

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

AMBASSADOR JAMES FRANKLIN JEFFREY

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy and Mark Tauber

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INTERVIEW

Q: All right. Today is the 6th of January, 2014, an interview with James Franklin Jeffrey, J-E-F-F-R-Y?

JEFFREY: R-E-Y.

Q: R-E-Y. And it's on behalf of the Association of Diplomatic Studies, and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. And let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

JEFFREY: I was born in Melrose, Massachusetts on August 1st, 1946.

Q: All right. Well, can you tell me something about, let's say, the Jeffrey side of your family? Where did they come from?

JEFFREY: Sure. The Jeffrey family, despite the name, on my father's side was largely Irish Catholic. It's just that my grandfather, Herbert Jeffrey, married into an Irish Catholic family around the turn of the century, which is unusual in that era. But he came from a family with a long lineage going back to the 17th century shortly after the Mayflower. And since the end of the 18th century Benjamin Franklin -- or Franklin -- has been a repeated name, usually a middle name in the family because of some connection with Benjamin Franklin, most probably when he was a youth in Boston back in the 18th century. So a long lineage. Three members of the family fought in the revolution, two of them on April 19th, and my grandfather married into the Irish Catholic family, was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives. But he suffered the, the expression "gerrymandering" as a Massachusetts term.

Q: Yeah.

JEFFREY: And he was gerrymandered out of his position. But he was a politician in the anti-Kennedy wing of the Democratic Party, which meant that he did not have a very successful time as a politician. But there was a sort of political atmosphere in the family because it was a combination of this old English lineage with basically a bourgeois Irish Catholic family that were several generations from coming over on the boat, but had

managed to get into business in Revere and were relatively well off. So that's the family on my father's side.

Q: Your father was -- what sort of business was he in?

JEFFREY: My grandfather?

Q: Your grandfather.

JEFFREY: That's a good question. He never quite had a profession.

Q: Oh.

JEFFREY: He did odd jobs. He was a salesman. His last job in his late seventies was an elevator operator. But his real passion was politics.

Q: Yeah.

JEFFREY: And a very well read guy.

Q: I notice, by the way, you have a very much -- someone reading this wouldn't catch it -- but a New England twang or whatever it is.

JEFFREY: Yeah.

Q: When you say Mayflower and all that.

JEFFREY: Right.

Q: It, it stuck.

JEFFREY: It is -- well, that's because I didn't leave New England until I was 23. And I went to school there. So therefore, it reinforces and my friends were basically Irish Catholic or other Catholic kids from my hometown.

Q: How about on your mother's side?

JEFFREY: Also an Irish Catholic family. Not quite as well off. But they had an automobile in the 1930s, so that was something. Both on my father's and mother's side are large families, so there are a lot of cousins and aunts and uncles.

Q: Did you grow up as a Catholic?

JEFFREY: I grew up as a Catholic, yes.

Q: Did you feel in that era, was there much in the way of Catholic, anti-Catholic or pro-Catholic prejudice? Did you find that growing up it was at all important?

JEFFREY: That's, that's a very good question. That was a transition generation, the baby boomer generation. Until that time people in Massachusetts were separated not only ethnically but also -- particularly strongly by religion. And at the level of my grandparents, Irish married Irish. And thus, my grandfather marrying into this family was always an abnormality. He himself was Protestant; he never converted, although he often promised to do so. And it was a relatively strongly Catholic family with a grand aunt as a mother superior and this sort of thing. So obviously in my own personal history, having had a Protestant lineage on my father's side, it wasn't a big thing. But you were just coming out of that. My generation, in looking at the marriages, there was no identification with religion or ethnicity in terms of who people married. It was truly a melting pot. My parents' generation, and certainly my grandparents' generation, it was certainly marrying within the Catholic world and usually within the Irish Catholic world, to wit my father and mother.

Q: Yeah, I recall a little of this. I went to Boston University after I got out of the Air Force. And named Kennedy of course everybody associated being Catholic, and I'm not Catholic! And I'd always find myself in a social position, people who would want to know what religion I was.

JEFFREY: Mm-hmm.

