did human rights mean in the Chinese context at that time?

HUSKEY: Good question, because human rights was a totally new and quite alien concept to the CCP and the Chinese government. Under the Chinese constitution people had all of the basic freedoms – speech, assembly, religion, etc., but in practice they had virtually no freedoms. They had to abide by the will of the CCP and the local party cadre. Human rights was not in their vocabulary. In fact, Chinese officials took great offense that the U.S. would dare to report on human rights in China. The U.S., they countered, had more than enough of its own “human rights” problems – racism, prejudice, cities burning down, like Watts and Detroit. So, China began developing its own HR counter argument: human rights means the right to life, the right of survival, the right to have enough food to eat. This definition made imminent sense to Chinese people, given their history of famines and civil war. Whereas, for Americans with their very different and more affluent history, human rights means freedom of speech, assembly, religion, etc., which most Chinese would see as the luxury of a wealthy society. So, we had fundamentally different, even mutually exclusive, definitions of human rights, each with its own logic and “truth.”

After I took over as embassy Human Rights Officer, I organized a meeting with a number of political science professors from Beijing universities, which a couple of Foreign Ministry officials also attended, to discuss the issue of human rights that was becoming so divisive in our relations. In this day-long dialogue on HR, we learned to understand each other somewhat and to clarify our very different definitions of human rights.

In July 1990, a year after the massacre, Joanne and I flew back to Washington for the birth of our son, Christopher. But I had to return to Beijing ten days after the birth to accompany Ambassador Lilley to Xinjiang, in the far west of China. We flew to Urumqi to meet with local Chinese officials, and then visited oil drilling sites at which Exxon Mobil was working. While Ambassador Lilley was meeting officials and engineers, I would often step outside and walk through the bazaars and talk with people in tea shops,

where I found Muslims frightened but willing to talk. They would look both ways and then tell me about the oppression they were experiencing from the now-dominant Han Chinese.

Q: When you were there asking questions would you identify yourself as being from the American embassy.

HUSKEY: Yes. I found that Uyghurs tended to like America. They were very angry because of their harsh treatment by the Chinese government, and had engaged in several uprisings, which the Chinese police and army brutally put down. Ambassador Lilley and I flew from Urumqi to Kashgar (*Kashi* in Chinese), the starting point of the ancient Silk Road that ran west through Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to Turkey at its western end. Kashgar reminded me of Kabul, Afghanistan, just across the Pamir Mountains, with its wooden buildings, iron lattice balconies and head-to-foot covered women. I accompanied Ambassador Lilley to various meetings, but in the evenings I would stroll through the bazaars and Uyghur tea shops, talking to locals, who were cautious but surprisingly vocal in their discontent. One whispered to me that they were planning an uprising the following week, reprising earlier attacks on army bases in which a number of Uyghurs had been killed. It all seemed rather pathetic, given the massive power imbalance. Uyghurs on horseback with ancient single-shot rifles attacking an army base with hundreds of soldiers armed with machine guns and tanks. This romantic bravado had no chance of succeeding.

Q: Was there any contact between the Uyghurs and the Tibetans.

HUSKEY: No, they were too far apart, separated by a thousand miles of desert and rugged terrain. Virtually a no-man's land with just a one-lane dirt road that ran southeast to Tibet. Tibet has similarly been overrun by Han Chinese immigrants, and the military and police power is asymmetrically on the Chinese side. Anyone in America who thinks Tibet or Xinjiang will ever be independent is dreaming. The power imbalance is just overwhelming. The American government has long since recognized that reality and does not support independence; perhaps some kind of autonomy, but not independence.

I flew from Urumqi to Beijing just in time to meet Joanne at the airport bearing a precious cargo, our little boy Christopher — *He Guifeng* in Chinese, meaning “Precious Wind.” The moment Joanne exited the aircraft carrying Christopher was the happiest moment of my life. Christopher was, literally, *Zhongguo zhizaode* (Made in China), and a “Tiananmen baby” to boot, one of several births about nine months after the spouses returned from their Tiananmen evacuation. Joanne and I had planned for Christopher to be born in Beijing, which would have been an interesting birthplace. But Ambassador Lilley, who had been born in China, urged Joanne to return to the U.S. for the birth “to make sure he can become president.”

Q: As a matter of fact, there were other similar cases. I think Mitt Romney was not born in the U.S.

HUSKEY: Wasn't he born in Mexico? [Note: Mitt Romney was actually born in Detroit; his father George Romney was born in Mexico.]

Q: Yes, a child born to an American mother is considered native born.

HUSKEY: But the question of eligibility to be president has never been settled in court. So, we decided it was better to be safe than sorry, so we returned stateside for the birth. When our Chinese friends would see Christopher, several remarked, “*Ta tai shuile. Henxiang Zhongguoren*” (He's so handsome. He looks Chinese). I had mixed feelings about that compliment. But with the passage of time Christopher outgrew that likeness and came to look more and more like me, for better or worse.

Baby Christopher enhanced our entree into Chinese society, because nobody loves children like Chinese do. We made lots of acquaintances, as passersby fell all over themselves gawking at our gurgling baby boy. Everywhere we pushed his stroller, people would come over and start talking to us. So, while the post-Tiananmen government kept diplomats at arm's length and discouraged Chinese people from talking with foreigners, baby Christopher neutralized that directive. Each evening, we pushed baby Christopher in his stroller along the banks of the Liangma He (Bright Horse River), and people would freely stop and talk and caress his hair. And I would gingerly ask questions, and they would talk with us with amazing candor because we had a baby and were, thus, deemed non-threatening.

Q: What about female babies? In Korea, I remember seeing people going to the shaman and praying for a baby boy.

HUSKEY: Good question Stu. The role of gender is very important in China. Today there are 30-40 million more young men than young women, because girls are traditionally unwanted and, with sonograms, many people selectively aborted female fetuses, though it was technically illegal to use sonograms for that purpose. When Joanne visited Qinghe Orphanage representing the CDPF, she saw that most of the orphans had at least one disability — one of which apparently was being a girl. She also saw that the infants were largely left lying unattended in their cribs, many wrapped tightly in blankets so they couldn't move. There was no one to exercise them, to stimulate their minds. So she founded Beijing International Volunteers (BIV), a group of foreigners who volunteered to work with the babies. She also raised money in the Beijing foreign community and bought 700 teddy bears for the children. And, finally, she helped facilitate the earliest foreign adoptions of Chinese orphans in 1990.

Q: I have to say I was Consul General in Seoul in the 70's. We had a very rigorous adoption visa program, and I think all of the children who were adopted were girls. These same factors were in play there.

HUSKEY: Joanne helped arrange for my embassy colleague Michael Meserve and his wife Carol to adopt a child at Qinghe. A girl of course. That little girl, Anna, and her adopted sister have grown up to be beautiful, intelligent and highly capable young

women. Anna was one of the first, if not the first, Chinese children to be adopted by foreigners. Severely under-funded orphanages had begun to realize that this was a way to raise funds for their orphanage. These early adoptions grew into a large-scale wave of adoptions by Americans and Europeans of overwhelmingly girls and severely disabled babies. The adoptions opened up a world of possibility for children who otherwise would have had limited chances in life.

Q: Was there a great discrepancy between males and females at the time? Were girls beginning to be valued, or was this still too early in the game for a premium to be attached to girl babies? I mean scarcity is scarcity, the law of supply and demand?

HUSKEY: I kept waiting for that to happen. It is happening to some extent now because there are so many men who can't find spouses due to the one-child-policy-induced gender imbalance. And today, girls seem to be much more valued and wanted than in traditional Chinese society. So, perhaps the market does work in that regard. So much so that today, girls are reportedly being trafficked from other countries into the more affluent China, another downside of that gender imbalance.

Q: Korea, for example.

HUSKEY: So, I spent my final year and a half at Embassy Beijing as the Human Rights Officer. It was fascinating. I would visit prisons and "reeducation-through-labor" camps to assess the treatment of political detainees. I would, of course, have to get permission to visit, and I included my findings in the State Department's annual Human Rights Report on China. I watched prison labor very closely to ensure that prison labor products were not being exported to the U.S. I regularly met with political dissidents in out-of-the-way places, such as parks and basement bars, to check into their well-being and to assess the extent of dissidence in post-Tiananmen China. (I expect there are far fewer active political dissidents in China today because the CCP and government under Xi Jinping have established near total control over the country via big data and the surveillance state now in place.) I also visited many unofficial "house churches." The CCP discouraged all religious practice but did allow nominal "religious freedom" under the guise of "official" church organizations, which it totally controlled. But many Chinese Christians and other faiths did not want to be part of the "official" churches, so in the 1980s a quiet movement of "house churches" emerged and began meeting discreetly in private homes. These were sprouting up all over China. I even met a number of unofficial American missionaries, who were teaching English in colleges across China. One American man described to me how he was "running" Chinese-language bibles into South China. His group in Hong Kong loaded boxes of bibles onto barges in Hong Kong, which they would sink just below the surface and tow at night to beaches in nearby Fujian and Guangdong Provinces, where local Christians would converge with carts and transport the Bibles into towns and cities. In succeeding years, the religious scene became more relaxed and open, until 2012, when Xi Jinping became president and began cracking down on unofficial religious organizations.

Q: Were missionaries allowed?

HUSKEY: No, missionaries were considered part of the “hundred years of humiliation,” when China was dominated by foreign powers. Quite as much as businessmen, diplomats and naval gunboats, missionaries were an integral part of the foreign presence and domination of China. The CCP rid China of missionaries in 1949, but as China opened to the outside world under Deng’s economic reforms, missionaries slipped back into China under the guise of teaching English, while discreetly evangelizing Chinese students. The Chinese government certainly knew this was going on, but as long as it was not too flagrant, it was allowed to continue until Xi began cracking down.

Q: At one point, I understand, there were Chinese Christians who were known as “Rice Christians,” because in times of food shortages they were able to get rice through the church. This goes back to the 30’s.

HUSKEY: Actually, it goes back to the late 19th century. “Rice Christians” were a product of the poverty-stricken China during the decades of disintegration of the Qing Dynasty prior to the 1911 revolution, and under the warlord civil wars after. In these times of mass starvation, one way to obtain food was to become Christian. Thus “Rice Christian.”

Q: I understand when you say Joanne is a ball of fire. For those of you listening to or reading this transcript, I have separately interviewed Joanne, so you can read her account or read her book, The Unofficial Diplomat.

HUSKEY: Joanne always reaches out and meets people, local people as well as people in the international community. She would start with the most interesting international and local women, through her acting in local theatres or in the book groups that she formed in every city in which we lived. She would assess where she could best fit in and what kind of contribution she could make in each place. In Beijing, she quickly developed a number of friendships with Chinese after arriving in August ‘88. One young college graduate became her Chinese teacher. He took her all over Beijing where she met many of his friends. Another young man became her *taiqi* (Chinese “shadow boxing”) teacher. She would go to Ertan Park every morning and practice her slow-motion sword dancing with large groups of practitioners. She got to know many people, so that we had friends all over the place. A lot of them became active later in the student protest movement, and several were arrested after the massacre. Her Chinese teacher was arrested and kept in prison for six months as a “spy,” supposedly giving state secrets to Joanne and, presumably, me. He was later released and made his way to Russia, then Finland and Italy, and finally to America, where he now lives.

Q: You mentioned state secrets. In the Soviet Union and elsewhere just getting a telephone directory can be considered a state secret. What was the interpretation in China at the time you were there?

HUSKEY: Virtually anything a Chinese told a foreigner could be deemed a “state secret.” China had become a totally closed society in the aftermath of Tiananmen, and

the definition of “state secret” was wide open and left wholly to the discretion of Party, government and security officials. During my final two years in Beijing, *Beijingren* had pulled back in and were keeping their heads down. But I continued to meet people, who would contact me and ask to meet in this or that underground café – a café literally in the basement of a building – at such and such time of night at a designated table. I would enter as unobtrusively as possible and the person would be sitting there waiting, and would tell me everything that was going on in his or her neighborhood or work place, what people were saying, and what was happening. I would report that, so that Washington had a pretty good sense of the situation in Beijing. Since China was a “denied country” that strongly discouraged foreign contacts, I had to be creative in working to meet people. My Chinese acupuncture masseuse, for example, was an elderly blind man who also served two members of the CPC Politburo, and about whom I would casually ply him with questions.

Q: Were the people you were talking to dissidents? How did people feel about the Party? I am talking about up and coming people. Were they going along?

HUSKEY: Well, after the massacre people were very angry. Even my contacts who were Party members were deeply embittered. Some tried to resign their Party membership, but learned that doing so might result in arrest. So, most were just angry at and disgusted with the Party. As time passed, however, they had no choice but to adjust to the new reality, which I expect was made easier and more palatable when Deng Xiaoping restarted the reforms with his “southern tour” in 1992, the year after we departed China. Today, of course, China’s historically unmatched economic development and rise as a global power has inspired national pride and much more positive views of the Party.

Q: How was corruption? What was the corruption situation at the time you were there?

HUSKEY: It was serious when we first arrived in August 1988, but seemed to have abated a bit under the post-Tiananmen crackdown. But bribery continued to be a way of life. And China’s growing wealth under the revived reforms in 1992 provided fodder for corruption. Probably for this reason, we saw the first inklings of a CCP-induced Confucian revival when we departed in July 1991, which I chalked up to the ideologically bankrupt CCP flailing about in search of some kind of moral guidelines for China.

Joanne and I also started teaching ballroom dance, which was something of a craze in Beijing in the 80s, with people dancing in all the parks. (Or, more accurately, *she* taught; I was her “straight man.”) She taught ballroom dancing in Beijing *pro bono*. There were lots of people who wanted to learn ballroom dancing, and the parks of Beijing were filled early each morning with middle aged people learning ballroom dance. Joanne was also invited to universities and secondary schools to teach dance. She (and me with her) was invited to teach square dancing at the No. 1 Girls’ Elementary School in downtown Beijing, where the top cadre sent their daughters. Each Saturday morning at 6:00 we would go to the freezing classrooms to teach square dancing to ten-year-old girls. So, dancing proved to be one more contact venue for us with Chinese society.

After the massacre, Americans were enraged at the CCP, many demanding relations be severed and trade ended. But George H.W. Bush was wiser and less emotional. He and Brent Scowcroft kept the door open, arguing that only when China restarted its reforms could there be any hope for the future of China. Otherwise China would just circle the wagons, turn inward, and resurrect its old Maoist system. So, H.W. bravely insisted on keeping the door open with China. Interestingly enough, Joanne led the way by organizing the first U.S.-China conference after the massacre. Working with the Chinese Women's Federation, she organized a U.S.-China Women's Conference in Beijing in 1991 with 100 Chinese women leaders and around 100 women from the U.S. This was the first U.S.-China meeting of any kind after the massacre and it helped to restart dialogue between the U.S. and China. It also paved the way for the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing that Hillary Clinton famously attended. Joanne noticed that when the women discussed women's issues in their own countries, the Americans laid out every problem and injustice, whereas the Chinese women tended to hew to the Party line that women in China "hold up half the sky" and have no psychological problems.

Q: Since you were there during a critical time, did you see changes in the role of Chinese women in society?

HUSKEY: Not specifically in those three short years. It is hard to know how much has changed even today. There continue to be very few women in the top echelons of policymaking in China. Certainly, more and more women are active in business and commerce. Lots of the young entrepreneurs in China, including some billionaires, are women. That creates its own way into power, but one heavily dependent on the good will of the men in power. China is still politically male-dominated.

Q: I was in Vietnam for some time and there were certain dragon ladies in business. I mean there is something in the oriental genome for business.

HUSKEY: Chinese women have that, too. The two great global diasporas are the Jewish and Chinese diasporas. Every city I have visited in Asia has its Chinese contingent. These were the products of largely entrepreneurial diasporas. Since these overseas Chinese are not part of the local society, the only thing they can do is focus on business, thus both Jewish and Chinese diasporas became masters at commerce.

Q: How did you experience the Gulf War?

HUSKEY: The Gulf War was at the center of our last year in Beijing, from Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in August '90 to the counter-invasion to rescue Kuwait organized by George H.W. Bush in February '91. This was a very tense time for us in Beijing. Our security people knew, from their MSS contacts, that the Iraqi military in Beijing was casing the American embassy and housing. It was particularly uncomfortable for Joanne and me, because there were several Iraqi diplomats, including two defense attachés, living in our high-rise apartment building. It was unnerving to

enter the elevator on our eighth floor and then stop on the fourth floor to pick up Iraqi military officers. There were many reports from Washington of Iraqi attachés worldwide casing U.S. embassies. We were concerned about possible bombings and terrorist attacks. The license plate prefix “224” clearly identified American embassy cars. But I will never forget the drama of watching CNN the night the bombing of Baghdad started. It was such a dramatic event. And, of course, the Iraqi security threat ended when we won the war.

Q: That war featured the so-called smart bombs of which we had videos. Were these videos broadcast on Chinese TV?

HUSKEY: Only occasionally, but I was glued to CNN on the embassy-provided cable TV in our embassy apartments. We watched the war with fascination, in real time. It was amazing for us to sit in our apartment in Beijing and watch the war in real time, just as it was for people in the U.S. and much of the world. But most interesting for me, Stu, was watching the reaction of Chinese party cadres and government officials. They were dumbfounded – and disappointed. Still quite anti-American and blaming the U.S. for the “counter-revolutionary rebellion,” they expected — or at least hoped — that Saddam Hussein was going to teach the U.S. a lesson. I heard one Chinese official predicting that Saddam would “teach America a lesson because he has a powerful army.” But the Chinese people at this point were still very much pro-American, as the Party’s anti-American propaganda had not yet taken root. So here you had the Chinese people pulling for America and the government hoping for America’s come-uppance. But when the U.S. coalition attack started, it was one of the most dramatic military victories in history, exceedingly well planned and executed.