Q: And I mean this sort of bothered me because this wasn't a factor for me.

JEFFREY: Mm-hmm.

Q: All right. You grew up in -- was it Melrose?

JEFFREY: Saugus.

Q: What was life like as a kid?

JEFFREY: We were a very poor family. My father was an auto mechanic; had to work two jobs. But a characteristic of that generation, my parents did everything possible to ensure the best possible future for their kids. Our pediatrician -- and we didn't, my brother and I had no real need for a pediatrician, we were both healthy -- was the head of the Department of Pediatrics in Harvard University, Dr. Wyman. And we would trot off once a year to Boston to his offices for gosh knows what reason. But this was the attitude of my parents. When I was eleven I was a very good student and a voracious reader, and my father, who himself was while not well educated formally, left school in the ninth grade, was very, very bright and also an avid reader. Bought me a set of Encyclopedia Britannica and basically my job was to learn as much as I could. And I took that very seriously. This was very strong parental encouragement to go into books, because on both sides of the family we're talking about working class people. One uncle was a

career army officer, a colonel, and on my mother's side one uncle was involved in the Manhattan project, later worked in an early defense industrial complex on Route 128, but also a naval reserve officer. So several members of the family were making it into the educated middle class, to some degree at that level. But I was the first of the generation on either side to ever go to college.

Q: Well, the generation of your parents, I've experienced this, but so many -- college was not part of the normal procedure. This was before the GI bill and all that. And, but extremely well read.

JEFFREY: Yeah.

Q: And I mean they worked at it, such as getting the Encyclopedia Britannica and kids were supposed to lie on the floor and read their way through the encyclopedia and many of your generation were the products of that.

JEFFREY: That's right. College was not a mass normative before the 1950s. Same thing in Germany, particularly -- my wife is German, who was at the university in the 1970s. Only 15 percent of Germans even went to the gymnasium, which is the preparatory program for the university and a smaller percent. And even today they rely much more on apprenticeship programs and technical training for a lot of things that we send people to universities for, for example nursing. But the -- first of all the quality of teaching, my father had nine years of formal education, but it was in a Catholic school with nuns who didn't neglect discipline or show any lack of attention, and he got an extraordinary education. He was with the Americal Division in World War II. So in the Massachusetts National Guard, and they broke up the Massachusetts National Guard before Pearl Harbor. And elements of it were sent off to the South Pacific and were assembled in New Caledonia, a French colony, to become the Americal Division, which was a conglomeration of National Guard units from various states. While there he lived with a French family, developed a relationship with them, learned French, and for years afterwards would communicate in French by letter with the family. And a few years ago I spoke to a member of the family who was a young boy whom my father sort of adopted, who was a rather aged fellow in Paris and was really delighted. I got a hold of him through several French ambassadors I knew. And he was delighted to hear, because he had actually known about me from my father's writing. So these were extremely educated people. And my father in the Americal Division would deploy to Guadalcanal to essentially rescue what was left of the 1st Marine Division in that terrible fighting.

Q: Yeah.

JEFFREY: And that was his World War II experience. He spent a year in hospitals with malaria, shellshock, and other things, and was ready to be redeployed to the Pacific when the Japanese surrendered. So Harry Truman in dropping the bomb was a particular hero of our family.

Q: Yes (laughs). I just missed it. I mean going into that one. Ended up going to Korea instead. You were brought up in a Catholic school?

JEFFREY: No. My brother was, my father was, I wasn't. Saugus High School.

Q: What -- in school how did you fit into -- what were your favorite subjects in school?

JEFFREY: History and English. But also math. In high school, I had a scientific math focus. But my real love was history and English.

Q: I take it you were a reader.

JEFFREY: Mm-hmm.

Q: Do you recall at an early age what were some of the books you read or --

JEFFREY: Zane Grey western novels. I mainly read basically western stories. I read fairy tales. The Grimm brothers' fairy tales and various fairy tales of that ilk.

Q: Did you get into Norse mythology?

JEFFREY: Not really, no, not at all.

Q: Mm-hmm. You went to -- what high school was this?

JEFFREY: Saugus High School.

Q: Saugus. What was Saugus like?

JEFFREY: It was a -- Saugus is the first single-family home community to the north of Boston. Boston is ringed, as you know having gone to school there, with a variety of lower middle class -- lower working class almost slum suburbs by the 1950s, Revere, Somerville, Malden, which we all called "three-decker communities." And my family on both sides came from Revere, so Saugus was a step up because it was a true suburb of, as I said, single-family houses. There was not a three-decker in the entire community.

Q: When you say three-decker you better describe -- I know what a three-decker is --

JEFFREY: Three-decker is a three-story building with a family living on each floor.

Q: Yeah.

JEFFREY: And that was common in the, as I said, the suburbs to the north of Boston after the turn of the 19th to 20th century. And so Saugus was relatively, compared to the suburbs to the north of us, Peabody, Swampscott, Lynnfield, Melrose, Saugus was a tougher place. Much more lower middle and working class. Growing up was relatively

rough. Compared to what my wife's experience was in Germany, what my son's experience was growing up, you always lived with a certain element of fear. Getting in fights was not uncommon by the time you were 10 or 11, and I got in a fair number of them. And it was just not something that was special.

Q: What triggered the fights usually?

JEFFREY: Aggressive male behavior, but a fair amount of it was they were just toughs, what you would call today townies or hoodlums or kids who wore their hair slicked back, and basically clearly didn't do well in school. And you have a lot of this in the 1950s movies. They emulated Marlon Brando in "The Wild One" and that kind of thing. But basically, they didn't have much of an academic background, they didn't have a very good family background. What they did have was muscle.

Q: Did you have -- as a kid were there sort of no-go areas?

JEFFREY: Yeah, yeah, there were, there weren't really organized gangs. There were a few places in the town that were bad. But it was nothing like, for example, the North End in Boston. There were serious no-go areas in Revere, you know, once you got old enough to be able to drive around in a car. There were definite no-go areas in Revere, in Boston that you stayed away from, in Somerville.

Q: Could you go into Boston itself and sort of enjoy the, I won't say Scollay Square, but other places --

JEFFREY: No, as a high school kid absolutely not. You had -- your whole world was your high school and your friends and studying, and a little bit of sports. But once I was a student at Northeastern University, sure, I mean Boston, we hung out in Boston all the time.

Q: Well then, you went to Northeastern?

JEFFREY: Mm-hmm.

Q: Could you describe Northeastern University?

JEFFREY: Well, Northeastern University was, it was the result of my first big failure in life. And like many of my other failures, it played to my long term plus. It -- I did very, very well in high school and I made a self-evaluation as a sophomore, partially because of some of my friends that I wanted to be more social. I was certainly more interested in girls. And that meant playing sports, I wasn't particularly good at sports other than football. But my parents didn't want me to play football. So I wound up doing several things not very well. I threw the discus. But basically I got a little bit into that milieu, and I was involved in some student activities, but my grades were very good. So when it came time -- and I wanted to have a career as a military officer. And so, my dream was to go to West Point. But I needed fallbacks, so I applied to Harvard and Dartmouth. And

at the end of the day I discovered that I got none of them, and I had not applied to anywhere else. I'd really done a very bad job. So Northeastern was the fallback. They immediately offered me a scholarship, and they have a work-study program. Again, my family could give me *no* money. And so I needed to go someplace where I could live at home and I needed a scholarship and I needed to work. And Northeastern offered all three. So I went there, but Northeastern at the time was not strong in liberal arts. It had a large engineering and business school, but it did not have particularly good liberal arts programs. So I basically occupied myself, first of all social life was terrible because I was working at home and I was still wedded to some of my other friends who went on to other colleges. And we maintained the links from high school. This is a terrible way to have a social life. Those friends who went off to school did far better in every respect. But the result of that was without much social life and having a work-study program, I devoted myself mainly to studies. And the benefit to Northeastern was you basically got professors to actually teach courses, rather than graduate assistants. And they took an interest in me, so I spent a great deal of time on advanced academic work, eventually writing a book-length thesis on U.S.-British relations in the Korean War. So I was very interested in the Korean War while you were off involved in it.