February 27, 1991, in fact, may have been the apex of American history: on that day, President Bush announced that the coalition forces had attained their goal of expelling Iraqi troops from Kuwait and would now halt their military operation. That announcement surprised — dumbfounded — the world. Chinese authorities had assumed that the imperialist Americans would use this as an opportunity to move into Iraq and seize its oil fields, as did much of the Middle East and, indeed, the world. Bush’s freeze had a dramatic effect on the world, and over the next months Middle East leader after Middle East leader came calling on President Bush, praising his leadership and his honorableness. The CCP and the PLA were flummoxed – America had just destroyed the Iraqi army with its smart bombs and its troops as the whole world watched in real time on television. They were unsettled by U.S. military prowess and by H.W.’s leadership. This was a low point for China, coming just months after the Soviet Union collapsed, followed swiftly by the collapse of East Europe’s Communist governments. All that was left standing was: China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Cuba. That was it; that was all that was left of the Communist world empire.

Q: How did the collapse of the Soviet Union play with the Chinese people. Was there sort of an expectation that this might happen in China, too? I mean, the people you were in contact with.

HUSKEY: Of course, it was not just the collapse of the Soviet Union. It was the collapse of the entire Soviet empire coupled with the rapid democratization of its former “colonies,” just one year after the CCP’s existential Tiananmen scare. This was democracy ascendant, the exact opposite of where the CCP wanted to go. The CCP was now focused on one thing: survival. Just staying alive by staying in total control. The failure of the August ‘91 right-wing coup in Moscow against Yeltsin greatly exacerbated the CCP’s fear of collapse.

Q: You mean Gorbachev.

HUSKEY: Yes, Gorbachev’s house arrest brought joy to the CCP, which was delighted with the hardliners’ coup, a Tiananmen-like crackdown that seemed to be restoring the Soviet Union. The collapse of that same coup several days later deflated that hope, followed by the fragmentation of the Soviet Union that terrified the CCP.

Q: I imagine it would.

HUSKEY: They reverted to hardcore Maoism, even Stalinism, bringing Deng’s reforms to a standstill. Until Deng ended the Chinese hardliners with his January 1992 “Southern Tour” and restarted the reforms.

Q: What were you getting from people you were talking to about Deng Xiaoping?

HUSKEY: Well the average person was still very angry over the bloody crackdown. They initially blamed Deng for the massacre, as well as Premier Li Peng. But gradually that anger subsided as Deng’s revived reforms began to take hold, for which people credited him.

We returned to Washington in Summer 1991, where I was assigned to the Intelligence and Research Bureau (INR) in Foggy Bottom. We rented a beautiful house in Northwest DC just off Connecticut Avenue, where we raised little Christopher for two years. My old friend Tom Finger was head of INR’s East Asia branch, and my former A-100 leader John Tkacik was in charge of the China branch to which I was assigned. It felt comfortable returning to an academic research environment where I knew most of the people. This is where I came to fully understand what intelligence is and how it operates. It was eye-opening, and I think every FSO should have this experience, since intelligence is a fundamental building block of foreign policy. In INR, we had access to literally everything, every level and type of intelligence, and U.S. intelligence services are far and away the best in the world. We had access to raw data coming in from NSA, both satellite imagery and electronic intercepts. We had access to raw intelligence coming in from our spies — human intelligence (HUMINT) from the CIA, FBI, and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). In INR we put this mountain of information together in a rational narrative for the Secretary of State and the White House. I learned to work with the other intel agencies, because personal relations play a large role in intel analysis. My friendships with analysts at both the CIA and DIA provided me with access to critical and timely information relevant to our foreign policy responsibilities. One day, I was

discussing the impending visit of a senior Chinese official with an analyst friend at the CIA, and he told me “on the QT” that DO (the Directorate of Operations, which is the spy half of the Agency) had just accessed the TPs (talking points) for the Chinese official’s meeting in Washington the next morning. I reported the TPs to the “Seventh Floor,” which provided the Secretary an important head start in the negotiations. So, Chinese-style *guanxi* (relationships) played just as important a role in the Washington intel community as in Beijing.

Q: Did you find that the INR people were maybe too bookish or really weren’t seeing the big picture? Was there an adjustment or what?

HUSKEY: No, I already had great respect for INR, which only increased as I worked with its analysts. I found INR to be the most balanced of the Washington intel agencies, because it receives and uses intel from every intel agency, which it complements with our own real-world diplomatic reporting. So, I was very impressed with the quality of INR analysis. Each evening we put the next morning’s SMS (“Secretary’s Morning Summary”) “to bed,” with its analyses of that day’s major developments worldwide for the Secretary of State and other senior officials across Washington. I believe our SMS was equally as good as, sometimes better than, the CIA’s PDB (“Presidential Daily Brief”).

Q: I was just wondering, did you find that INR was reporting in the same channel.

HUSKEY: Yes. Remember that in 2003 INR was the only Washington intel agency that dared dispute the CIA’s fallacious assessment that Saddam Hussein had an active WMD (weapons of mass destruction) program. INR “took a footnote” in the PDB stating that it did not see conclusive evidence that Saddam Hussein had an active WMD program.

Q: I have my personal prejudice. I served in INR Africa a long time ago. One of the problems the CIA and some of the other agencies have is that there are too many layers. Generally, you get people looking at the field and coming out with tough but accurate conclusions about the situation somewhere. But then you have people who are somewhat removed but are editorializing, sort of qualifying, and they end up over-qualifying things. INR sort of tells it as it is seen from the field.

HUSKEY: That was my experience in INR, which the amazing INR footnote later reinforced in spades. INR analysts assessed all of the available intel, then their analyses went straight to the Secretary each morning, with copies going to NSC, CIA, and DOD. I was impressed with and proud of the quality of INR analysis. In INR you see it all. I was working on China, so I read all of the cables coming in from the five China posts. I also read all of the CIA, DIA, and NSA intel relevant to China each day, then I would put it all together into my own assessment of events. I also cultivated close relations with my counterparts in DIA, CIA, NSA, FBI, and NSC, so that I was able to just pick up the classified phone and call them and discuss what I was working on and check if they had any new intel, which they would then send me. Sometimes, in a pinch, they would send raw, unculled intel just in from the field, whether HUMINT from agents overseas,

satellite imagery, or electronic intercepts. I would massage these into my own analyses. But it was the *guanxi* – something I learned in China – that made all the difference. So, anyway, I learned a great deal working in INR, and I left two years later for overseas assignments with a good understanding of what Washington “sees” — what information is available to the U.S. government — so that I, as an FSO, could supplement and not duplicate that information.

Q: How were your relations with the Desk?

HUSKEY: Excellent, because I knew all the China Desk officers. Several of them had been in Beijing with me. I gave intel briefings every morning to desk officers and to Deputy Director Bader, sometimes to Director Williams, and occasionally to Assistant Secretary Richard Solomon. If I had something military, I would brief Pol-Mil officer Ford Hart. I had access to all of them because of my *guanxi*.

Q: I was wondering if this would be a good place to stop.

HUSKEY: I think so. We have come to the end of my INR years, and can now move on to India, Kenya, and Taiwan.

Q: Sure, so we will pick this up the next time, when you are off to India.

HUSKEY: OK, that’s fine.

Q: Today is 7 December 2017 with Jim Huskey. You were saying?

HUSKEY: Actually, this is December 8th, not Pearl Harbor Day, December 7th. So, we have gone through my first assignment on the China Desk, my first overseas post in Beijing, then working as an intel analyst in INR at Main State. My two Washington assignments were invaluable to my service overseas – six months on the China Desk as the Human Rights Officer, and two years in INR learning about the intel eyes and ears of the U.S. Government, which greatly enhanced the quality of my own reporting when I returned overseas.

So, in Fall 1993, my second year in INR, I was preparing to bid on my next assignment as an FS-3 Political Officer. I put all of my eggs in three baskets: Embassy Nicosia, in Cyprus; Consulate Thessaloniki in northern Greece, and the Consulate General in Madras, India, now called Chennai. Those were the three places Joanne and I were most interested in. Either Europe or India.

Q: Why this emphasis on Greece?

HUSKEY: Because I had hitched through Greece at the beginning of my round-the-world travels in ‘71, and really liked the people, cuisine, and culture, and

found Thessaloniki to be an especially beautiful city on the Aegean Sea. In addition, Cyprus is a fascinating and history-laden island, and as for Madras, I had spent six months in India and found Madras to be a fascinating city on the Bay of Bengal. In the end, all three posts offered me their Pol-Econ Chief position. Joanne and I finally decided on Madras, as I wanted Joanne to experience India with our son and our impending daughter.

Q: So, you really got what you wanted.

HUSKEY: Yes. Stu, you may not remember but I told you earlier about my time in Madras in '71, when I went to the air conditioned library of the American Consulate General and met the Pol-Econ Officer, who invited me up to his palatial office on the fourth floor, and I thought "Wow, what a wonderful life, what a profession, to live overseas and to do meaningful work and to have a beautiful office like this. Wow." 22 years later, I was sitting in that office behind that desk. For me moving to Madras was like going home, since I had spent so much time in India in the early 70's. Moreover, South India is different from North India (just as the American South is different from the North, and in similar ways!). The people of the south are more open, warm, and friendly than in the north. I figured that Madras would be a unique place to live and a good experience for our growing family. And it was that, in spades.

But our move to Madras was incredibly complex, because it occurred on the back of three highly stressful life events: in the space of two weeks, we bought a beautiful brick colonial house in Bethesda, Maryland (which we promptly rented out); gave birth to our precious daughter, Caroline; and moved halfway around the world to India. Not to mention that, three days before the birth I went into the hospital for shoulder surgery for a skiing injury. Three major life events, back to back. Each stressful in its own right, but together a tsunami of stress: buying a house, having a baby, and moving to India (with arm in sling).

Q: Before going to India did you get any language training?

HUSKEY: None at all. I would have loved to have studied Tamil. It is a wonderful and ancient language, perhaps the oldest spoken language in the world, maybe even older than Sanskrit. But the problem with India – and, later, Kenya – was that it had been a British colony, and most educated people spoke excellent English. So, the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) stopped altogether teaching Tamil to FSOs. I tried to study on my own. But in India, Tamil language study gets little reinforcement from people who speak English so well.

Q: So, you arrived there when?

HUSKEY: August 1993.

Q: It might have been a bit warm wasn't it?

HUSKEY: It was. And the intensity of the heat hit us very hard. You walk outside and it's like walking onto a sirocco or an oven. Fortunately, we lived next door to the Madras Club with its beautiful Olympic swimming pool. But, then, jumping into the pool in summer was like jumping into a pot of hot tea. Not very refreshing.

Q: Yes, for years we had watched Kerala.

HUSKEY: Both Kerala and Calcutta, now Calicut, were Communist states, which seemed rather anachronistic in 1993, after the end of the Cold War and the virtual collapse of international Communism.

Q: People talk about the food being so different.

HUSKEY: Yeah, well Tamil food is of course very hot and quite unique. In many ways it reminds me of China, especially the mushier food in the south — Guangzhou in China and Tamil Nadu in India. But South India was different. We felt very comfortable there because it was a warmer and more hospitable society than North India.

Q: What was the situation with India and the United States, first in India politically, and then with bilateral relations?

HUSKEY: India was just emerging from 40 years of Nehruvian socialism., when everything was controlled by the government. Many foreign businesses, most notably Coca Cola, had been kicked out of India. There was little American business activity in India during those years, and India experienced little economic development. In the 50's, after Mao took over China, the West was engaged in a "twilight struggle" with Communism and looked to India — the "world's largest democracy" — to demonstrate the superiority of democracy and capitalism over Communism. Through the ensuing next decades, neither nation experienced much economic development, hobbled as they were by Maoist egalitarianism and Nehruvian socialism. But in 1978 under Deng Xiaoping's economic reform and liberalization, China began to develop faster and faster with each year, which outshone the "Indian model." In the early 90s under Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, however, India finally began to open up and develop. When we moved to Madras in 1993, Rao and his Minister of Commerce Manmohan Singh were leading India into its own economic miracle, paralleling that of China under Deng.

Q: Could you believe the bureaucracy and the piles of papers on desks?

HUSKEY: Yes, India was a case of bureaucracy gone wild. I remember when I was traveling around India in 1971, I would go to a bank for cash or a government office for a travel permit and ten or more people would have to stamp the form, which I would watch slowly wind its way around the office desks all morning. If one man was out having tea or in a meeting, everything came to a standstill until he affixed his stamp in the proper sequence. It would sometimes take a whole day to get a single form fully stamped and approved.

India is a very proud country with an ancient civilization. While proud of their history, culture, and religion, Indians are also deeply resentful of the more than one century they spent under colonial rule. Only in 1947 did India gain its independence, leaving a residue of bitterness and resentment about the way they had been treated, mirroring the resentment in China today over its “century of humiliation” by Western Powers and Japan. And in India, just as in China, some of this bitterness is directed at America as the dominant world power. Both nations have a love-hate relationship with America. Indian elites have long sent their children to America to study, because America has been so open and welcoming of foreign students. Many of the Indian families we met in South India had children, siblings, and friends living in the U.S. and expressed great affection for America. But Indians also resented America, in part because – I believe – they see it as the successor “imperial power” in the post-war world order (never mind that America had fought its own war against British colonialism!).

Q: When were you there?

HUSKEY: We arrived in late summer 1993 and departed in 1996. But, as I explained, when I was in India in the early 70s, I met many Indians and experienced first-hand their love-hate attitude toward America, as well as their deserved, but thin-skinned, sense of national pride. This is very important for American diplomats to understand, Stu, because it is so easy to touch the quick of that national pride, if one is not aware and careful. Because of my earlier experience, I knew what to expect – I knew how proud and how thin-skinned Indians can be. They react strongly and viscerally to any perceived criticism of India and Indian culture because they are so proud. And, certainly, they have experienced more than their share of colonial humiliation, which is also expressed, I believe, in a sense of self-doubt and lack of confidence because of this humiliation. So, an American diplomat must be very careful in dealing with Indians because of this pride and this extreme sensitivity.

Q: Where stood the Soviet Union? The Soviet Union was all over India.

HUSKEY: Yes, Indo-Soviet relations were very close through most of the Cold War. When I was there in the early 70’s, the Soviet Union was virtually an Indian ally.

Q: I have always found it hard to understand how these two nations had aligned.

HUSKEY: Perhaps, it was because the Soviet Union was officially, at least “on paper,” anti-colonial. And the Indian people are intensely, viscerally anti-colonial. That was the tether that tied them together and which the U.S. could not sunder. Plus, I believe Indians resented the wealth and power of the United States, just as they had long resented Great Britain and its colonial overlordship. A foreigner always needed to be sensitive to the levels of history that described each person with whom he was talking, because history is always so close to the surface of Indian consciousness. Fortunately, I had already developed a sixth sense of that consciousness so that I was better able to tap into and emphasize the positive side of our bilateral relationship.

In August 1993, Joanne and I flew to Madras with our two-week-old Caroline and three-year-old Christopher. That was quite a trip, part of it spent scouring the Frankfurt Airport in search of a spare bottle for Caroline! We landed in Madras, after an all-night flight. Madras, in those days, was not easy to get to, and we had to change planes three times, which was extremely challenging, with an infant and small child. Unlike our awful experience of arriving unmet in Beijing, however, Commercial Chief Michael Keaveny and his lovely wife, Martha, were at the Madras Airport waiting to meet us. It was a welcome relief to see them, particularly because the long flight with two babies had been very demanding, discombobulating, for Joanne, who had just given birth. Michael and Martha – our fast friends to this day, two decades later – escorted us straight to our new home at No. 2 Turnbull Road.

Our home on Turnbull Road was a large, snow-white house set in a large yard filled with manicured gardens and lofty palm and banana trees, and surrounded by a high brick wall. No. 1 Turnbull Road next door was Consul General Tim Hauser's palatial white residence, overlooking the lovely, but often odiferous, Adyar River. And on the other side of No. 1, at the far end of Turnbull Road, was the gleaming white Madras Club with its majestic dome looking out over the Adyar, which had been the heart of British colonial life.

The next morning I was picked up by a consulate car and whisked off to my new job. I callously — I later realized — left Joanne alone, and disconsolate, with baby Caroline and little Christopher and with nothing but our consulate Welcome Kit of dishes, utensils, cookware, and Michael and Martha's thoughtful collection of basic foods and milk products. Her first task was to hire a household staff. A western lifestyle in India required a large staff — cook (to shop daily at markets all over the city, then prepare meals), housekeeper, baby amah, sweeper, gardener, and gate guard. The first thing Joanne saw out the window that morning was a long line of people waiting patiently at the gate to apply for jobs. Overwhelmed by the throng, Joanne called to an attractive young woman standing in line and asked if she could take charge of baby Caroline. Quick-witted Jaya immediately took charge and cared for Caroline and Christopher then and for the next three years, while Joanne interviewed each of the applicants.

By the end of the morning, Joanne had hired a full retinue of servants. Most, if not all, were Untouchables, the lowest Indian caste now renamed Dalits ("Children of God") by The Great Soul, Gandhi. Baby amah Jaya cared for and formed strong bonds with Caroline and Christopher. Grandmotherly Leila, our cook, was able to prepare virtually anything we requested. She was a member of the minority Christian community, many of whom were, like Leila, Dalits who had converted from Hinduism to Christianity as a way to escape the life sentence of the caste system, since Christians were automatically removed from the Hindu caste hierarchy. Shy, gentle, always smiling Mary kept our house immaculately clean, despite the dust and the mold that pervaded Madras. Tall, hard-working Sampath (pronounced sahm-baht) kept our perfectly manicured lawn and flowers, kept the King Cobras at bay, and played lovingly with the children. Parvati swept our sidewalks and patio clean of the incessant dust. Handsome, brawny SP, our driver, deftly chauffeured Joanne in our Honda Accord through the chaotic streets of

Madras, weaving in and out auto rickshaws, cows, elephants, and hoards of pedestrians. On our return visit to Madras, now Chennai, last year in the spring of 2016, we had a moving reunion with SP, who had parlayed our small funding for a used vehicle into a large trucking company criss-crossing the State of Tamil Nadu. Finally, Mukund guarded our front gate in sync with a variable set of night guards.