But so, very strong academic background. Then the other thing, I still vaguely wanted to be in the military. So I joined ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps) and I didn't like it. It was all kids in these ugly U.S. Army 1950s dress uniforms marching around, close-order drill. And Northeastern had a huge program. And as a liberal arts major I was destined to go into the Signal Corps, which didn't interest me. But then, this was the era of John Kennedy and the Green Berets and the startup in Vietnam. So they formed essentially a little, like a junior Special Forces detachment at Northeastern. And I decided I would take a look at it. And as I said, I'd played some sports and had been a relatively tough guy in high school. And five minutes with this unit and I realized I was in my element, I was with kids who were really committed, who were really physical, who were really serious. And their record in Vietnam later in many cases demonstrated --

Q: Well, was this Green Beret Unit, which was Special Forces, was it feeding right into the military? Or --

JEFFREY: Right, every -- essentially most of us got regular army infantry commissions.

Q: Mm-hmm.

JEFFREY: And some went off to be helicopter pilots. But a few went artillery, but essentially it was combat arms, regular army, and we had extraordinary Vietnam vet officers leading us. So it was a pretty interesting thing to do.

Q: You were going there what years?

JEFFREY: From '64 to '69.

Q: So you, you really were looking at a military role when you got out of --

JEFFREY: Certainly, certainly a military role. But it's a good question. They had a paid scholarship program. Now, I was in a work-study program, I had some scholarship money, so by this time I had some money. And I -- the scholarship was for four years military service, almost as big a commitment as West Point. I didn't sign up for it, but I was perfectly willing to sign up to be a regular army officer for three years. I was going to try it and I felt the need to go to Vietnam. I felt politically -- I wasn't particularly enamored of the Vietnam War policies of Johnson and McNamara, but I was repelled by the anti-war movement. Because I thought it was hypocritical. And I felt that it's the duty of everyone to serve whether you -- you don't get to pick your wars.

Q: Well, I mean, particularly being in Massachusetts at the time, while it maybe wasn't replicating California it certainly had a strong anti-war movement at elite colleges.

JEFFREY: Mm-hmm.

Q: Did you feel any of this?

JEFFREY: I was totally in the middle of it. I was very political and I was probably one of the more vocal and I would argue more eloquently than many others. You know, one of the few spokespeople in university circles throughout Massachusetts for the "no, this isn't an immoral functional equivalent of Hitler invading Poland in World War II." It may be a military disaster, it may not be a good idea, but there's nothing immoral about it and there's definitely nothing immoral about the people who fought in it. This is a very long and separate discussion that I've written a book about which I haven't published.

Q: I would think at Northeastern you would have been more in the majority there. Because it's more a working class --

JEFFREY: And now --

Q: -- university.

JEFFREY: Certainly, except liberal arts schools were totally taken over. Two incidents. One -- they're both very moving -- I was, as I said, a good scholar. And so, and I wanted to make the most -- I mean I felt very bad about not getting into, quote, "better colleges." And therefore I studied very hard and took everything I could. And I took an advanced Shakespeare course. And the only other people in the class were of course English majors. Well, English majors were probably the most left wing and anti-war --

Q: (laughs)

JEFFREY: -- in 1968, 1969 that you could imagine. And we had a professor that was clearly left wing. And, he and I would get into various arguments, either about the war or about, you know, Richard III, or other things. Obviously if you read Shakespeare you're in a world of war and turmoil and politics. And I loved it. I loved the course. I did very

well and that was much resented by most of my classmates who, as I say, were English majors and didn't like my point of view. But the professor, while he was clearly to the left, was -- the professor was fair. And tough. And I like fair, I like tough. But then an incident happened that is one of the most moving things in my life. Just before we were commissioned, now this is after the Tet Offensive, this is in a year where we had 13,000 people killed in Vietnam, most of them infantry. And I volunteered for the infantry and as an ROTC student once you are about to be commissioned and the final paperwork is done, you're authorized to wear your officer's infantry cross rifles. And so I was wearing it on my ROTC uniform -- so it was a drill day, we wear uniforms -- in my class right at the end. And so at the end of it, right as I was leaving this guy called me over and said, "I notice you're wearing infantry rifles."