We paid our servants considerably higher wages than other members of the foreign (mostly diplomatic) community, who protested that we were ruining the servant market in Madras. While salaries were abysmally low by western standards, we were nonetheless providing seven-eight very poor households with a livable income. Most Americans are uncomfortable with the presence of servants because it is not part of the prevailing American culture. But Joanne and I gallantly learned to accommodate this luxury and ended up spending much of our years abroad managing servants, who would incessantly come to us with every conceivable personal problem. Leila's son needed money to apply to university. Mary's small slum house burned down. Parvati's husband regularly beat her. We got involved and helped them emotionally and financially. Our wealthy and more servant-savvy Indian friends advised us not to get involved in the private lives of our household staff, since we would get sucked in deeper and deeper because the needs of the average Dalit are bottomless. But we did get involved and we helped them as much as we could. There is just so much to say about India. It is an endlessly fascinating country.

Q: Well let's talk. I am in no hurry. Who was our Consul General?

HUSKEY: Tim Hauser. Tim and Sandy lived just next door to us. They did not have children of their own, but were so welcoming and kind to us and our children. They lived in a huge walled compound with a lovely swimming pool overlooking the Adyar, which they invited us to use, and a wonderful clay tennis court, which Tim graciously shared with me. Each morning before work, I played with Chandran, our Dalit tennis grounds keeper, who was illiterate, dirt poor, and always barefoot, but could play tennis like a pro.

The elegant, centuries old Madras Club became the centerpiece of our life in Madras. It had been the heart of British colonial life in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when Madras was the capital of the British Raj. After Lord Cornwallis lost the Battle of Yorktown in 1781, he was dispatched to Madras as Governor General of India. Coincidentally, the new United States sent its very first overseas consul, outside of Europe, to Madras in the early 1790s, but a bitter and unforgiving Lord Cornwallis refused to receive him. Colonial Madras had broad boulevards lined with imposing, red sandstone Indo-Saracen buildings topped with grand cupolas. Now, 200 years later, most of these grand old buildings were in serious disrepair and well past their prime. But the beautiful, well-kept Madras Club had maintained its original luster and elegance. Once the heart of the Raj, it had become the meeting place of the Indian elite, with its grand ballrooms, olympic swimming pool and clay tennis courts. Ironically, that Club had been the epitome of British colonial *pucca* — “first class,” but effectively meaning “whites only,” since no Indians were allowed inside, except for servants, of course. In the half century since independence, however, it had completely “Indianized,” with a few “token” foreigners invited to join. The cream of the Indian elite — wealthy industrialists,

successful professionals and political leaders — all had memberships in the Madras club. We were privileged and delighted to be among those few token foreigners.

When we received an invitation to join, I went to the club for the requisite formal interview with the Board, wearing a navy blazer, white shirt, conservative tie, and gray slacks. After the interview, one of the members discreetly pulled me aside and said, “Dr. Huskey, you should realize that we don’t wear blazers in this Club. We only wear suits. We are quite formal, you know.” They had, it seems, out-Britished the British in their etiquette and formal attire, often including tuxedos at dinner. Despite that *faux pas*, the Board approved our membership, and the club became the center of our life in Madras.

Through the Madras Club we came to know the Madras elite, most of whom had personal ties to America through their own studies or their siblings’ or children’s. It was a tremendous professional boon for me to be a member of the Madras Club, because we became personal friends with a large swath of the social, industrial, professional and political leadership. We would see them daily. Joanne walked our children each afternoon to the Club, where they would play on the swings and slides. As they grew older, they swam in the pool and practiced *taekwondo* on the terrace with a group of children. We had dinner there many evenings in the formal dining room, or on the terrace overlooking the Adyar, or on the pool patio. This gave us a hint of the elegance of the Raj.

So, Stu, Joanne and I made many Indian friends through the Club. Whereas most of my colleagues at the consulate socialized mostly with the consular community, we found the joy of living in India was getting to know the Indian people, whether the Madras Club elite or people we met every day. They were so open, friendly and welcoming. We ended up having so many Indian friends and spent most of our time with them. The privilege of having a household staff enabled us to entertain representationally — I could invite virtually anyone to our home and they would come, because I was an American diplomat! And this, in turn, greatly benefited my work as a diplomat in South India.

When I first arrived in Madras, as in each country in which I served, I asked our USIA office for a print-out of our consulate’s International Visitors (IVs) to the U.S. (Note: The IV Program sponsors rising young leaders in every field on expense-paid one-month visits to the U.S. to meet people in their own field or specialty in multiple cities and states.) USIA prepared a 20+ page list of IVs by specialty and by each of the four southern states in our Consular District — Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Kerala. I then analyzed the IVs on the list – where they lived and what they were doing – and this became my most productive contact list on a wide range of issues: political, academic, commercial, cultural, etc. This was a quite special list, for it consisted of a rising Indian elite with personal ties to the U.S., who would likely be amenable to meeting with an American diplomat. And most, in fact, were delighted to be contacted by the very consulate that had sponsored their visit to America, and they usually held generally positive attitudes toward America. There were Chief Ministers of each state, leading politicians, newspaper editors and journalists, business leaders, cultural leaders and performers, and prominent academicians and authors. Several of the current Chief

Ministers, for example, had been targeted years earlier as a person-on-the-rise by our consular officers and sponsored on an IV trip to the U.S. Thus, they had something of a vested interest in India-U.S. relations, because they had been there, had seen the U.S. warts and all, and had been well received by Americans in similar professions. So, I had this huge data base of people I could readily meet and discuss the issues I was covering in South India and in U.S.-India relations. Many of them, to be sure, were also highly critical of, even angry at, America and what they saw as American imperialism, but still they were unfailingly polite and welcoming and tended to have a vested interest in good relations with the U.S. That list and the Madras Club were a wonderful entering wedge for understanding our Madras Consular District in South India.

Q: Absolutely. I would say the IV program is probably one of the most powerful arrows in our quiver.

HUSKEY: We often point out that people like Indira Gandhi, Golda Meir and Xi Jinping were IV alumnae, demonstrating how well our diplomats had identified young people on-the-rise. Actually, I believe Xi accepted the IV invitation but was unable to obtain Party permission to travel at that time, but I am not absolutely clear about that. I know that he did, in fact, visit Iowa and had a very good visit, because I recently talked with a former Iowa politician who met Xi during his Iowa stay and was later invited to visit President Xi in Beijing. Anyway, I rather creatively used this amazing source of contacts in South India, as, indeed, I did repeatedly through my FS career. Ironically, my fellow FSO's never saw IVs as a useful resource.

Q: No, you are absolutely right.

Anyway, I had been assigned as the Pol-Econ Officer in Consulate-General Madras, inheriting the position and the very office of the Pol-Econ Officer I had met in the USIA Library there twenty-two years earlier, in 1971. As the Pol-Econ Officer, I was the number two officer in the Consulate after the Consul General. I quickly found that most Indians in Madras were happy to meet for lunch or coffee. It was a real pleasure and privilege to be able to talk about everything with them — politics, economics, commerce, culture. So, I was just constantly collecting information and sending reports back to Washington about life and issues of importance in South India.

Q: How does South India fit into the Indian political system?

HUSKEY: As I mentioned, the Madras Consular District consists of the four southernmost states: Tamil Nadu with its capital at Madras; Andhra Pradesh at Hyderabad, Karnataka at Bangalore, and Kerala at Trivandrum. Each state has its own language — Tamil in Tamil Nadu, Telugu in Andhra, Kannada in Karnataka, and Malayalam in Kerala. But since most educated people speak English, a remnant of the British empire, I was able to function quite well in English throughout South India.

South Indian politics are infinitely fascinating because each state is its own political constellation. While Congress, the party of Nehru and his daughter Indira Gandhi, was

the largest national party and quite strong in all four states, it was being challenged in each state by state-centric parties — DMK and AIADMK in Tamil Nadu, the latter led by the fascinating former film star Jayalalitha; TDP in Andhra Pradesh, led by film star NTR; Kanata Dal and BJP in Karnataka, and the Communist Party in Kerala. I regularly traveled to the capitals and hinterlands of each state in order to understand its constellation. I was so fortunate to have a superb local staff of FSNs (foreign service nationals) in our fourth floor Pol-Econ suite of offices, each a specialist and language-fluent in one of the states: Natarajan for Tamil Nadu, Madhava Rao for AP, Lalitha for Karnataka, and Finney Jacob for Kerala. For the econ side of our work, we had MIT-educated SK, who adeptly covered all four states. It was such a pleasure meeting with the entire team each morning to discuss developments in each state and what we should be focusing on and reporting to Embassy New Delhi and Washington. Concerned that they might feel a conflict of loyalties between job and motherland, I stressed that we were working together to promote U.S.-India relations in every sphere — diplomatic, political, economic and commercial, cultural, and academic. I tried to accentuate our common national interests, because most Indians in the early nineties were supportive of good U.S.-India relations, in the aftermath of the cold war and the collapse of India's old Soviet ally.

The best part of my job was my wonderful staff, which was such a pleasure to work with. However, my large office on the fourth floor was located behind “The Line,” a heavy steel door that separated the secure executive suite where Consul General Hauser and I had our offices. This forced me to exit the secure area to meet with my team. Since the six of us met first-thing each morning, this separation was inconvenient and awkward. I stressed to them that this division did not mean a lack of trust in them, but was required for the secure communications that every diplomatic mission of every nation in the world must have.

For U.S.-Indian relations, this was a new day after years of distrust and estrangement during the Cold War, and we at ConGen Madras were playing a major part in promoting that relationship. The Pol/Econ team constantly organized visits for me to their home states, on which they accompanied, to meet with a broad range of people — Chief Ministers, political leaders, newspaper journalists, academics, business and cultural leaders. Almost no-one ever refused a meeting request. Again, many of these, or their siblings or children, had studied and lived in the U.S. It was a real privilege to be able to meet such a broad spectrum of prominent South Indians, so many fascinating people, making this the most enjoyable job I could imagine.

Q: What was the situation with the Tamils in Sri Lanka?

HUSKEY: That was a very challenging situation. A large number of Tamils had migrated across the fifty-mile wide Palk Strait separating Tamil Nadu from Sri Lanka, and settled in the northern part of the island. The years of oppression by the Sinhalese had prompted an independence movement led by the Tamil Tigers, the LTTE, under Prabhakaran, and a bloody civil war with the Sri Lanka government. Many people in Tamil Nadu were naturally sympathetic with the LTTE, and there were reports of

weapons trafficking across the strait to Sri Lanka. When Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi moved to improve ties with Sri Lanka by cutting off the flow of arms to the Tigers, they responded by assassinating him on his visit to Tamil Nadu in 1991. This shocked Tamil Nadu and appears to have reduced that support. Natarajan and I made several trips down the coast of Tamil Nadu. Sometimes we would rent a 1940s-vintage Ambassador car, which was still manufactured in India, to bring less attention as we travelled around the state. We would drive along the coast and stop at villages to meet with local leaders. I would usually inquire about LTTE presence in that region, but gingerly, since this was such a sensitive issue. Did they know of any Tiger training camps in the area? Had they heard of any arms trafficking to Sri Lanka? Occasionally, I did pick up reports of weapons trafficking, which I reported to Washington. The violent and bloody civil war continued through my whole assignment in Madras, 1993-1996.

Q: Sinhalese people.

HUSKEY: Yes, the Sinhalese, or Sri Lankans, are the overwhelming Buddhist majority of the Sri Lanka population. They run the government in Colombo and dominate the economy and military.

Q: Did we have any position on the civil war. I suppose we wanted to bring peace, but—

HUSKEY: Well, we had good relations with both India and Sri Lanka, both of which opposed to LTTE. As a matter of human concern, the U.S. wanted the war to stop, so our official position was to encourage talks between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE. But any real peace would require that Sri Lankans improve their treatment of Tamils. This was a problem with deep historical roots and deep social and ethnic differences that would not easily be resolved. The Sri Lankan government has since “resolved” the problem by totally defeating the Tamil Tigers, but the deep-seated roots of discontent have not been addressed.

One of the joys of serving as an American diplomat around the world was that I represented the United States of America, a great country with important values and interests, and with universal presence and import. Thus, I was, *ipso facto*, “important”! In Madras, or traveling to Bangalore or Hyderabad or down to Kerala, this meant I could meet with virtually anybody. I had *carte blanche* to meet with the Chief Minister, and sometimes the Governor, but the latter was only a figurehead position. I was privileged to know leaders of all the political parties, many of the leading industrialists, and the most prominent scholars and authors. I had an open door.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about the society in South India. What was being done about the caste system when you were there?

HUSKEY: India was in a period of major transition at the time of my tour in Madras. There were signs of progress, but the caste system was still very much alive, seventy-five years after Gandhi called for ending the system. All Indians know where they fit in that hierarchy and that affects their behavior and expectations. If you are Brahman, the

premier caste, the world is open to you and there are no limits. The lowest caste is no longer called Untouchable, but Dalit, or “the oppressed,” and there are extensive “Reservations” that reserve set numbers of seats in Congress or the Civil Service, for Dalits and other lower castes. But most of our friends in Madras were members of the economic and educational elites, which were dominated by Brahmins. They and their children were often educated in the U.S. or Britain. But things were changing, and the social media generation is changing even faster. The daughter of very close friends, a wealthy Brahmin couple, recently married a Dalit, a medical doctor, and our friends graciously accepted and welcomed him into the family. They even held one of those elaborate Indian weddings, replete with reams of dripping gold jewelry and ornaments. This would have been inconceivable a couple of decades ago when we were there.

Q: Wasn't there a problem with the Dalits, that a Brahmin couldn't touch anything they had touched? But had that pretty well died out by the time you were there.

HUSKEY: Well, it was receding, but there are disconcerting remnants, as we found with our own household staff.

Q: I was just thinking, your cooking was prepared by Dalits. Could a Brahmin eat the food they prepared?

HUSKEY: When we were there it was still transition. The educated Brahmins we knew would have been open and non-discriminatory, up to a point given the deep roots of caste. It has changed so much in just the three decades since we were there. Today, many of the very wealthy Indians and the political leaders, and even the intelligentsia and medical doctors, are Dalits. Many have studied in the U.S. and returned and founded successful high-tech corporations. Reminiscent of my native South, where the status of African Americans has changed dramatically over the past fifty years, and yet there is still residual racism.

Q: Well during the time you were there, what was the role of women?

HUSKEY: Fast changing, also. Women were very active all through society. Of course, Indira Gandhi had already been Prime Minister and Jayalalitha Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. It really seemed not that different from America. Joanne felt very comfortable there because women were so visible and active. There were so many professional women. But, of course, when you went outside of cities like Madras and Bombay, it was, and continues to be, very different, just as it is in much of the developing world. In small villages, women carry the water and do much of the work. You often see men sitting around drinking hooch, locally made liquor, and getting drunk. This is true in so many of the places I have served in Africa and Asia. Which is one reason, Stu, why the Department of State and USAID began focusing much of their development assistance through women's collectives. But, certainly, women in rural India continue to be second class citizens and harshly oppressed.

Q: The fires that kill wives who are accused of having affairs.

HUSKEY: If a woman does have an affair, the man or his family will sometimes kill her. Even though Indians no longer practice Sati — wife burning alongside the husband's body — they virtually do because widows are oppressed, abused, without rights, and live in poverty, especially in the countryside. The issue of rape, which is now finally coming out publicly — is widespread across India, especially among lower caste women.

Q: One of the things I felt in my dealing with Indians was that our two cultures are actually very similar in that we preach at each other.

HUSKEY: Good point, Stu. We Americans are not above preaching to other people.

Q: That is right and when you cross an Indian you get it back in return.

HUSKEY: Perhaps because of my USIA background I considered PD — Public Diplomacy — to be an important part of my work in South India. So, I spent a lot of time explaining U.S. policies and actions. I spoke at Rotary Clubs in the major cities and visited universities and met with students. They always asked hard, sometimes awkward, questions — for example, why did Nixon send an aircraft carrier into the Bay of Bengal in 1971 to block India from helping East Pakistan, now Bangladesh? I would try to explain the specific international situation at that time and why the U.S. did what it did. My answers were not always satisfying but my openness and willingness to listen was appreciated, and I believe this helped improve America's image in South India.

Q: That was when Pakistan was trying to subdue Bangladesh.

HUSKEY: Yes, and Nixon and Kissinger were on the side of West Pakistan, for Cold War reasons. Indians were very bitter about this. I was actually traveling in India at the time, December 1971, and vividly remember the anger and the anti-America diatribes I encountered then. So, when I gave speeches, I freely acknowledged that the U.S. had made its share of mistakes, but argued that, overall, the U.S. had been a very positive force on the world since WWII. Relative to India, I would stress the positive, focusing on U.S.-India trade, Indians studying and living in the U.S., and our shared democracy. I believed it was important for me to be out in public meeting people and presenting a public face for America in South India. I generally received quite good press coverage for these speeches.

I knew the leading journalists and reporters in South India, who were very smart and inquiring people. One of my closest contacts in Madras was Mukhund Pabmanabhan, a reporter for the national newspaper *Indian Express*. A man of great integrity and intelligence, Mukhund asked hard questions about American policy. Today, he is Editor-in-Chief *The Hindu*, the national newspaper of India. I learned from the journalists and they from me, just as I had with foreign correspondents in Beijing. More than once, I went to bed terrified that a reporter might twist my words and end my diplomatic career, but I kept dialogue open with the press because I believed this was important. It required a great deal of trust, trust

that worked both ways. I gave— and received — information to and from journalists over the years, while most of my FS colleagues detested reporters and would not touch them with the proverbial “ten-foot pole.” In my 30-year FS career, I was never once burned by a journalist.

Our Consulate in Madras also had an excellent USIA outreach program at the Consulate, including a strong Fulbright program and a wonderful USIA library. USIA brought in a steady stream of American cultural events, including many jazz groups like Herbie Hancock and others. Those were the good ole days, when USIA still promoted cultural and literary events.

All the while, of course, I had a secret weapon — Joanne, who was so outgoing, language fluent, and active in community work everywhere we served. The thesis of her memoir, *The Unofficial Diplomat*, is that representing America internationally is the responsibility of every American abroad, not just diplomats. And she did that in spades, in South India and in every country in which we served. She was often the best-known member of each of our posts, with the exception, of course, of the ambassador. As I may have said earlier, despite my importance and prominence as a U.S. diplomat, after six months I had become known as “Joanne’s husband.” In every city she was active in local theater. In Madras, she performed on stage in a number of plays, both American and Indian. The same later in Nairobi. She would get involved in NGOs and work with the local people. She was a tremendous benefit to have at my side, and quite frankly, as she argues in her book, her unofficial diplomacy was equally — if not more — important than my official diplomacy.