I said, "Yeah."

He said, "So you're going to be an infantry officer," you know.

I said, "Yes."

And he said, "I was in the infantry from 1955 to 1957." And he just looked at me and said, "I wish you all the best." Because he knew what I was going into. And I cherish that, not only because it was a very human moment, but because this is exactly what I wasn't getting from my student colleagues and couldn't get from them. Because the nature of their anti-war protest, which involved in the case of the males rejection of any military service, let alone service in Vietnam, as immoral and evil, necessarily meant that those who were accepting it were somehow morally challenged or victims. The movie that best portrays that is Oliver Stone's "Platoon," but the movie that Jane Fonda starred in, "Coming Home," portrays it well also. We were seen by my peers, my intellectual peers, as either victims or war criminals. Nobody saw us as heroes. When Robert De Niro played in the movie, "The Deer Hunter" and it won the Academy Award, there was a huge fervor -- furor in America, even though that was 10 years after the war in 1979, or almost 10 years, because De Niro and his friends, although they were certainly victims, were also portrayed as heroes. And what I was seeing, or my specific commander, the advisor to this little Special Forces type, you know, was a guy named Myron Diduryk who is a legend in the U.S. Army. And he was certainly a hero, and a lot of the people I served with -- not I, but a lot of them I served with in this unit -- went off and did heroic things. So I knew what I was getting into and I was very resentful of that.

So I was very vocal and it was a very exuberant university political scene. And at one point the Harvard Club invited me over to talk to them as a student and when I got there -- it was really impressive -- these paneled rooms. I looked around and I said, "Why are you asking me to come talk to you? You know, you're the Harvard Club. You have a whole university full of people like me."

And they said, "We couldn't find anybody, in the whole university."

Q: Yeah. You know, I'm a little bit cynical about the anti-war movement. As you know, I served in the Foreign Service. I volunteered and I went in as consul general after 18 months just at this time. And I noticed when we stopped the draft all of a sudden the anti-war concern about the immorality of the war and all just dried up. Who cared? You know, I mean it was their ox that was being gored and it wasn't a sense of great moral outrage really (laughs). It was just, why me?

JEFFREY: Yeah. There was a lot of that. I wasn't particularly happy with the way the war was fought. I mean I wasn't stupid. Anybody looking at this is saying we've got 550,000 troops and we're losing 13,000 a year and we keep doing this year after year, how does it end? But a) I pretty well knew the history of Korea, I had a pretty good idea of what was going on in Taiwan, what was going on in Franco's Spain, what was going on in the Generals' Turkey, the Colonel's Greece, and other things. And I realized that many of our allies and friends around the world had histories very similar to Vietnam. And the fact that it was a civil war wasn't all that special. Greece was a civil war, Berlin was a civil war, China was a civil war, Korea was a civil war. And that didn't necessarily mean that we were making a mistake, per se, that we'd rise to the level of an immoral decision. It was just a stupid decision, because Vietnam had basically been lost after the 1954 Geneva Accords. And what we were trying to do was to reverse that, first through our allies locally, and then when they couldn't hold back the foe we got in there ourselves. But as you know, you were there. But there's a difference between, as I said, you don't get to pick your war.

Q: Yeah.

JEFFREY: And one of the things I resented most was when people say, "I would have fought in World War II." Well, taking the decision to fight is a very dramatic thing. Particularly when you consider dying at a young age or having to kill at a young age. So to lightly just dismiss what I was doing with a cavalier, hey, if it was a better war worthy of me I would have fought in it, really made me angry. So I left with a lifetime anger at these people. And there was a real alienation between me and most of my peers. It was no accident that my two closest friends, who were also going one to BC (Boston College), and one to Merrimack College, all went in the army with me and all of us had fathers, two on Guadalcanal, one a paratrooper in Normandy who'd all had -- how to say -- illustrious wars in World War II. And that wasn't an accident either. So that was my college career.

Q: All right. Well, did -- by the way, at this point did you develop a significant other, or were you --

JEFFREY: No. No, because -- that was a problem of living at home and being with friends who also were at other universities but we were very tight and we were a core of a larger group, the others who had gone off to college who had developed significant others and a great social life because we would go and visit them. And a lot of it revolved around getting liquor, because we were not 21 and as we weren't in fraternities, as we weren't plugged into a university scene, we basically had to, you know, find ways to get

liquor by hook or crook. We would crash parties in Boston, which could be a risky undertaking. And it was a -- we weren't hermits, but none of us had permanent girlfriends. And while I certainly would have liked it, because in high school we had certainly no -- I mean high school was -- my last years in high school were nice socially. But this was a very barren period. And frankly, I had to wait until my two friends went off into the army, because they were in a four-year program, before I could start doing normal dating. And I -- because I was the car, I was the money, I was a fair amount of the muscle, and I was the adult supervision of these three guys. And so I couldn't just leave them because I liked some girl. And we were just, you know, finding these girls as kind of drive-by things and in any case -- but then, so I had a normal social life my last year, I had a girlfriend. But then I realized none of this is working. Some of it was I really wasn't clicking with the girls but the other thing was I was going off in the infantry to Vietnam.

Q: Yeah, well let's talk about your military time. What happened? I mean you came out as a shavetail?

JEFFREY: Right. Just before I went on active duty they changed my orders and I was going to Germany, not Vietnam. And I was so relieved I went out, got drunk that night, fell in love with a 16-year-old girl that I never saw again, and crashed my father's car. So -- and I'd driven drunk for years, that was one of my roles with my friends. And I -- because I was so torn in both directions I realized I might be still alive in two years. I mean the chances of emerging unscathed in Vietnam in 1969 were not very good.

Q: No.

JEFFREY: It was either maiming or death. So you were hoping for the maiming, you lose an eye. I was in a battalion later, two of the seven captains were missing eyes. And not just eyes. But. And then, so I had to get my mind around that. And I said, "OK, I'll go to Germany and then I'll go to Vietnam." Which was essentially what happened. But first I went through the various, I mean training, the most dramatic being Army Ranger School, which was --

Q: What type of training did you get?

JEFFREY: Well, you get the basic infantry course. I went through Jump School. And then I went to Ranger School, which is two months of the very toughest combat training in the world, essentially. And with a very, very high dropout rate, a very high injury rate. And I -- it was very, very dangerous and it was very, very interesting. And I didn't know whether I'd make it through, but in the end you basically decide it's real simple, I'll either graduate or I die.

Q: Well, OK, let's talk a bit about this training. What were some of the elements of it that you can describe?

JEFFREY: Well, you do night parachute jumps with full equipment. You have to swim across rivers in the middle of the winter. You spend days and days out on patrol climbing cliffs and carrying lots of equipment. Basically infantry patrolling. But -- and all kinds of physical stuff. Walking on logs 40 feet above a river, a slide for life from a 75-foot tower along a cable, and just all kinds of things, tremendous amount of force marching, and a lot of helicopter work. And just, it was just wearing you down physically. What they were trying -- and, and the genius of the course was you were leading these patrols and you were, you were evaluated and you would either pass or flunk your patrols. And you would be rotated through. They would walk up to you and tap you and say, "You're now leading. So you'd better be paying attention." And this would be after days without sleep, and usually with very little food. And so you were totally stressed out, and what they were trying to see is could you generate leadership capability, judgment, and tactical sense under very, very difficult conditions. And if you didn't pass 50 percent of your patrols, you washed out at the very end of the course, which meant you had to go through the whole misery and you still didn't get what's called the Ranger Tab, which is a little badge you wear on your uniform. And, I did well in the patrols and I survived the, the physical, the grueling physical program. And it basically gives you so much confidence. I just cannot describe any other event except meeting and marrying my wife that has given me the confidence that I have. And stayed with me in Vietnam and then in Iraq many years later. When you're in a dangerous situation or tough physical situation you can always say, "Well, this isn't nice, but it certainly isn't as bad as Ranger School." And people had told me that before I went to Vietnam and I didn't believe them, and then I learned, they're actually right. This school is designed to be as bad as anything you would have ever seen, other than the actual death. But people were being very badly hurt in some cases.