Q: Let’s talk about business there. When you say Bangalore, I think about two things. One is the so-called Bangalore torpedo which was a pipe bomb that was inserted to blow up fortifications, but then the other one is the business community. That was right at the beginning, wasn’t it.

HUSKEY: Yes, we arrived in Madras in 1993, just when India was first opening up from decades of top-down Nehruvian socialism, under reformist Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and Minister of Finance Manmohan Singh. Under Rao’s leadership, business began to percolate in India, as Rao and Singh pared back the heavy regulations that had long inhibited economic growth, so much so that even Coca Cola, which had been expelled from India twenty years earlier, returned to India and began building bottling plants and distributing Coke. This was an amazing change, because Coca Cola was the epitome of what Indians saw as American imperialism — the “Coca Colonization” of the world. With Rao’s economic reforms, entrepreneurialism was bursting at the seams in South India when we arrived. Indian students were streaming out of the IIT’s (Indian Institutes of Technology) into high tech startups in Bangalore.

ConGen Madras was intently focused on the burgeoning American business community in Bangalore, the emerging high tech capital of India two hundred miles west of Madras. Company after company was setting up camp there — Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, IBM, etc. U.S. business growth there was rapid and on a seemingly automatic trajectory.

Madras, however, was a tougher sell to U.S. business, because his once-splendid capital of the British Raj was something of a commercial backwater when we arrived there. Michael Keaveny's commercial team worked directly with the sporadic U.S. firms expressing interest in Madras, advising about Indian regulations and doing business in Tamil Nadu. For my part, I explained the local and national political situation and main issues to visiting American business people. When Dupont expressed tentative interest in building a large airplane tire manufacturing plant in Madras, after a failed effort in Goa on the west coast, we were ready to assist. The virulent opposition to Dupont by Goan environmentalists was a continuing repercussion of the 1984 Bhopal chemical disaster that killed several thousand Indians, which gave U.S. industry a black eye in India. I organized a series of meetings for Dupont engineers with leading environmentalists in Madras, most of whom vigorously opposed the plant. In their impressive presentations, the engineers convincingly demonstrated that the effluent from the Dupont plant would be cleaner than the inflow and that the plant would be one of the cleanest manufacturing facilities in all of India. The presentations defused the environmental opposition and enabled Dupont to construct its plant on the northern outskirts of Madras. This was the first large-scale U.S. investment in Madras, which helped pave the way for future investments.

Q: Now tell me going back to the time that you got there, what was the state of computers in the Consulate and what was happening in India?

HUSKEY: Well, 1993 just at the beginning of the internet age. Computers and the internet were just entering South India, mostly in Bangalore and Hyderabad. There was one communications officer in the consulate who was internet savvy, and he set up his own internet connection at home. This method of communication was amazing in a country where you still had to "book" overseas telephone calls and wait, in some cases, for a day or two for the connection to go through. When we arrived, there were no cell phones, but three years later when we departed, cell phones were appearing everywhere, as India literally leapfrogged over its dilapidated copper-wire infrastructure and went straight to the stars. Instead of having to upgrade their decrepit old system at a cost of billions of dollars, India turned to cell phones and, abracadabra, had world class communications. The California cell phone company Air Touch — the first customer of my wife Joanne's new firm Global Adjustments (GA) — was instrumental in launching the cell phone revolution in South India.

Q: Had they started, while you were there, having Indians serving in American call centers?

HUSKEY: Yes, these call centers were starting during our last year in Madras. India, of course, had the advantage of both an educated English-speaking population, a legacy of the British Empire, and an extremely low cost of labor. GA helped start the first call centers in Madras, training Indian graduates to understand American dialect, how to speak to Americans in everyday English, and how to discuss American culture, sports, and slang. There was, also, an explosion of data entry firms in Bangalore and Madras, with an endless supply of jobless English-speaking college graduates who could cheaply

enter data for American doctors, hospitals and businesses, returning the entries by the following morning.

Q: Well as the economic officer, what was the State Department interested in and what were you supplying them?

HUSKEY: Energy. With the surge in Indian business activity, there was a surging need for electricity, a market which Enron and other U.S. energy companies rushed to fill.

Q: Oh, yeah.

HUSKEY: American energy companies were pouring into India looking for places to build dams and power plants because of India's desperate need for energy. So, American businesses would come to the consulate seeking to understand the lay of the land in south India. Mike would cover the commercial side, and I would provide the political brief. More specifically, they needed to understand the economics and politics of each of the four southern states. And they needed to find partners. So, we worked together to bring American business into South India.

Q: Did we find that we were in competition with Germany and Great Britain?

HUSKEY: We were. One of the big energy firms Schlumberger — I believe it is German — was very active there, but actually Schlumberger's employees in Madras were all Americans. So, there was competition, but there was so much opportunity, so much need for electricity that there was room for all.

Q: You know looking at this objectively did you find that Americans worked well in the Indian environment compared to other people or not?

HUSKEY: Good question and the answer is yes, quite well. It was, of course, very individualistic. While many Americans are extremely sensitive to Indian culture, still others are tone deaf. Seeing this disconnect in Madras was one reason that Joanne founded Global Adjustments — to provide cross-cultural training and awareness at a time when U.S.-India commercial relations were beginning to rapidly expand. GA worked with American clients and individuals to teach them how Indians think, to explain about Indian etiquette and how to interact with Indians. Indian culture and daily life is quite different from America, and there are things that Americans do which are very offensive to Indians, and vice versa. It was essential for Americans to understand these differences so they could conduct business effectively in India. GA actually worked in both directions, training Americans how to work with Indians and vice versa, to bridge the huge cultural divide.

Q: You were there during the first Gulf War weren't you?

HUSKEY: No, we were in Beijing during the first Gulf War.

Q: Was there any particular incident or issue that caused problems for you? Did you have any demonstrations or that sort of thing?

HUSKEY: No, it was actually the reverse of that. When the U.S. decisively won the Gulf War, George H.W. Bush shocked the world by abruptly halting the American troop advance into Iraq after liberating Kuwait. This created enormous positive feelings toward the U.S. around the world, including in India. The early 90's were the halcyon days of America's international presence. Our democracy was fully functioning. Bill Clinton was leading America back into fiscal responsibility and a balanced budget. We had won the Cold War and the Gulf War, so that America was the preeminent nation, and for many the model nation. That was such a good time to be in India, and I was exceedingly fortunate to represent the U.S. there at that time.

As Pol-Econ officer I travelled all over South India monitoring elections, to ensure they were free and fair. And Indians actually welcomed foreign observers at their elections. I also spent a lot of time working on HIV Aids, which was becoming a major problem in South India in the early 90's. I worked with local doctors to help develop Aids awareness and treatment of Aids, helping doctors in South India make contact with American HIV specialists. I also worked with environmentalists in their effort to clean up Madras waterways, using the example of the Johnson Administration's clean-up of Potomac River, which, I pointed out, was once as polluted and putrid as the Adyar River.

There were, of course, specific challenges from time to time. One week when I was the Consulate Duty Officer, for example, I had to accompany the body of an elderly American man, who had died of a heart attack, to the crematory. It was quite disturbing, as I had never seen a human body consigned on a conveyor belt into an oven. On another Duty Officer occasion, a sailor on a U.S. destroyer out in the Bay of Bengal had an accident that severed one of his fingers. The U.S. Navy was at that moment flying him by helicopter to Madras. So, I quickly arranged with Apollo Hospital for a surgeon to accompany me in an ambulance to the airport to meet the helicopter. The sailor exited the helicopter holding his iced finger. On the way to the hospital, the surgeon prepared the finger for surgery. When we reached the hospital, he sewed the finger back on, and a few days later the sailor was helicoptered back to his destroyer. A couple of months later the Admiral of the Fleet sent me a beautiful hat emblazoned in gold leaf with the name of the destroyer to thank me for saving the young man's finger.

Q: How did the embassy in New Delhi fit into your operation?

HUSKEY: Embassy New Delhi under the Ambassador, Frank Wisner, was directly responsible for its own Consular District covering North India, and it coordinated the nationwide U.S. diplomatic presence in India through the embassy and the three Consulates General in Calcutta, now Calicut, covering East India; in Bombay, now Mumbai, covering West India; and in Madras covering South India. Ambassador Wisner visited Madras several times during my tour there, usually also visiting Bangalore to meet with the Karnataka Chief Minister and with the growing community of American high tech firms there. Otherwise, we were largely on our own. We read the reporting cables out

of Embassy New Delhi, but that involved the national government which had only an episodic effect on South India. We were like a consular fiefdom way down in South India.

Q: Little dukes.

HUSKEY: Yeah, we were like a mini embassy.

Q: I was Consul General in Naples and we had it very much that way. Did you have any particular visitors that stick in your mind?

HUSKEY: We did. In addition to the wonderful visiting American jazz musicians, authors, and scholars, we hosted Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown's visit to Bangalore.

Q: Later killed in Croatia.

HUSKEY: Yes in a tragic plane crash. Brown came to Bangalore, the high-tech capital of India, to wave the American flag of commerce. Most large U.S. high-tech companies had a presence there — Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Oracle, etc., though Microsoft had gone maverick and set up shop in Hyderabad. Michael and I flew to Bangalore to prepare the way for the visit and to meet Brown's airplane. As in Beijing with President Reagan, it was a moving experience when I saw the elegant sky blue 707 — an "Air Force One" when the president is aboard — first as a speck in the distant sky, growing larger, then gracefully landing with the American flag "flying" majestically on its tail. Serving thousands of miles from home, it was quite emotional to see this striking aircraft taxi down the runway to the stairway where we waited with the Governor and Chief Minister of Karnataka for the arrival. I felt, too, pride that I was representing a great nation.

Q: I know exactly what you mean. I think of that sometimes.

HUSKEY: At that time, in the aftermath of the Cold War, America was the preeminent nation in the world and the undisputed global leader. We had, to be sure, made mistakes — Vietnam and Iraq — but we were the global leader on so many issues — nuclear security, commerce and free trade, medical science and infectious disease, human rights, climate change. To have the Secretary of Commerce visit and represent America's commitment to free trade was a proud experience. I had the dubious honor of being asked to carry the Secretary's briefcase. Reminds me of my colleague Ted Andrews who several years later was given the singular honor of carrying Hillary Clinton's roll of Charmin everywhere she went during her visit to Kenya. Both were "above and beyond the call of duty" for an FSO.

Q: Well, I am looking at the time. This might be a good place to stop. Anything more you would like to talk about now?

HUSKEY: There are some other things, which I can mention next time.

Q: You can add some later, when you get the full transcript.

Q: Today is February 8, 2018, with Jim Huskey. We are picking up after a bit of a hiatus. Jim, where are we?

HUSKEY: We were talking about India. As I mentioned earlier, Madras was a commercial backwater when we arrived in 1993. Michael and I puzzled over the absence of Americans in Madras. There were just a handful of Americans living there outside of the consulate staff — one or two retirees and an American businessman named Glenn running a fishery south of Madras. We agreed that one reason Americans and American businesses avoided Madras was the absence of an American or international school. While Joanne and I were fortunate to find a wonderful Indian Montessori school called Abacus for Christopher, other consular officers had great difficulty finding schools, because local schools did not readily welcome foreign students. So, Martha, working with Joanne, took the initiative to begin investigating how to create an American school. They applied for and received a grant from the State Department to start the complex process of establishing a school.

On one of his visits to Madras, Ambassador Wisner came to our house for dinner, and Martha and Joanne told him what they were doing. He was absolutely delighted and clearly understood the importance of this effort, “You have got to go ahead on this. I will support you all the way in building an American School in Madras.” So, Martha and Joanne applied for and received a small grant from the State Department to get started, and the American School in New Delhi provided used textbooks and curriculum planning assistance. They began recruiting teachers and searching for a place to house the school. They found space in the most unlikely place imaginable, the Russian Cultural Center. The Russian Consulate had fallen on hard times in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, and desperately needed funds. The staff was not being paid. So, they agreed to rent space on the second floor of the Center, which became the temporary American International School of Madras (AIM). I spent several weekends building a playground — painting several long bamboo ladders in bright colors, and hanging them from trees to form a long interconnected set of monkey bars. I also installed badminton, tetherball and a number of large, brightly painted wooden boxes for the kids to climb on. None of this, of course, would have passed muster in any school district in the U.S., but we had to make-do. We inaugurated the new school in September 1995 with 18 students — two children from France, several from the UK, and the rest American.

Q: What has been the impact of AIM?

Well, AIM made Madras a more attractive place to live in and do business, and the American presence began to grow quickly, as more and more U.S. companies moved in. Last year, in 1916, the four of us were invited back to Madras, now Chennai, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of AIM, now called AISC, the American International School of Chennai. In place of 18 students in the Russian Cultural Center, AISC now has over one

thousand students studying on a beautiful campus with palm trees and flower gardens, modern brick buildings, and the last word in sports equipment and science and computer labs. About half of the students are American, the children of the hundreds of American families now living in Madras. There are also European, Japanese, Korean and other nationalities represented in the student body. So, our little American school played a major role in the transformation of Madras, now Chennai, into a major manufacturing and commercial center in India.

Similarly, my wife Joanne and her close friend Ranjini Marian founded Global Adjustments relocation company that also played an important role in the transformation of Madras. GA assisted Americans and other foreigners move to and work in Madras, trained Indians how to work with Americans in India and how to do business abroad in American and Europe.

Today, twenty years later, GA has grown into a large enterprise with offices in Bangalore, Hyderabad, Bombay (now Mumbai), New Delhi, Calcutta (now Calicut), and the home office still in Madras (now Chennai). GA was instrumental in Ford's decision to build its billion-dollar automobile assembly plant in Madras, instead of Pune. Joanne led a visiting delegation of Ford executives around Madras and convinced them that Madras would be a good place to set up shop. But the *coup de grace* was when Ford brought a group of spouses to look over Madras, and Joanne showed them the wonderful life we were living in Madras, and they voted hands down on Madras, which carried the day. Ten years later, Ford invited Joanne back to Madras to celebrate the tenth anniversary of its highly successful assembly plant in Madras. At the banquet, the Vice President of Ford pointed to Joanne sitting at the head table and said, "She is the reason Ford is in Chennai."

During our three years in Madras, 1993-96, the city began to undergo the transformation that would make it a commercial and industrial of India. Much of that transformation was due to the work of ConGen Madras, working in conjunction with the American School and Global Adjustments. When Joanne, Michael, Martha and I departed Madras in summer 1996, the national newspaper of India, *The Hindu*, bade us farewell in its lead editorial thanking us for our years of service in South India. When we visited for the American School anniversary in 2015, we were amazed to see the dynamic city that Chennai had grown into, now one of India's leading manufacturing and high tech centers. In 1993 Madras manufactured zero cars. Today it is the automobile manufacturing center of India. How did that happen? Well, put your video camera in reverse. It happened because Toyota built a billion-dollar assembly plant in Madras. Why did Toyota build that plant? Well, Toyota followed in the footsteps of Hyundai's huge new assembly plant. Why did Hyundai go to Madras? Well, Hyundai followed in the footsteps of Ford. So, why did Ford go to Madras? Well, because Madras had a helpful U.S. consulate General, a vibrant American School, and a Global Adjustments that assisted relocation, but, perhaps most tellingly, because Joanne convinced the Ford wives that Madras was the place to be. The result: Madras/Chennai is now the leading car manufacturing city in India, a major high tech hub and the locus of a large American community.

Q: How did the Bhopal tragedy affect the growth of American business in India? Had that happened before and what corporation was behind that?

HUSKEY: Because of the 1984 United Carbide chemical spill that killed thousands of people and gave American manufacturing a black eye in India, many people in Madras instinctively opposed Dupont's interest in building an airplane tire factory near the city. So, after meeting with the Dupont advance team when Dupont first expressed interest in Madras, I organized a series of meetings for Dupont engineers to explain the proposed plant to local environmental leaders. The engineers convincingly demonstrated that DuPont would be a responsible and environmentally conscious manufacturer, and that the effluent from the plant would be cleaner than the influx. With the environmental opposition defused, DuPont built its billion-dollar factory, followed by Ford's billion-dollar assembly plant, then American company after American company followed suit. Chennai is now a major center of American business in India with a large American presence in the city.

Q: Jim, I was reading in the Economist not long ago about developments in India, saying that foreign firms, American and others, look at India as the second largest population in the world, but note that the income distribution in India is bad, in that there isn't much of a middle class.

HUSKEY: Well, actually there was already a rapidly growing middle class in India by the mid-90's when we were there. Today, the middle class is huge, but there is also a vast wealth divide that is politically destabilizing, with vastly wealthy people and impoverished masses. But, of course, we have an equally dangerous wealth divide in America, as does China. It is interesting to recall that after WWII India and China were held up as examples for democracy and communism. But neither country really developed until Deng Xiaoping and Narasimha Rao launched their respective reforms in 1978 and 1991, moving the two countries beyond Maoist egalitarianism and Nehruvian socialism and both countries began to develop rapidly. China may already be the largest economy in the world, and in fifteen years or so, India will be the second or third largest.

Q: Well, two factors when you deal with India. First, how did you deal with corruption?

HUSKEY: The issue of corruption did not affect us. U.S. businesses are prohibited by the FCPA (Foreign Corrupt Practices Act) from paying bribes abroad for commercial advantage, and in my experience most were very conscious of the legalities and careful to abide by them. Had I been confronted with any cases of corruption by U.S. businesses, I would have "done my duty" and reported back to Washington. But I found U.S. businesses to be aware of the FCPA and careful not to cross its boundaries. This often put them at a disadvantage because some other nationalities were able to pay bribes by their home countries. I would occasionally hear American businessmen lament that French or other nationals were allowed by their home countries to pay bribes and that these were even tax deductible. To my knowledge, however, overseas bribery is illegal in France as in America. Certainly, the extent to which other nations were more lax in allowing their nationals to engage in bribery abroad would put U.S. businesses at a disadvantage. But I

believe that our FCPA paid off in the long run, because it created a sense of trust in U.S. business that, in turn, benefited U.S. business. In my experience, U.S. businesses tended to do quite well overseas.

Q: Sort of tied to that is the Indian bureaucracy. I remember even Bahrain, when I was serving in Dharan, we would go into offices run by Indian merchants and see piles of dossiers on desks. Did you find this a significant problem?

HUSKEY: Not for me as a diplomat, because all of the everyday purchases at our consulate were handled by our FSN staff and we didn't face that. I did face this 25 years earlier when I was traveling around India as a student and would have to wait in long lines at banks or government offices for approval stamps.

Q: Were you able to make any dent in that system or was it changing?

HUSKEY: Things were changing because of a demand at the top. There were so many Indians returning from America and other nations and starting computer and internet companies and becoming quite wealthy. With their American experience, they were intolerant of the old corrupt ways of doing business and found the Rao-Singh governments more supportive. Locally, they would pressure politicians and Chief Ministers to clamp down on corruption and bribery, because that was hurting India as a place of business. So, I think India has changed a great deal, in part from "osmosis" from the American example.

Q: Well, when did you leave India?

HUSKEY: We departed in summer 1996. When I was bidding on positions in the previous fall, I was particularly interested in a position in the Political Section at Embassy Nairobi. Africa and Kenya would be an interesting experience for our family. Joanne and I were very uncertain, however, because we had heard horror stories about rampant crime in Nairobi. Around the time I was bidding, a British diplomat in Nairobi was hijacked and killed. So, Joanne was understandably leery about taking our two young children to Kenya with its rampant crime. I called PolCouns Alan Easton who had just transferred to Embassy New Delhi from Nairobi, where he had served as PolCouns under Ambassador Smith Hempstone

Q: I have interviewed Smith Hempstone.

HUSKEY: Hempstone is certainly a fascinating man. Anyway, over the phone with Joanne and me, Alan and his wife Caroline waxed positive about serving and living in Kenya. They pointed out that there were similar high crime rates in Washington, D.C. If you are careful, they said, you will be fine. They emphasized what a beautiful and fascinating country Kenya is — the wildlife, the tribes, the colonial history. They were so positive and encouraging that we decided to go ahead and bid Nairobi. Alan strongly supported my bid with Nairobi DCM Tim Foster, who then offered the position to me. So, Joanne and I left India in July '96 and transferred directly west across the Arabian

Sea to Kenya via home leave, arriving in Nairobi in mid-August for an incredibly fascinating three years. Nairobi was “the best of times and the worst of times” — the incomparable safaring, the wonderful people of Kenya, the amazing tribes, the fascinating international community, the curious “White Kenyans” (Brits who remained after independence), and the near perfect climate in Nairobi. But, then, there was August 7

The *piece de resistance* for me was the vibrant political scene as Kenya sought to move out from under the autocratic government of Daniel Arap Moi into full-fledged democracy. When we arrived, Kenya was an authoritarian state with political parties heavily restricted. Shortly after we departed three years later, Kenya had its first free and fair presidential election. We played a decisive role in this transition. Just as we made a difference in India, so did we make a difference in Kenya. The similarities between the two countries was striking. Both had been British colonies, and English was widely spoken in both, so that I did not need to spend the requisite year studying either Tamil or Swahili, because the educated people in both countries spoke excellent, locally accented English. Our three years, 1996-99, were as pivotal for Kenya as were our three years in India, 1993-96, and our three years in China, 1988-91. Once again, “the right place at the right time” . . . well, making allowance for the horrific August 7, 1998 bombing of Embassy Nairobi.

Q: What was your job?

HUSKEY: I was the PolOff assigned to cover domestic politics in a large Political Section of seven or eight FSOs. Our PolCouns, Marilyn Jackson, was a dynamic African-American who seemed to know everybody in Nairobi. Being African-American gave her full entry into Kenyan society, although many African-Americans had a difficult time in Nairobi because they felt some Kenyans looked down on them, or, more to the point, accorded them less respect than they did to white diplomats. But Marilyn did not have any problems in this regard and was a superb diplomat. She made sure to include me in many of her lunches and other meetings with Members of Parliament, government officials and political leaders, so that I got up to speed quickly, and in a couple of weeks was producing useful political reports back to Washington. I met all kinds of people through Marilyn, and this was an incomparable introduction to Kenya.

As domestic PolOff, I observed numerous elections across Kenya. Usually Political FSN Edwin Omori and I would travel by Land Rover to an election site, meet with election officials and local political activists, then observe the polls on election day. My highly visible presence — I would fly an American flag on the front bumper — alerted election officials to the presence of outside observers (which my governor, George Wallace, used to call “Outside Agitators,” and which is exactly how I was made to feel, at least by the government side).

I coordinated election observation with like-minded embassy diplomats, notably the British High Commission, and the French, German, Italian, Scandinavian, Australian, New Zealand, Japanese and South Korean embassies. (Since Kenya, like India, was a

member of the British Commonwealth, its embassies were designated High Commissions and its ambassadors High Commissioners.) We would stagger our election observation trips to ensure we covered as many counties and polling sites as possible in an election.

I made a special effort to observe elections in tribal clash-prone areas. This foreign diplomatic presence seemed to motivate County Magistrates and local police to more aggressively intervene and stop the violence. Occasionally, I would coordinate an observation trip with “Mac” McLaughlin, a very savvy PolOff at the British High Commission, which sat on a hill overlooking the U.S. Embassy at city center near Parliament and government ministries. Mac and I would caravan to elections in our Land Rovers flying the Union Jack and Stars and Stripes. We would meet with the County Magistrate, the local Election Supervisor, and the local Chief of Police, on our way to observe the election, which appeared to have a magical effect on the polling stations that we visited.

Q: What was the instigator for these tribal clashes?

HUSKEY: It varied by tribe and region from ancient tribal enmity, to wealthy ranchers egging on clashes, to simple ethnic politics. When I arrived in Kenya, I realized there was a marathon race between an emerging national consciousness and atavistic tribalism. Kenya had been independent since 1962 and young people were growing up to be Kenyans first, rather than tribal. But remnant tribal identity continued, with people identifying as Kikuyu or Luo or Kalingen or Maasai or any one of another 20-30 tribes. These two identities — national and tribal — were in constant flux and competition, sometimes violent clashes.

My most memorable election was in the hills of “Luoland,” on the western slopes of the vast Maasai Mara game preserve. I was driving on a dirt road between two ranges of hills when a cloud passed overhead, which I quickly realized was a swarm of arrows. Arrayed on the eastern hillside was a mass of Maasai warriors shooting arrows and, on the other, Kissi warriors with rifles shooting back with deadly accuracy. People along the road, who I believe were Kissi, claimed the Maasai were using poison arrows. I drove past the melee to a police station in the next village, where I urged the station chief to intervene in the fight. They sent a small force to break up the fighting. But people died in that purely tribal clash. Tribal brawls still occur, most recently in the 2007 presidential election, so it is an open question which identity will prevail, national or tribal. When a Kenyan wins the Boston Marathon, however, he wins as a Kenyan, not as a Maasai or a Luo.

In addition to covering domestic politics, I was also the Human Rights Officer, reprising my earlier assignments as HRO in Beijing and Madras. There were many active human rights issues in Kenya, so I organized a human rights observer group of the same likeminded embassies. We met together each month in alternating embassies to discuss the human rights situation and to coordinate our coverage of human rights. At that time, Koigi Wamwere, Kenya’s most famous political dissident, was in prison and on trial for his life. So, our HR group coordinated coverage of his trial in order to make our presence constant and highly visible, which clearly improved the attitude of the trial judge. Each

year I drafted the Human Right Report on Kenya, in which I hit hard on the prevalence of human rights violations in Kenya, including political prisoners, political party restrictions, police violence and oppressed labor unions.

My portfolio covering domestic politics and human rights was both compatible and mutually reinforcing, since Kenya was a limited democracy with President Daniel Arap Moi running the country with a proverbial “iron fist.” There were other political parties but they were tightly restricted. The other side of the political coin was the systemic violation of human rights, which I also covered.

Q: During the time you were there what was the situation along the Somali border?

HUSKEY: Somalia was in free fall then, and its chaos and violence were bleeding into eastern Kenya. In early 1999, I traveled to Garissa and Wajir, the main towns of Kenya’s Northeastern Province bordering Somalia. The best way to reach these remote towns was in the twice-weekly “quat run” by a rickety square-bodied propeller aircraft from little Wilson Airport. The body of the plane was filled with stacks of quat on which I, and the Somali passengers eying me with sullen curiosity, sat for the duration of the harrowingly bumpy flight that instilled no confidence we would safely land. From time to time passengers would reach down to retrieve a handful of quat, the semi-narcotic plant that is chewed like tobacco or used to make tea. The purpose of my visit was to get a fix on the security situation in the province in the aftermath of the Embassy Nairobi bombing the year before. Jihad terrorism had not yet taken hold there, though there had been reports of scattered attacks on civilians. Today, of course, that threat has metastasized into a regional terrorist threat, so that the beautiful Muslim island of Lamu is now closed to tourism because of Al Shaba terrorism.

Q: What was your life like in Kenya?

The great joy and privilege of living in Kenya were the wildlife, the grand vistas, and the safariing. On weekends, we would drive our four-wheel-drive to the Nairobi game park just south of the city, where we would view prides of lions, occasional leopards and cheetahs, hulking rhinos, and great herds of zebra, gazelles, elephants, and giraffes. Our nine-year-old Christopher and six-year-old Caroline became adept at spotting wildlife, including the rare cheetah that I could never spot.

Q: A member of the cat family, they often slink around and have those spots.

HUSKEY: They have excellent camouflage, but Christopher and Caroline could zero in on them camouflaged in the bush. Every month or so, we drove out to the majestic Rift Valley, the Kenya section of the great indentation extending from South Africa to Israel, with its vast collection of wildlife. We drove north to Lake Nakuru at the foot of Menengai Volcano, with its vast cloud of flaming pink flamingoes. We spent weekends driving west to the great Maasai Mara game preserve and south to Tsavo Game Park at the foot of snow-capped Mt. Kilimanjaro, and north to Mt. Kenya and Ilinguisi, home of

Sambura warriors. Really, all over Kenya. The game parks were the special privilege and joy of living in Kenya.

We always chose different religious denominations in each place we lived, and in Kenya it was a local Catholic Church run by Irish nuns. They were highly irreverent nuns, wild and wonderfully non-dogmatic. I suspect the Pope would have been horrified by their pragmatism in working with the local tribes. On even the most sensitive issues, they honored the local culture. As a result, they were highly effective and played a very important role in human rights monitoring across Kenya.

Q: On human rights and other matters, what part did tribalism play?

HUSKEY: Well, politics, human rights and tribes were interwoven, because many political parties were basically tribal. Political repression and political prisoners were usually focused on members of the opposition party. Another major political issue in Kenya was rampant corruption. I remember once driving down a pot-holed dirt road in the Kamba tribal lands in the wilderness east of Nairobi to meet with the local Chief, who pointed to the road I had just driven: "This beautiful paved road was funded by the World Bank." Surprised, I responded, "But I don't see any paving, just holes." "The paving is there, on that hill," he laughed, pointing to a large mansion on a near hilltop. "It was built with World Bank highway funds by our MP" (Member of Parliament). This was quite typical of the rampant corruption in Kenya. I asked friends who worked in the World Bank if the Bank would be willing to hold back funding until the government cracked down on corruption, since such questionable funding would only fuel further corruption, but the Bank apparently has its own internal demands. Anyway, corruption was a huge problem in Kenya.

There is some movement forward in Kenya, much of which comes from foreign returned students. When Kenyan students go abroad to Britain or the U.S., who return to Kenya with a different mentality and sense of business ethics and demand change.

Q: Well, what was in it for us. I mean what were American interests in Kenya?

HUSKEY: In those days we had only limited commercial interests. Coca cola had a big processing plant in Nairobi, but our overall commercial stake in Kenya was quite small. Promoting democracy and human rights played a more prominent part in our foreign policy toward Kenya. Through my 30 years in the Foreign Service, the U.S. stood for democracy, free trade, human rights and religious freedom. These were core principles that ran independent of national interests. Perhaps because the U.S. had so few commercial interests there, we could afford to focus primarily on principles, including human rights, religious freedom, and anti-corruption.

Q: While you were there was Moi still Chief of State?

HUSKEY: Yeah, he was president the whole time I was there.

Q: How stood he towards the United States?

HUSKEY: He seemed to become more and more resentful. Earlier, Moi had been favorable toward the U.S, but he greatly disliked Amb. Hempstone, who pushed relentlessly for free elections, human rights and freeing political prisoners, core HR issues. Then Hempstone was followed by Aureal Brazil and then by my ambassador Pru Bushnell. I was there for Pru's full three years. She was relentless. She would go into meetings with Moi and read out the list of political prisoners that I had prepared. The more she pushed, the more Moi grew irritated with her. I am sure he dreaded her office calls. She would ask for a meeting and he would only grudgingly agree. She always brought a long list of issues — unfair elections, political prisoners, etc. The more she pushed, the more resentful he grew. I also worked closely with Pru on her ambassadorial self-help grants.

Q: Yes, small amounts of money.

HUSKEY: Yes, usually just seven or eight thousand dollars. Peanuts compared with USAID or World Bank project funding. But highly effective — dollar for dollar, much more effective, I believe. We had more than 25 of these small development projects spread across Kenya. When I traveled with Pru, we always included visits to Ambassadorial Self-Help Projects. And they were amazing projects. We visited one in a remote village north of Mount Kenya, in which we had given a grant of \$8000 to a women's collective. We had, by the way, been concentrating our development grants increasingly on women, because they tended to use the money more efficiently.

Q: In most societies, it is the women who do the work while, the men sit around and drink and smoke.

HUSKEY: Yes, the women were focused on the welfare of their children, so they were intensely and personally involved in the development projects. Anyway, we had given this grant to a collective of women, who used the money to buy foot-pedal — in the absence of electricity — sewing machines along with a supply of cloth. The women started sewing school uniforms, which they sold in far-off Nairobi. The money they made was invested in more cloth and machines, then they started distributing some of the profits to the members, who used it to build brick houses to replace their mud hovels, and to pay school tuition for their children. So, this single grant materially improved the lives of whole families, and women from other villages heard and came to inquire about the project. We visited another small village on Lake Victoria, just west of Kisumu. The women's collective there had purchased two oxen with their grant, which they used to plow their fields, replacing their own human labor. They then enlarged their field and grew their income. When they were not using the oxen, they rented them out to women in a neighboring village. These small self-help grants started little micro-enterprise prairie fires scattered randomly across Kenya. It was a joy to work on those projects because they had such a visible impact on the villages, more so, I believe, than some of the very expensive development projects of USAID and the World Bank.

Q: Speaking of human rights issues and self-help development projects, were we the only embassy doing this or were others?

HUSKEY: The Scandinavians were very active with micro-enterprise projects, as were the British. In fact, most of the liberal democracies, or “likeminded” embassies, were active on both development projects like ours and human rights monitoring. We took the lead on human rights and election observing, but the like minded were right in step with us.

Q: Well did the troubles in some of the neighboring countries — Somalia, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Tanzania. — have an effect on Kenya.

HUSKEY: Rwanda had been particularly destabilizing for the region. As Deputy Secretary of State, Ambassador Bushnell took the lead on the U.S. response to the genocide in Rwanda. She pressed hard for America to intervene militarily to stop the genocide, but the Clinton administration and Secretary Albright were unwilling to get involved. Clinton later stated that not getting involved was his great mistake. Later, in Kenya, Pru was extremely active and outspoken on human rights issues, to the chagrin of Moi. So, as the embassy’s HR Officer, I had strong front office support for my work. One Saturday afternoon, I went to a park to observe a demonstration protesting, I believe, police violence in the slum area of East Nairobi. The police were lined up in full force on one side of the park while the demonstrators were protesting on the far side. I was just hovering around the center watching. My presence as the only obviously non-Kenyan seemed to anger the police, whom it apparently limited. I gave my embassy name card to one of the police officers, identifying me as First Secretary of the U.S. Embassy. The officer in charge strode up to me shaking his finger in my face, “You should not be here. You are interfering in our domestic affairs.” The next morning, “The Nation,” the national newspaper, had a large photograph of me in the center of the front page standing with my arms folded as the police officer angrily jabbed his finger at me. It was a shock to wake up and see myself emblazoned on the front page. I expected to be at least chastised, but the ambassador and the embassy did not appear to mind, and I did not get reprimanded for “interfering in Kenya’s internal affairs.”

Q: Do you want to talk about the bombing?

HUSKEY: I guess I can talk about it. I would need to set the stage.

Q: Is there anything else we should talk about first? We don’t have to go there yet.

HUSKEY: What time is it now?

Q: It is 11:30.

HUSKEY: So, we have more time. One of the more interesting facets of Kenya is its British colonial heritage. There are still so many “White Kenyans” living there. These are the progeny of Brits who migrated to Kenya in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and

built large coffee and tea plantations and vast cattle ranches. Many were the younger sons of British landed gentry and aristocrats — earls and barons — usually the landless younger sons, who remained in Kenya after independence in '62. And many now hold Kenyan citizenship and are called “White Kenyans.”

Q: I was going to mention the renowned Kenyan “Happy Valley.”

HUSKEY: Yes, there were still remnants of the fabled Happy Valley crowd present in Kenya. Living there really gave a sense of that earlier era in the 30's and 40's, because there were so many of these old White Kenyans around, who vividly remembered those extravagant years and loved to recall the shenanigans of the Happy Valley Crowd.

Q: Then, there was the old joke, “Are you married, or are you from Happy Valley?”

HUSKEY: Exactly. I mentioned that Joanne was active in the theater in every country in which we served. In Kenya she performed in a lot of plays, most notably in “White Mischief,” a mystery drama about the 1942 murder of Lord Errol, which has never been solved. This celebrated crime struck at the heart of the Happy Valley civilization, of which Errol was a leading light. Everyone in Kenya knows the story of the murder of Lord Errol, and many around the world because of the fascinating movie, “White Mischief.” So, Joanne and Dick Buckley, Pro Bushnell's dapper husband, crafted a dinner theater in which the audience played the police and was tasked with solving the murder. Joanne played Alice de Janze, the beautiful and wildly promiscuous Chicago Armour heiress and one of Errol's many lovers. She played her part so well that she was more often than not accused of being the murderess. Her theatre group took the play all over Kenya — up to Mt. Kenya and down to Karen at Karen Blixen's famous farm. Elderly White Kenyans would leave their ranches to attend and relive the colonial Kenya they missed. Some actually knew Alice or Josh or their various lovers. So, Joanne and her group of merry players were performing a play about their own history. It was a very special way for us to get to know that fascinating side of Kenya, which was fast fading into history, and is gone now.