Q: What sort of unit were you -- when you got to Germany, where'd you go and what'd you do -

JEFFREY: I went to a place called Bidingen, and I was assigned to an armored cavalry squadron, which is a battalion-sized unit of light tanks, scouts, and supporting weaponry, quite a large unit and 31 helicopters. That is essentially the reconnaissance element of an armored division, in this case the 3rd Armored Division and it was in Bidingen between the city of Frankfurt, a major German metropolis, and Fulda, on the border with East Germany in the famous Fulda Gap, which is a major military route and one we thought that the Soviets would use. And one of the missions in my squadron was to reinforce the armored cavalry regiment up there, which was the screening force for the V Corps, which was half of the U.S. Army basically running south of Bonn to the Rhine River. So essentially the southern half of Germany was a U.S. military command, the V Corps had the northern half of that southern half and the main avenue of approach from East Germany was the Fulda Gap, and that was where we were. So this was a very elite unit, it was constantly on alert, and we took our training very seriously.

Q: What was the general opinion among the officers about our ability to stop the Soviet thrust of Fulda Gap?

JEFFREY: You're hitting on one of the most significant things in my life, and one that I recently had a discussion with Kissinger on and I'm going to go up and see him on this. We had pounded into us that we would not be able to hold for too long and that we would have to go nuclear. And the whole nuclear deterrence was based upon hair trigger use of tactical battlefield nuclear weapons, because nobody would believe that, you know, to save Bonn we would sacrifice 100 million Americans. So therefore, it was a very step-by-step very intricate plan of using battlefield tactical use or lose missiles and get there.

But you know, keep us on. So there was a real debate. But the main policy of the U.S. government was partially to reassure the Western European allies that we would go nuclear and that this would bring us in and that that's what would keep the Soviets off. Essentially what the Germans in particular, who had a very large army of essentially the equivalent of 15 divisions, didn't want to fight another 30 years of war on their territory. They wanted there to be no invasion and they thought the best to do was a link to a nuclear weapons exchange. So that was the theory. Now, I'm getting ahead of myself, but when I was back on my second tour in Germany I worked for a corps commander, Donn Starry who thought that this was all foolish, that the United States could stop the Soviets, that the -- by excellent training and the right tactics, which later become known as the "air land battle doctrine," which was a doctrine used in the First Gulf War, Starry was the father of that, that we could stop them and I was one of his captains who was running around trying to prove this point. But I'm getting ahead, getting ahead of myself. Basically, we figured that we, we, we didn't know whether the whole U.S. Army could stop the Soviets. What we did know was that our screening force would not stop them for very long.

Q: Yeah, I -- well, during '55 to '58 I had the assignment, I was a vice consul in Frankfurt my first job. And one of my tasks was if the Soviets came through the Fulda Gap, I was to set up a card table in the _____ and process passports of civilians that wanted to get out. We figured the Soviet tanks would probably be on us before I'd get the legs up of my card table, but no, it -- something -- it's something we lived with for a long time.

JEFFREY: We have a lot in common. Could you turn this off, because I really should make this call, because what happened --

Q: Yeah.

JEFFREY: OK. So that was my job. I had a number of jobs in the squadron, support platoon leader, which is basically moving the ammunition and fuel and then scout platoon leader, and then the assistant S3 operations officer for the squadron.

Q: Well, did you -- we're running across dealing with soldiers at that time. The military's beginning to unravel, wasn't it?

JEFFREY: Less so than people said. It was considerably more unraveled two years later when I was back in Germany in '73, '74. Which was the low point. In my unit '70, '71 we had enough NCOs (non-commissioned officers). Some of them were very junior, they had only been in the army a couple of years, but they were basically solid people. I mean they deserved to be sergeants. So, and I had in both cases platoon sergeants who were, you know, had been in 15, 20 years and knew what they were doing. And the troops were very much children of the '60s. But you just -- I mean essentially they didn't like bullshit and they identified a lot of what the military did as bullshit, but so did we lieutenants to some degree. But the thing we all liked was to train and shoot and roll around the countryside. And as these units did a lot of that, there was no problem with anybody when you're in the field. There were constant problems in garrison, because garrison was boring. I mean you know German weather in the, you know, nine months out of the year. Standing around in a motor pool looking at your vehicle for eight hours a day is demoralizing for the most highly motivated of people. And a lot of these kids weren't particularly highly motivated; they were draftees. They were happy not to be in Vietnam, but apart from that.