Q: What was the crime situation in Nairobi when you were there?

HUSKEY: Not good. From time to time, there would be home robberies and car hijackings of foreigners, not just westerners because there is a large population of Asians, mostly Indians, who settled in Kenya and South Africa during the colonial era. They are now very successful business people and medical doctors and, thus, prized crime targets. They and the international business and diplomatic communities had homes surrounded by high walls. Thieves would climb over walls and break into homes, so most houses had “cages” on the second floor, with prison-like bars across the stairway to keep the raiders on the first floor until security forces could arrive. Safe upstairs in their cages, families would be physically safe while intruders ransacked their houses. Our Defense Attache, Brigadier General Dan Pike, lived in a large house with a big yard surrounded by a high wall. One night a gang of men climbed over the wall and shot up the windows of the house with machine guns. They fired up the stairway but could not reach the second floor

where Dan and family were hiding under a bed. The Marine Security Guards arrived quickly in response to Dan's walkie-talkie call, and chased away the gang, leaving Dan with quite a cleanup on his hands. Several men broke into the home of a good friend of ours, head of the Coca Cola boating plant in Nairobi. They forced their way into "the cage," threw him and his wife against the wall, and made off with their jewelry and money. Fortunately, they were not harmed. So many cars were hijacked, that people started attaching GPS devices under their cars so the stolen cars could be tracked. When they realized this trick, the hijackers started demanding "Where is your GPS?" Drivers then began attaching a second GPS, which is where the cycle of hijack defense stood when we departed in 1999. But we actually never had any problem. When we drove somewhere at night, we would drive fast and never slow down. Insecurity was the downside of living in Kenya, but it wasn't intolerable. We learned to live with it. Our three years in Kenya were actually quite wonderful . . . except for one day in the summer of 1998.

At 10:00 on the morning of August 7, 1998, Joanne drove downtown to the embassy to take eight-year-old Christopher and five-year-old Caroline to see the embassy doctor in the Medical Unit in the basement of the embassy. She parked in the rear parking lot by the rear entrance gate next to a strange truck waiting for the gate to open. She and the children walked to the pedestrian gate, which a visibly flustered guard opened for them. Christopher waved to the man in the truck, who turned out to be the al Qaeda terrorist and did not respond. Joanne led the children down the ramp into the garage, through the steel door into the basement, and down the hall into the doctor's office. Moments later, they were blown to the floor by an 800-pound bomb. They managed to survive the bomb blast because, being in the basement, the path of the blast went just over their heads. Joanne groped and found the children in the pitch darkness and pulled them over debris and bodies into the dark hall toward a shaft of light she spied at the far end of the corridor. She pushed them through that opening into the garage, and they ran up the ramp directly into the wall of flames, then turned left and ran to the south corner of the building.

Q: Where were you?

HUKSEY: At the moment of the blast, I was in the ambassador's office on the fourth floor at the weekly Country Team meeting of embassy section chiefs. The Team usually met in "The Tank," the secure room in the center of the building. But this particular morning we were meeting in the ambassador's office. I never learned the reason for the change, but it was a life-saving change for all of us. I was attending the County Team meeting because Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Michael Marine was on Home Leave in the U.S., and my boss PolCouns Lucian Vandenbrook was serving as Acting DCM and I was Acting PolCouns in his stead, another life-saving change. Lucian was running the meeting because Ambassador Bushnell was in a meeting with the Minister of Labor in the Bank of Commerce building next door, directly across the rear parking lot. We were sitting in a circle of chairs when we heard a distant bang or popping sound. It sounded like a car backfiring to me, so I did what I was trained to do as a PolOff — I stood and ran to the window to see what was happening in the street below. The Assistant Defense Attache was sitting next to me and did what he had been trained to do — duck and cover.

As he dove for the floor, he reached up and grabbed my arm and pulled me down with him. So, when the bomb exploded seconds later, I was on the floor and the brunt of the blast went over my head. The 800-pound bomb hit with an indescribable impact that still echoes after twenty years. I can still feel it reverberating inside.

The blast threw us all to the floor, shattered the furniture and blew out the windows. But it was the smell, the acrid odor of evil, that I remember from that moment. I stood to find several colleagues injured. We stumbled to the stairwell, which was covered in rubble so that we had to carefully work our way down the steps. At each floor, colleagues merged into the stairwell, injured, bloody, crying. As we worked our way down, it struck me that we were filing down the stairs with the order of our fire drill two weeks earlier.

The damage worsened with each floor. I grew increasingly desperate, because I knew that Joanne and the children were waiting for me in the doctor's office four flights below. Reaching the first floor, I ran into a wall of debris blocking the way down to the basement. I was stunned, shattered. I pushed through the splintered front door, down the front staircase into the parking lot, and ran as fast as I could along the 8-foot high iron spiked fence surrounding the embassy to the south corner of the building. Rounding the corner, I ran into a wall of flames at the back of the building, a towering brilliant orange column. I froze. Nothing could have survived that. There was nothing left. It was over. I just stood there, frozen in anguish.

Moments later, the silhouette of a little girl in a dress bounded around the corner of the building crying "Daddy, Daddy." Caroline. Just behind her, the silhouette of a little boy, Christopher. Then, moments later, Joanne stumbled around the corner. She pulled them along the inside of the iron fence to the front of the building where I was desperately trying to pull the bars apart. My colleague Kevin Richardson came running over to help and somehow Kevin and I, out of sheer desperation, pulled the thick iron bars apart, enough to pull Caroline through, then Christopher. We kept pulling and were finally able to roughly pull Joanne through the bars. Crying, we hugged each other tightly. Then I shouted over the din, "We've got to get away from here." We ran down Kenyatta Street toward the Hilton Hotel, and after one block I spied an embassy van making its way back to the embassy. I stopped the driver and ordered him to turn around and take Joanne and the children home. As Joanne has already described to you, when they reached home, she washed and bandaged the children, then sat them in front of the television and played video after video of the Brady Bunch to distract them from the horror they had just experienced and restore a sense of normality.

With Joanne and the children headed away from harm's way, I ran back to the embassy. Colleagues were still streaming out bloody, screaming, crying. There were bodies in the street and crowds were quickly gathering across the street watching in horror. Many who stumbled out of the building fell to their knees praising God for saving their life. I thought at the time how odd that was, because if God had saved these people then he had chosen not to save others, a theological conundrum that repeatedly came back to haunt me. Lucian, as Acting DCM, was at the front of the building directing the first recovery steps. When he saw me he shouted, "Jim find out who is still in the building." So, I

grabbed one of the blizzard of papers swirling in the air — turned out to be a classified “SECRET” CIA document — and began writing down the names of everyone I could see, organized by section — Pol, Econ, Defense, Consular, Admin, and so on. I collared several colleagues to assist and we quickly developed a list of those who made it out of the building, which we used to triangulate on who might still be inside. Then we joined those inside the destroyed building to pull out people, both injured and dead. That is what I did for the rest of the day — stumbling in and out, in and out, in and out of the building.

That night, after hours of digging and removing, I finally reached home. Joanne was waiting and told me about the children, and I told her about my horrendous afternoon. As we were sitting in the living room, she asked what the piece of paper sticking out of my breast pocket was. I pulled it out and it was the bank check I had filled out that morning to cash at the second floor bank window before meeting Joanne and the children for lunch in the basement. Everybody in that line was killed.

Joanne, of course, had her own story to tell.

Q: Yes, we have that on tape.

HUSKEY: We and others in the building survived because of that one courageous guard, who protected the embassy at the risk of his own life. Amazingly, he survived by falling behind a concrete barrier a split second before the explosion. Had that guard opened the gate and admitted the truck, the bomb would have exploded in the garage and the upward blast would have killed every person in the building. Instead it exploded in the parking lot in the back, destroying the embassy and killing hundreds of people in the street and surrounding buildings.

Our family of four was fortunate beyond belief. The chances that a family of four in different parts of the building could have survived that massive bomb blast were virtually zero. But I have always refrained from calling our amazing survival “miraculous,” as many did, otherwise how to explain the dead and wounded. The killing field was utterly random, survival serendipitous. The only other family in the building, Julian and Jay Bartlett, were both killed. One colleague standing at the water fountain died. Another, entering the restroom just steps away, survived. Slicing through the building in a split second, the bomb traced its path in soot on floors and walls. As we removed bodies later, you could vividly see the swirl of the bomb blast emblazoned on the walls, a lethal artwork in black swirl on white. You could see where the bomb hit and killed from the path of its waves. You could see where this person standing in the check-cashing line was killed. You could see where that person who had just turned the corner into another hallway survived. It was purely serendipitous with no theological rationality. My A-100 classmate Michelle O’Connor, sitting at her desk on the second floor, was killed, leaving two small children. Her Admin Section bore the brunt of the embassy dead and wounded. So many wonderful people died in the bombing. So many — twelve in the embassy and over two hundred on the street and in an adjoining building that pancake-collapsed.

Q: How would you describe the aftermath of the bombing?

Several platoons of U.S. Marines flew in within hours from Europe, as did FBI agents and the emergency FESS team from Washington. Several days later, after pulling out the wounded and digging out the dead in our destroyed embassy, and scouring morgues for unaccounted bodies, we survivors “moved on,” on to the ten-story USAID building several miles away. Our USAID colleagues doubled up in cramped cubicles to make way for us survivors to share their building. And this is where I spent the last year of my otherwise wonderful Kenya tour. It was a makeshift arrangement in a building surrounded by coils of barbed wire and legions of marines, for whom we were deeply grateful. So, we moved and moved on, wounded warriors again functioning as diplomats.

Q: How did the embassy respond to the bombing?

Immediately after the bombing, the Department created a 24/7 bomb crisis Task Force (TF) of officers from all relevant State bureaus and U.S. government agencies. The TF operated out of the seventh floor Operations Center, coordinating the response to and investigation of the bombing. But after ten days of so, the TF was disbanded, its members returned to their day jobs, and we were left on our own. In the State Department, it was not in anybody’s “job description” to care for a bombed-out embassy and traumatized staff. It was deeply disheartening to us, the survivors as we saw USAID and the Defense Department “take care of their own.” Once the TF shut its doors, there was just a void, no answer on the other end of the line, nobody to ask for assistance, as we were shunted back into the regular bureaucracy.

When we moved across town into the AID building, Acting DCM Lucian directed me to set up a 24/7 “Open Line” to Washington in our Front Office. So, I went over to one of the secretarial desks and dialed the Operations Center in Washington, then taped an index card on top: “DO NOT HANG UP! Open line to Washington. Keep it open 24 hours a day.” The TF officer who answered the phone exclaimed, “Huskey! Thank God, you’re alive.” It was Steve McGann, a former colleague who had recently transferred from Embassy Nairobi back to Washington. So, my telephone contraption became our precious “Open Line” to Washington through which we orchestrated everything: military movements, medical evacuations, FBI investigations . . . the stuff of crises. But TF coverage proved episodic. On the third night after the bombing when I was Duty Officer in our makeshift embassy, a TF member raised us on the open line, stating “This is (so-and-so) from the Admin Bureau. Your embassy Mission Plan is overdue, When can we expect it.” I was dumbfounded and responded, undiplomatically, “You can go to hell.” We were still digging bodies out of the building. So, overall, the Department failed miserably in its response to the embassy bombing.

One ironic “silver lining” of the bombing was the inadvertent modernization of our operations in our makeshift embassy. Before the bombing, Embassy Nairobi, like most overseas missions, was saddled with antiquated technology. Our computers were abysmally slow, decade-old 386 and 486 work stations. After the bombing, the Department flew in a load of blazingly fast — for those days — Pentium computers so

that we could actually function and communicate in the real world. A sadly ironic “silver lining.”

Q: How did the State Department respond to your psychological well-being?

HUSKEY: The bomb had a massive impact on the survivors, including my family. Families all across Nairobi, across Kenya, were devastated. The PTSD remained for years. I can still feel the bomb reverberating deep inside me, two decades later. Even today, when I walk down a street or a hallway at Main State, I will calculate to myself: “If I turn this corner, I might survive the bomb . . . or I might not.” I gained an enduring appreciation for the fragility and serendipity of life, and a much greater realization of the wonder of life and the preciousness of my family — my incomparable wife and our two beautiful children, all three of whom continue to amaze me with their *joie de vivre*.

But you ask about the State Department. Nada. Zilch. Nothing. That failure was all the more glaring, galling, in the face of an outpouring of assistance from USAID and the Department of Defense for its people. Over the next year, USAID brought in a stream of psychologists to counsel their people, who were miles away from the bomb. The Department of State? Nothing. Nada. Nobody came to help us. Nobody! Oh, but I almost forgot: six months after the bombing, the Ambassador notified the embassy community that a psychiatrist and PTSD specialist from the University of Oklahoma would arrive the next week and that every embassy member who had been in the bombing should sign up to meet with her. Finally, we all thought we would receive counseling, even if grudgingly and belatedly. I was assigned a half hour slot to meet with the psychiatrist. She immediately launched into a string of questions about the bombing and my reaction to it. After a few minutes I said, “I don’t understand the meaning of these questions.” She replied, “This will be a great help to my research on PTSD.” So, the only psychological counseling we received after the bombing was from a psychiatrist who was using us as her guinea pigs. That poured salt in the wound. One result of this fiasco was the creation of the Office of Casualty Assistance (OCA) in Main State, whose staff was finally assigned the task of assisting employees through crises and traumas like August 7.

After the bombing, it was announced that anyone who wished to do so could curtail their tour assignment and leave Kenya. Only a handful of families departed, and those were the families of colleagues who had been killed or severely wounded. The rest of us stayed, which turned out to be a positive choice, because had we returned stateside, life would have moved on after a month or so, leaving those of us in the bombing deeply shaken and bearing elements of PTSD. For those who remained at post, there was a broadly shared trauma, because everybody, American and Kenyan, had been affected by the bomb. The 200+ Kenyans who were killed each had extended families spread all over Kenya, so that the entire nation was affected and traumatized. In Kenya, there was a universal shared sense of trauma, of tragedy. So, we remained “on station” for the last year of my assignment, which probably helped our family come to terms with and get beyond the bombing.

It still unnerves me when I realize how minuscule was the chance that our whole family could have survived the August 7 bomb. In the first place, the likelihood that anyone in our building would have survived was near zero, because it all depended on the faithfulness of that one Kenyan embassy guard, who risked his life and refused the bomber entry to the embassy garage. Also, the fact that we four were separated into two vulnerable locations, made survival extraordinary, seemingly “miraculous.” The only other family in the building at the moment of the bombing, Julian and Jay Bartley, were killed.

In the tragedy of the bombing, our family was the only remotely “good news” story, so much so that we were repeatedly interviewed on American television. Ted Koppel devoted half of his “Nightline” news program to our family’s remarkable survival. We were the lead interview on “Good Morning America” and several other programs. On each program, the four of us described our traumatic experience, with Christopher and Caroline reciting their memory of the bombing. Koppel asked five-year-old Caroline, “How do you feel about what happened?” She said, “I don’t know because I’ve never been in a bomb before.” I accepted these requests for interviews because I thought it would help us, especially the children, to talk about our experience. But, secondly, I thought it would be good for America to have at least one non-tragic story out of the Nairobi bombing. But each time our survival was called “miraculous,” I winced because if we were a miracle, then what did that mean for those who did not survive and their loved ones. I always felt a sense of discomfort akin to guilt each time we met our wonderful friend Sue Bartley, whose husband and son did not experience that “miracle.”

Q: Also, I understand from Pru Bushnell that she had complained about security before. This must have been rankling to all of you. Realizing that you had been given such low priority.

HUSKEY: Yes, but the situation was more systemic than just an episodic misstep. At that time, the security needs of each embassy were assessed on the Diplomatic Security Bureau’s (DS) low/medium/high risk scale. Embassy Nairobi was assessed “Medium Risk,” compared to “High Risk” posts in Baghdad, Amman and other Middle East countries. So, most of the Department’s limited DS funds went to improving the security of “High Risk” missions. For more than a year before the bombing, Pru had repeatedly cabled Washington requesting greater security protection, most notably requesting increased setback for our building that was located in the center of Nairobi and directly on the sidewalk with no setback. However, since we were categorized as “Medium Risk,” Pru’s requests were routinely denied or, more often, just ignored. We later learned that Main State, including Secretary of State Albright, was increasingly irritated by Pru’s pestering requests for increased security. DS funds were being allocated strictly according to the DS risk list, which left Embassy Nairobi the “soft underbelly” of American diplomacy, a gaping hole that al Qaeda brilliantly and correctly assessed. After the Nairobi bombing, the Department ended that priority risk list. As you know, Stu Pru has written her own book, which will soon be published.

Q: I have done an oral history with her. Well, what did you do during your last year there?

HUSKEY: My first post-bombing assignment was to reach out to the Muslim community in East Nairobi, called Eastlake, where many Somali refugees resided. There were indications that this refugee community was a feeder camp for terrorism. After Lucien returned to the Political Section, he and I began meeting with local Muslim leaders to get a sense of how they felt about America and what we could do to improve relations and understanding. Lucien was particularly effective in this effort, because his wife was Sudanese and his doctoral studies had focused on the Middle East and Islam.

At the same time, as President of the American Women's Association, Joanne was raising money to fund medical treatment for Kenyans injured in the blast, many in wheel chairs or blinded. In our television interviews, she always mentioned the need for funds for this medical treatment, which pulled in some financial support.

Q: Including a lot of civilians who had no contact with the U.S. government at all.

HUSKEY: Yes. The U.S. government funded medical treatment only for U.S. Government employees, so Joanne's fund drive filled a glaring hole in U.S. foreign policy, giving substance to her role as "unofficial diplomat," the title of her memoir of our life abroad.

Q: Wasn't there a lot of resentment in Kenya that you Americans brought these troubles on us, because they lost so many lives. I understand that Moi felt "you damned Americans brought this into my country and killed all these people."

HUSKEY: Yes, since most of the people killed were Kenyans — 202 of the 214 killed in Nairobi were Kenyan, including my wonderful Kenyan assistant, Edwin Mori, and 12 Americans. There was resentment that America had brought this on Kenya. But there was greater anger that the embassy only took care of its own people after the bombing. And the embassy did focus its initial recovery efforts on the embassy itself, working to rescue our survivors and recover our dead. We were digging to find our wounded and dead, and were not in a position to help others. Other nations did quickly offer help — French, Germans and, especially, Israelis came pouring in to help Kenyans, especially the six-story building next door to our embassy that was completely destroyed when it "pancake" collapsed killing more than a hundred Kenyans. A number of U.S. emergency forces also flew contingents of emergency workers to Nairobi. Ironically, for me, this criticism replicated our Tiananmen experience, when many Americans arriving in the U.S. after the massacre, lambasted Embassy Beijing for "ignoring" Americans in Beijing. In that case, there were many thousands of Americans in Beijing at the time of the massacre and it was physically impossible for our embassy to reach all of them. The same criticism repeated in Nairobi. We did not help Kenyans early on, which stirred resentment in Kenya. Eventually, the U.S. did give a great deal of assistance and aid to Kenyan victims, but there was residual resentment. Moi was resentful for a different

reason. He felt the bombing was caused by the U.S. presence in Kenya, which had attracted Al Qaeda. Which was, by definition, true.

Q: Maybe this would be a good place to stop today.

HUSKEY: Yes. So, anyway, we did stay for another year, which was probably good for our family. And the Department gave each embassy employee in the bombing an extra R&R trip. I took our family to the beautiful island of Mauritius out in the Indian Ocean for our much-needed respite from the trauma and stress. The most amazing thing was how quickly the embassy moved into makeshift quarters and began functioning — promoting U.S. policy and producing diplomatic reporting. Within one week I was meeting with the Muslim community and reporting back to Washington. We survived “by hook or crook” and we moved on.

Q: Today is 16 February 2018 with Jim Huskey. Jim, when we left it you were just out of Kenya.

HUSKEY: Out of Kenya, but with echoes of the August 7 bomb blast still echoing inside.

Q: Of course.

HUSKEY: Again, our final year in Kenya turned out to be a blessing, because had we returned to the U.S., we would have found Kenya and the bombing a distant memory, “out of sight, out of mind.” People at State Department and in America had moved on and forgotten, while the bombing was still at the center of our lives and consciousness.

Q: So, other than that Mrs. Lincoln, how was the play?

HUSKEY: Exactly.

Q: Well, what did you do in your final year in Kenya after the bombing.

HUSKEY: My last year in Kenya after the bombing focused on two things. First, PolCouns Lucien Vandenbrook assigned me as embassy liaison with the Kenyan Muslim community. The majority of Kenyans in the Northeast Province from Garissa to the Somalia border were Muslims, and there was a large population of Muslims in the Eastlake area of Nairobi, many of whom were refugees from Islamist violence in Somalia. Lucian and I met with leaders to see what their people were saying and to explain what we knew about the bombing and what we were doing to help Kenya. The U.S. was actively assisting injured to access medical treatment and surgical operations. There was also a lot of private American assistance after the bombing. I mentioned the work that Joanne was doing as President of the American Women’s Association in Nairobi. She raised funds to sponsor Kenyans who had been seriously injured — blinded

and crippled — to go to South Africa or to Boston for operations. So, we did a lot, but it was never enough. So many Kenyans had been killed and seriously injured and there were always some who would fall between the cracks. So, there was resentment toward America, yes.

Q: Did you find particular resentment that may have been there before in the Muslim community?

HUSKEY: I didn't sense antagonism from local Muslims. The Muslims who attacked us had been sent in from Saudi Arabia and other places by al Qaeda. They had gone underground in Kenya; several had settled on Lamu island, where we used to visit, married local women and developed their plot to bomb the American Embassy in Nairobi. They were most or all non-Kenyans. So, for the next year I worked as our embassy liaison with local Muslims to reach out to and create mutual understanding with Kenya's Muslims. My other main focus was on elections, because we were pushing very hard, working with the like-minded embassies in pushing for free and fair elections. We coordinated election monitoring in both local and national elections, which pressured the local authorities to run more open and fair elections and to count fairly.

Q: Prior to the bombing how did you view the election process?

HUSKEY: It was quite flawed because it was run by local officials whose top priority was staying in office and protecting their privileges. We and the like-minded had so many observers observing elections throughout Kenya that it made it more difficult to stuff ballot boxes or to fake vote counting. I would always be right there watching Kenyan officials count the votes. Two years later in 2001, Kenya had its first free and fair presidential election, and shifted from a one-party state under the ruling party into a multiparty democracy. So, I left Kenya convinced that the work we and the like-minded did paid off and helped propel Kenya into a democratic system. Since then, of course, they have had many problems with resurgent tribalism. So, the foot race between the national identity and tribal identity continues and, I fear, could worsen with the growth of nationalism around the world, which is a kind of tribalism writ large. Across Europe and America, the cult phenomenon of populist nationalism is surging. China and Russia, inter alia, are becoming more nationalistic, a kind of global tribalism. I am concerned about where both Kenya and the world are going.

Q: How did you feel about Kenya and where it was going?

HUSKEY: I was pretty optimistic when I departed in summer 1999, because I felt we had a really good track record promoting human rights issues and working with Kenyan human rights organizations, as well as with the Catholic and Anglican churches. Kenya has a large Christian population, so working with church leaders and with the group of like-minded diplomats that I put together proved very effective in dealing with HR issues. We actively monitored police harassment and the condition and trials of political prisoners. The latter made a demonstrable difference. The most visible example was the renowned political dissident Koigi Wa Wamwere, who was being tried for treason and

fomenting revolution. We took turns attending Koigi's trial day by day to help ensure a fair trial. After he was acquitted, Koigi told me that our diplomatic presence made all the difference, greatly improving the attitude and behavior of the presiding judge.

Q: Where did tribalism run counter to what we were after?

HUSKEY: Moi's ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU) was largely based on the Kalenjin tribe, whereas the Democratic Party (DP), the main opposition party, was populated largely by members of Kenya's largest tribe, the Kikuyu. For Kenya to move from a KANU-dominated political system to a multi-party democracy required free and fair elections, which is why we were focused on that issue. But when Mwai Kibaki won the first free and fair presidential election of 2002, he brought in mostly Kikuyu leaders. Thus, paradoxically, increased democracy could potentially also intensify tribalism, much as it did in Yugoslavia after Tito. Resurgent tribalism and nationalism may be a time bomb in international politics today if liberal democracy does, in fact, allow tribalist nationalism to reassert. This is a constant concern and balancing process in Kenya and the world.

Q: Well, when did you leave Kenya and what did you do next?

HUSKEY: We departed Kenya in August '99, and moved back to Washington and into the lovely colonial home we had purchased six years earlier before leaving for Kenya. Despite the wonderful experience of living overseas and going to excellent international schools, we felt it was important for our TCKs, Christopher 9 and Caroline 6, to "learn how to be Americans." We wanted them to have first hand experience living in America after years of living in India and Kenya and attending international schools. So, we moved into the classic 1930's "Brady Bunch" neighborhood of Wood Acres in Bethesda, just across the line from Washington. This was truly "fiction become reality" because, as I mentioned, immediately after the bombing Joanne had sat the children in front of the TV and played video after video of the "Brady Bunch" television series to provide a sense of normality. Well, that fiction became the reality to which we returned in Washington after the searing experience of August 7.

Q: Well, I don't know how your kids were, but I found that with our kids the greatest transition was coming back to America and going to school. They didn't like it, because they were used to international schools and international kids.

HUSKEY: Good point, Stu. When we moved back to Bethesda, Christopher was in 4th grade and Caroline in 1st grade at the beautiful newly refurbished Wood Acres Elementary School, reputed to have the only elementary school planetarium in America. When Caroline returned home from her first day of school, she asked Joanne in a puzzled voice, "Mommy, where are the black people? There are only whites." Our children were uncomfortable in the absence of diversity and as TCKs felt more comfortable in international settings. Still do. After graduating from Stanford, Chris moved to Beijing and Caroline to Cape Town, and they have never stopped their global trotting.

Q: Well, what did you do when you returned to Washington?

HUSKEY: In September 1999, I returned to my “Home Bureau” — East Asia and Pacific Bureau (EAP) — as Deputy Director of the EAP Regional Affairs Office (RA). A year later, when Gen. Colin Powell arrived at State Department as George W. Bush’s Secretary of State things really changed. Powell was horrified to find the Department still using antiquated 386 and 486 computers and with no access to the internet, which was looked upon with suspicion by State traditionalists. I vividly remember the day he arrived in early 2001. He told the large crowd of employees gathered to welcome him in the entrance hall of the Department, “My top priority is to get you all updated, to get State modern communications equipment and offices online with internet access.” And this is how Powell dealt with the Department — as a military officer who “takes care of his troops.” State, as I have already indicated, was notorious for *not* taking care of its troops. Powell changed that. One Saturday morning when I was working in my office at Main State, I felt a shadow over my shoulder and turned to see a man standing there wearing a sports shirt — Colin Powell. He was walking around meeting people. After years of never having met any “7th Floor” illuminati, I went on trips with Powell and with Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage. Compare that with Rex Tillerson who rarely leaves his office. Nobody at State knows him. But Powell and Armitage were a different kettle of fish. They were out meeting their “troops.” It created an unprecedented esprit de corps, and I used that access to the Secretary to bring about my pet project: stronger U.S. relations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the regional organization of the eleven Southeast Asian nations.

RA was responsible for coordinating U.S. foreign policy on regional issues, such as narcotics, environment, trade, nuclear security, human rights, trade, and multilateral relations, while the other EAP offices were responsible for bilateral relations with each nation in the region. I bid on the Deputy Director position because I strongly believed that multilateral diplomacy and multilateral organizations — EU, OAU and, in this case, ASEAN — were important channels for U.S. foreign policy and for representing U.S. values and interests. I chose U.S.-ASEAN relations as my personal portfolio, because I had long felt that State Department paid insufficient attention to Southeast Asia and to ASEAN, the organization, thus leaving the field open for China to gain sway in this region of 650 million people and \$3 trillion GDP. ASEAN, I believed, was the best channel for reinforcing and improving U.S. relations with the region as a whole, particularly because China was aggressively reaching out to ASEAN, while the U.S. was seen as indifferent to the region. Senior U.S. officials, however, including recent Secretaries of State and Presidents, had already skipped too many ASEAN Summits and ASEAN-U.S. bilateral meetings, giving an impression of U.S. indifference to both organization and region. So, I immediately began lobbying the EAP Front Office and, through it, the “Seventh Floor” (the Department’s senior leadership) on the importance of the Secretary’s attendance in order to raise the level of U.S. engagement with ASEAN.

To my great satisfaction, Secretary Colin Powell agreed to attend the ASEAN Summit in Phnom Penh in 2002 and, to boot, he gamely agreed to participate in the most iconic ASEAN event — the song and dance performance by each of the ASEAN Foreign

Ministers. A group of us worked long hours to draft a humorous but politically and diplomatically correct song for the Secretary to sing, which he did in robust fashion and to great acclaim from the Summit attendees. His attendance at the Summit had an enormously positive effect on the ASEAN member nations, demonstrating that the U.S. was fully engaged with ASEAN and the region. Part of the U.S. reputation for indifference derived from the belief among ASEAN member nations that U.S. engagement with ASEAN nations was on the decline. At one of the ASEAN meetings I attended in Kuala Lumpur, I remember listening to a Chinese delegate criticizing the U.S. for doing nothing to help ASEAN, while “we Chinese help you.” So, in preparing for the Secretary’s trip to the Hanoi summit, I reached out to all U.S. Government departments and agencies in Washington for assistance compiling a database of U.S. Government projects in and exchanges with ASEAN nations. I printed this database, which to my surprise turned out to be a three-inch thick book of USG projects — NIH, NOAA, Agriculture/Defense/Justice Departments, etc. — with the ASEAN region totaling an astounding \$2.2 billion dollars in projects. Then, in the ASEAN-Plus-One meeting between Secretary Powell and the eleven ASEAN Foreign Ministers, when the Secretary began presenting the U.S. position paper that I had drafted, I walked around the large conference table and placed one copy of the thick tome in front of each FM. As they opened the document while the Secretary was speaking, you could see their jaws drop in surprise. Nobody — not the Foreign Ministers, not ASEAN, not even the U.S. Government itself — had had any idea of the enormity of U.S. engagement with the ASEAN region. Certainly nothing like \$2.2 billion! This was the first time this information had ever been compiled in a single place, and Washington agencies were just as surprised as the ASEANS at the extent of U.S. engagement with the region. That began a much enhanced U.S.- ASEAN relationship.

Q: I have a feeling we are in what the Italians call “a parenthesis.” With a little time off, we learn to live with our shame and then get on with it.

HUSKEY: Well, ASEAN is very important for the U.S. and our place in the Asia Pacific region. It is an important partner. I am not at all confident that Trump and his people understand this. I fear that my 30 years in the Foreign Service are now being eviscerated. In my service as a U.S. diplomat, I was so proud that we made a difference. In China, when I was the HR Officer, we held China’s feet to the fire on its political prisoners. We did that in Nairobi, to great effect. We were actively involved in India promoting bilateral trade and American investment at the very time Narasimha Rao was opening to the outside world. So, I believe that we played a role in the revival of U.S. relations with both India and ASEAN, as well as Southeast Asia writ large. I was privileged to be in both places at the moment of transition and revival of relations. I am not confident that these accomplishments are continuing today.

Q: So, after 9/11 things changed for you, didn’t they?

HUSKEY: Yes, in spades. Two years after the Kenya bombing, we had 9/11, followed two years later by the U.S. invasion of Iraq. On September 11, I was in a meeting in Deputy Assistant Secretary Don Keyser’s office the moment the plane hit the Pentagon,

spewing smoke and debris into the air. Don exclaimed, “My God, the Pentagon is on fire.” People turned on TV sets and radios and we realized the World Trade Center had already been hit twice. After the crash of the passenger jet, in a Pennsylvania field that was likely headed for Washington, the building speakers announced immediate evacuation. I walked 8 miles home and Joanne picked up the kids from school, as our family was dragged back into the horror of a terrorist bombing. For us, 9/11 eerily and awfully reprised Nairobi three years earlier.

EAP Assistant Secretary James Kelly called me into his office the next day and said, “Jim, you are a point man for building an EAP coalition in support of the Afghanistan operation. Our most reliable ally, Australia, gave the strongest regional support for Operation Enduring Freedom to defeat al Qaeda and the Taliban.

The events two years later, though, were very different. Bush Administration “Neocons,” led by Vice President Cheney, relentlessly asserted the claim that Saddam had an active WMD program. The CIA began putting out a steady stream of intel assessments reinforcing the Neocon claim. Cheney apparently made numerous visits to Langley headquarters, meeting with and praising those agents who concurred with his assessment of Saddam as a bad guy with WMD. I believe this distorted our intelligence assessments so much that my beloved boss, Colin Powell, finally gave in and went before the UN Security Council in February 2003 with his Power Point slides that seemed to “prove” Saddam Hussein had an active WMD program. When Powell did that, that was good enough for me and for most FSO’s. We trusted his word. Turns out, of course, he was wrong and was wildly misled by Cheney and his cooked intel. Remember, of all the Washington intel agencies — CIA, DIA, NSA, FBI — only INR dared to dissent from the intel community consensus that Saddam had an active WMD program.

Q: INR is the State Department analytical branch.

HUSKEY: Yes, INR, where I served in 1991-93. INR analysts bravely “took a footnote” (expressing disagreement) to the intel community consensus in the “President’s Daily Brief” (PDB) on Iraqi WMD, asserting that INR had not seen evidence that Saddam had an active WMD program. Assistant Secretary Kelley again called me into his office and assigned me to be point man for the EAP bureau in building the “Coalition of the Willing” with our friends and allies in Asia. So, while we were working each day coaxing Asian embassies, I would argue each night at dinner with Joanne, who vigorously opposed the impending invasion. No, I insisted, Colin Powell has looked at all the evidence and I trust him. In March 2003, just before the U.S. launched its invasion of Iraq, Joanne published a column positioned in the center of the Washington Post editorial page under her name, Joanne Grady Huskey, stating “Mr. President, don’t do it.” Recalling our experience with the bombing in Kenya, she wrote that bombs will not solve the problem in Iraq. “Mr. President, don’t bomb, don’t go in there, don’t invade.” She ended with, “If you think bombs will solve the problem, Mr. President, you are wrong. Vice President Cheney, you are wrong. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, you are wrong. We must not invade Iraq.” I had not seen nor known about her column that morning when I entered Under Secretary Mark Grossman’s office for our daily planning meeting to

scope out the post-invasion recovery. He waited for me to sit at the conference table, then said with visible displeasure, “Jim, I saw your wife’s column in the Washington Post this morning.” So, here I was, the FSO assigned to build the “Coalition of the Willing” with Asian nations having a wife publicly attacking the whole enterprise. It was awkward, to say the least. Grossman said, “Your wife, of course, has the right to do that. But I disagree with her. She is wrong. Saddam has WMD.” Later, after the invasion began, when I would meet colleagues in the hallway, we would stop and talk, and the phrase I heard most often was, “I surely hope they find WMD and find it fast.” Otherwise, we all knew, the invasion was bogus and the U.S. was damaged. We waited day by day, then week by week, finally month by month, but no WMD. It became increasingly clear: it was bogus. The invasion was bogus, because we had invaded Iraq for the sole reason that it had an active WMD program, and now we knew it did not. Rather, Bush and Cheney apparently had a personal vendetta against Saddam, which they assuaged at immense cost to the U.S. and the Middle East. When the administration shifted and started saying that our purpose was to make Iraq into a shining example of democracy for the Middle East, it was just bullshit, a post facto justification. After two or three months, I apologized to Joanne. I was wrong. Colin Powell was wrong. He later acknowledged that his greatest regret was making that presentation. He had been suborned by Bush-Cheney.

Q: That was a very difficult spot.

HUSKEY: Very difficult situation. Let me see if there is anything else about my years in Washington. My next assignment was Taiwan but let me see if there is anything. Anything you can think of?

Q: Well, I was just wondering if you faced problems because of Joanne’s article, attacks or negative reaction?

HUSKEY: No, because I was supportive of the invasion from the moment Colin Powell made his presentation. As were most FSO’s. A few did not. Ann Rice and one or two other FSO’s courageously resigned in protest when the invasion started. They were the heroes. They resigned in protest.

Q: I have interviewed Ann.

HUSKEY: I respect that protest, but I did not have — we did not have — the intel. All I knew was that my boss, Colin Powell, a man I respected more than anyone in Washington, finally accepted the WMD claim. I now speak of the Iraq invasion fiasco as the biggest mistake in American history. We have made a lot of mistakes. Vietnam was a stupid mistake. But that is a different story. But just a pure mistake? That is Iraq. And the results have been catastrophic — the U.S. bears heavy responsibility for the lives lost in Iraq and for the Middle East chaos we have today — the rise of ISIS, and the growth of Russian and Iranian influence and power in the region.

Q: The idea was that we were going to turn Iraq into a shining city on the hill.

HUSKEY: It was a massive mistake. I believe this started the real decline of America. America has always gone up and down, made mistakes and recovered. In years past, people lamented America's best days were over because of this or that: Vietnam, Watergate, the oil embargo, the rise of Japan, "The New Superstate," etc. But they never played out. The 2003 invasion of Iraq, however, was truly catastrophic and from which we have not recovered. We lost the trust of much of the world, even our friends and allies.

Q: Maybe we should move on to Taiwan.

HUSKEY: OK, Taiwan. I bid on Taiwan because of my long background there. I had already lived in Taiwan for five years – 1971-1973 when I first began studying Chinese, then 1976-79 as a Ford Fellow doing my Ph.D. dissertation research there. So, I had years of Taiwan under my belt. I had always appreciated the traditional Chinese culture on Taiwan that had been deeply damaged under the CCP, especially the destructive Cultural Revolution, on the Mainland. So, I bid on the position of PolCouns in the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), our de facto embassy in Taipei. While our official embassy is, of course, in Beijing, AIT is an embassy in everything but name. FSOs earlier had to resign from the Foreign Service in order to serve at AIT, and then would be miraculously rehired by the Foreign Service when they departed, but that charade had ended a few years earlier and FSO's now remained on active duty during their Taiwan tenure.

For me, moving to Taiwan was like returning home, and I was so glad to be able to give my family the experience of living in this wonderful place for four years. These four years would be my final overseas assignment and the logical culmination of my global life and my Foreign Service career, a kind of "going full circle." I spent the first year at the State Department's language school on beautiful Yangming Mountain, working to get my Chinese back up to speed. Then, I moved down into the city to work at AIT on Hsinyi Road, in the very neighborhood where I lived in the 70's. Christopher and Caroline entered the sixth and ninth grades at Taipei American School, among the premier international schools in the world. I watched them absorb China, becoming fluent in Chinese language and making so many wonderful Chinese friends. It consolidated their upbringing as TCK's and was the bridge to the amazingly global lives they now lead all over the world.

Q: What was your job in AIT?

HUSKEY: I was Political Counselor. I viewed my main task to be dampening Taiwan's push toward independence, which at some unknown tipping point would have incited a PRC invasion that could have sucked America into the conflagration because of the TRA. Immediately after President Carter shifted U.S. diplomatic relations from Taipei to Beijing in January 1979, Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) which obligated the U.S. (1) to "provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character" and (2) to maintain U.S. capability "to resist any resort to force" to alter Taiwan's status. This sentence delineated the nuanced U.S. policy of "strategic ambiguity," a kind of "keep 'em

guessing” deterrence for both sides. Any clarification of this ambiguity would have been counterproductive by undermining the deterrence aimed at both China and Taiwan — to keep China guessing what the U.S. would do in the event it invaded Taiwan, and to keep Taiwan guessing what the U.S. would do if Taiwan’s own actions provoked an invasion. On the one hand, if the U.S. declared it would defend Taiwan in the event of a Chinese invasion, that would antagonize Beijing and probably incite military action, while also arousing Taiwan independence fervor under the perception of a U.S. military umbrella. On the other hand, if the U.S. indicated it would not take military action to assist Taiwan, that would free China to attack Taiwan at will.

In my reading of the TRA, a unilateral Chinese attack would probably obligate the U.S. to come to Taiwan’s defense, but a unilateral Taiwan push toward independence that triggered a PRC attack would leave the U.S. with considerable leeway, since Taiwan’s own rash action would have incited the PRC attack.

Therefore, I saw my job being to dampen Taiwan independence fervor as much as possible. I had to “tiptoe through the tulips” and gingerly warn my “Green” contacts in Parliament, government and media that pushing the envelope on independence could nullify the U.S. defense pledge, since Taiwan would be seen as *casus belli*. But this entailed a contradiction: America’s strong support for Taiwan democracy could actually undermine our effort to dampen the push toward independence that was a product of that very democratic freedom, since the overwhelming majority of Taiwanese prefer separation from China. It was a touch-and-go, dicey task. Especially, since Taiwan’s “Green” leadership under DPP President Chen Shui-bian was constantly pushing toward independence. I got to know Chen quite well, a real dynamo of a man. But he was constantly pushing toward independence, obliquely if not directly, so that we were constantly having to cautiously urge caution. So, in a nutshell, the challenge was to keep the “Greens” from becoming too “Green.”

Our daily “lobbying” effort to this end ended abruptly in May 2008 with the election of my old friend Ma Ying-jeou as President of Taiwan. The election of the Harvard-educated Ma, a moderate member of the now democratic KMT, immediately defused cross-Strait tensions that had been kept at near boiling point through the two terms of DPP President Chen Shui-bian (2000-2008). When Ma took office in late May, he quickly reached out to Beijing to initiate direct exchanges and to open the way for direct trade and tourism. Soon thousands of Mainland tourists were flooding into Taiwan, flying on the new direct cross-Strait air routes. So, when I departed Taiwan in Summer 2008, cross-Strait tensions had been effectively resolved . . . at least for the time being.

Q: How do you tamp down an independence movement?

HUSKEY: Every way you can. It required delicate balancing. On the one hand, we greatly respect Taiwan’s wonderful democracy. But given that the great majority of the Taiwan population was Taiwanese, that very democracy could easily “push the envelope” on independence. So, we had to go in day-by-day and reiterate our policy of “strategic ambiguity” and coax caution. On balance, I believe we were successful right up to the

election of Ma Ying-jeou, two months before my tour ended. Subsequent developments under the hyper-nationalistic Xi Jinping appear to be destabilizing the cross-Strait situation once again.

Q: With the KMT from the Mainland and the Taiwanese with little use for China, how did you balance these two?

HUSKEY: Well, Taiwan itself was changing. The old Mainland-Taiwanese division and mutual antagonism had receded. Moreover, the KMT itself had changed with the passage of time and of the old Mainland generation. The KMT that returned to power 2008 under Ma Ying-jeou was an altered and much-chastened KMT. It was a wide open party with many Taiwanese members, and it sought to directly address the needs of the Taiwanese people. I believe that our efforts to dampen the independence fervor also encouraged the KMT to evolve into a fully democratic party. The important point is that today Taiwan is a thoroughgoing democracy, and the KMT and DPP are no longer poles apart on the China issue. The new DPP President, my old friend Tsai Ying-wen, is quite pragmatic rather than hardline pro-independence. Hopefully, she will continue to keep cross-Strait tensions down. This is very important for America, as we face so many hot spots around the world, especially the Korean peninsula face-off, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and India-Pakistan confrontation.

Q: Looking at it from your perspective at AIT, were the Chinese provoking, or were they pretty quiet too?

HUSKEY: During my four years at AIT, 2004-08, China was not militarily provoking, but it was working hard to keep Taiwan isolated internationally. We will have to see how Tsai governs and how Beijing and Xi Jin-ping respond to her leadership. Clearly, Beijing is not happy with the “Greens” recovering the presidency of Taiwan.

Q: Quemoy and Matsu were no issue?

HUSKEY: They were potential flashpoints through my four years in Taiwan, but Ma’s presidency completely defused that tension as thousands of Chinese tourists arrived daily on tourist boats visiting the two Taiwan-occupied islands just off the coast of Mainland China. They used to exchange gunfire with Mainland batteries every day, sometimes just every Thursday, but now they only exchange tourists. There are also tens of thousands of Chinese tourists pouring into Taiwan every year, and a very active two-way trade, with many of the Mainland companies actually owned by Taiwanese. So, I am less worried about Taiwan right now, as both sides are operating quite pragmatically. For the time being, this is one global hot spot that has been largely quenched. It now remains to be seen how the more nationalistic Xi plays his Taiwan cards.

Q: How did you find our officers who were dealing with that. I mean did they get tainted by serving in Taiwan?

HUSKEY: No, as I mentioned, FSO's no longer had to "retire" from the Foreign Service to serve at AIT. The situation had relaxed enough by the time I arrived in Taiwan in 2004, that even U.S. diplomats stationed in Taiwan could visit China. Direct flights had not yet begun, so I had to fly to Hong Kong, apply for my PRC visa there, and then fly to Beijing or Shanghai. But now it is wide open for U.S. diplomats. I believe we played a role in helping keep the cross-Strait situation calm during my four-year tenure at AIT.

Q: What was Taiwan doing with say India or Indonesia?

HUSKEY: Taiwan has become quite pragmatic in its foreign policy. It still has formal relations with fifteen or so countries, mostly small countries to which Taiwan provides a lot of aid. These formal relations, in turn, give Taiwan "face." The idea of face, as you know, is very important in China and Chinese civilization. This contest for diplomatic recognition has been an ongoing contest between Beijing and Taipei and the source of much bribery. Taiwan will come in and say if you will break relations with China and recognize Taiwan, we will give you all kinds of aid. And vice versa, as both sides incessantly seek to buy recognition from these countries.

Q: Well, in a way it must have been interesting and you must have been pleased. You spent so much of your life focusing on China, and then to spend these years actually in the middle of this potential flash point.

HUSKEY: Yes, it was, for me, beyond fascinating. But, really, each of my overseas posts occurred at similarly transformative moments. We arrived in India in 1993, right at the moment it was beginning to open up, and the following three years were critical for that renewal. Had Rao lost his footing at this critical time, India could well have regressed into its old top-heavy Nehruvian Socialism. My three years there were pivotal years, and I believe that our Consulate played an important role in that transformation, as the Hindu editorial of appreciation for Joanne and me for our service there indicated. We had both been deeply involved in bringing in American businesses and creating an American school, which helped improve U.S.-India relations. In Kenya, our embassy pushed hard for free and fair elections, so that Kenya is now a democracy, with problems, to be sure, but a democracy nonetheless. In Taiwan, we worked hard to tamp down the independence fervor, and when we departed in 2008, Taiwan had a new pragmatic government that effectively neutralized, if only temporarily, cross-Strait tensions. I would like to think that my diplomatic service made a difference, especially in concert with my amazing wife, Joanne, the consummate "Unofficial Diplomat."

Q: We have an intern here from India. Do you have any questions?

INTERN: Well, yes, I want to ask you. You say that you were in India during the transition period when our markets opened up. What sort of policies, what narrative did you get from the United States in India during that time. Did you have any sort of increased trade relations?

HUSKEY: Well, President Clinton was very focused on developing ties with India, as was his Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown. We did our part at ConGen Madras to implement this policy, working with American businessmen to support joint ventures in South India, especially with the burgeoning Bangalore IT firms. I concentrated on South Indian politics and bilateral trade and investment, and spoke out in public fora to explain America's policy toward India. This public diplomacy made a difference and helped improve U.S.-India relations in South India. When we arrived in Madras in 1993, there were no Americans living there. When we left three years later, Americans were beginning to move to Madras.

Q: Well, what have you been doing since Taiwan?

HUSKEY: I returned from Taiwan in 2008 and spent my last four Foreign Service years in Washington. I served two years in the International Organizations Bureau (IO) and then two years here at FSI as Director of – appropriately enough – Crisis Management Training at our overseas missions. In the first two years, 2008-10, I was Deputy Director of an office in IO that coordinates U.S. relations with more than twenty international agencies — including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, the International Postal Union (IPU) in Bern, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal, the UN Environmental Program (UNEP) in Nairobi, and others. When Obama became President in January 2009, the whole tenor of our foreign relations changed as multilateral diplomacy replaced unilateralism as the leading edge of U.S. foreign policy. I will never forget attending my first IAEA meeting in Vienna two months into the Obama Administration. Diplomats from allied and friendly nations rushed over to welcome our delegation, indicating their pleasure that the U.S. was “back” — presumably referring to the U.S. unilateralism of the Iraq invasion.

Nuclear security returned to the fore when Obama created the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS), that now occurs every two or three years bringing the world Chiefs of State (COS) together. The first NSS was held in Washington in March 2009, with India's Manmohan Singh, China's Hu Jintao, France's Sarkozy, UK's Tony Blair, Russia's Putin, etc. attending. As State Department point man for the conference, I sat in one of the three chairs arrayed behind each leader, from which I watched Obama magisterially run that two-day conference. He had clearly read and digested every page of the 800-page briefing book I had prepared for him, with entries I had gathered from DIA, Departments of Defense/Energy/Commerce and others. Obama was head and shoulders above every other COS present. At one point, Putin raised a point. . . .

Q: Medvedev, you mean.

HUSKEY: Oh, yes, Medvedev. It was 2009. Medvedev raised a point about a nuclear issue, to which Obama responded extemporaneously and in amazing detail. He ran that gathering of world leaders with grandeur, and you could just see the respect for him around that table. It made me so proud to be an American to have such an impressive President, one who was brilliant and respectful, yet fully in charge and in control.

Intern: Unfortunately, I have to leave because I must catch the shuttle.

HUSKEY: OK, back to school?

Intern: Yes, back to school.

Q: Do you have a card?

Intern: I do. I was going to ask both of you for a card, too.

HUSKEY: I think I have one with me, let's see. Let me hear from you.

Intern: For sure.

Q: Something I wanted to ask you about. When you were working here at FSI preparing our missions for crisis management, what did you feel we needed to concentrate on mainly?

HUSKEY: It was an ironic twist of fate to end my FS career as Director of Crisis Management Training for the State Department, given my own crisis experiences during my FS career. I was able to use my own crisis experience to train our overseas missions and our outgoing FSOs and Ambassadors. I collated the crisis experiences of many FSO's – earthquakes, tsunamis, bombings – to create a storehouse of crisis management best practices. I was fortunate to have a wonderful, dedicated staff of crisis management trainers, who deeply believed in what they were doing and who traveled all over the world training our embassies and consulates on how to prepare for and respond to crises. This training is exceedingly important. As I explained, Stu, when the bomb hit Embassy Nairobi on August 7, and the survivors were filing calmly down the ruined staircase, it hit me that this was exactly what we had trained to do in our fire drill a few weeks earlier. Well, that is what crisis management training and preparedness means. You don't have time in a crisis to re-invent the wheel; you must be prepared to act quickly, almost instinctively. I believe our embassies today are far better trained and prepared to respond to virtually any crisis, whether it is anti-American demonstrators coming over the wall or an earthquake or a typhoon or a terrorist attack.

In many ways, Stu, this final assignment brought my career full circle. I was able to take the several horrifying events in my career – a massacre, a bombing, many anti-American demonstrations – and use them to train succeeding generations of FSOs how to respond to crises. We train FS Junior Officers how to write effective reporting cables. We must also train them how to manage crises. In the Foreign Service, again, "what goes around comes around." The guy you are managing or training now might save your life or be your boss five years later.

Stu, I think that about wraps it up. The irony is that after a 30-year career representing America abroad with great pride, I am watching our Foreign Service and our foreign

policy being eviscerated. Today, in February 2018, America has no discernible foreign policy on any issue. We have jettisoned human rights. We no longer talk about nuclear security. We have pulled out of most of our trade agreements. We are increasingly isolated from the rest of the world. To see my beloved Foreign Service being dismantled and so much that we accomplished jettisoned really hurts. It deeply hurts.

Q: It does. This is a very difficult period, but I hope we will come back again. What are you doing now?

HUSKEY: Since retiring in 2012 at 65, I have had six wonderful years working part time at Main State as a WAE – “When Actually Employed,” meaning I work when I want to and travel when I want to! I am doing FOIA reviews under the Freedom of Information Act, where I actually review my own career. Recently, I was reading a stack of reporting cables from Beijing, and it suddenly hit me: “That sounds familiar, Oh, yes, I wrote that cable.” So, I am enjoying this reprise of my career. Joanne and I also travel widely but now mostly in Europe. We travel, because traveling is in our blood, and we watch the peripatetic lives of our children as they travel the globe, because it is in their blood, too. We raised them that way, as TCKs. Like Caroline said when we wanted to know if she would ever settle down, “Mom and Dad, you created this monster.” Christopher is living and working in Beijing and Caroline in Cape Town because, she explained, “It’s the most beautiful city in the world.” When we Zoom call Christopher, he might answer in India or Israel, and Caroline in Paris or Sydney. They are TCKs, Global Citizens. On my 65th birthday, they gave me a beautiful crystal globe on a crystal stand with the engraved words: “To Dad. Thanks for giving us the world. Love Christopher and Caroline.” That is what we give our children in the Foreign Service, a world of experience, capabilities, and possibilities.

Q: Well, Jim, I think this is a good place to stop.

HUSKEY: I think we’ve done it, Stu.

Q: I want to thank you very much.

HUSKEY: Stu, it has been a great pleasure working with you on this.

Q: You will find I have to warn you that editing this thing will be more work than you might imagine.

HUSKEY: I am happy to do it. And Joanne asked if her interview transcript will be coming through soon.

Q: OK. I will make sure.

HUSKEY: Please ask them because we are going to Naples next week and she can edit while we are there. And I look forward to seeing my raw transcript and see if I can make it read a little smoother.

Q: Great!

End of Interview