Q: Did you get any feel, considering your later career, about your opponent? The other side of Fulda Gap? The Soviets and -- what'd you feel about the enemy?

JEFFREY: It's a good question because I was very involved in that later. No. I was totally involved in -- being in a unit like this is constantly being deployed, constantly in the field, constantly out doing things. And then we had a relatively active, borderline wild, social life. And so that's what my life consisted of.

Q: What about interaction with the Germans?

JEFFREY: Well, a lot of our social life was interaction with the Germans, including my future wife.

Q: Yeah. Can you -- it's easy to ask and hard to describe probably, but how did you sense Germans were feeling about American forces there?

JEFFREY: Well, we were -- this was a small historic town called Buding in the middle of the Buderwald, an imperial forest in the Middle Ages. And, but the town was very dependent upon the small army garrison. Secondly, the officers club and our commanders' quarters were not on the base, but downtown. So there was much mixing and this is unusual -- and so therefore there wasn't a town versus gown kind of thing. We were right in the midst of this. Many, many people from the unit had married Germans, some of which had retired, left the military, and were living nearby. Some of whose spouses, you know, were off in the States. My wife knew, you know, relatives and friends who had married or who had had relationships with Americans. So it was a close relationship. And at the time, at the end of the day the Germans, at least in the small villages, particularly in an area that had seen a lot of fighting in World War II and was on the invasion path, were happy to have us. There was no animosity whatsoever.

Q: And it was on this deployment that you met your wife?

JEFFREY: Mm-hmm.

Q: What was her background?

JEFFREY: She was a -- when I met her she was a high school student. But of course you have to know the German system, as you do. She was in the gymnasium, which is not like being in high school. It's like being in the elite, like the French Lycee, where you've been culled out from the pack and been put on a university track. So she was -- her father had been, had gone to the gymnasium, was a finance ministry official. Both he and his father had been army officers, or in his case an officer candidate. And so she came from a middle class family that put a lot of emphasis on education. And when Germans put emphasis on education they do it with real dash. And so it's music and culture and poetry and languages. She of course was good at English. And so I met her when she was finishing up her gymnasium, and I started dating her in 1971. Well, I met her in early '71. In late '71, just before I went out to Vietnam, and by this time she had begun studying at the University of Frankfurt.

Q: Well, was there an expectation that something would happen? I mean were you following events in the Soviet Union, or not, or?

JEFFREY: You know, that's a good question too. Because I was somebody who voraciously read newspapers and New York Times, The Boston Globe. And you had very little access other than maybe Time and Newsweek to serious news where we were. I mean The Herald Tribune was hard to come by, and the, the, the military newspapers were not --

Q: The Stars and Stripes were sort of --

JEFFREY: Yeah, the Stars and Stripes were sort of, you know, fluff news. So you didn't really have -- so I kind of dropped out of following politics. As I said, it was an extremely busy life.

Q: Well, I know I was -- when I was a military enlisted man I eventually ended up in Darmstadt. And we, at one point, were all confined to barracks because there was an uprising in Berlin. This is about '53 or so.

JEFFREY: Mm-hmm.

Q: And actually it was a rather serious one. But I don't think, you know, good guy, we just sort of -- this was just an inconvenience that kept us out of the _____ or something like that at the time.

JEFFREY: Well, the last major development involving -- essentially the conflict had frozen after the second Berlin crisis in '63. And you had the whole series of uprisings.

You had '53 in Berlin, you had '56 in Poland, '56 in Hungary. And then the last one was '67 in Czechoslovakia. And that was a few years before I got there. And so, you'd have the, and you had a new administration, but you'd have basically a number of arms control agreements with the Soviets. You'd gone through the Cuban Missile Crisis. You had a new leadership and such. And so, the confrontation with the Soviet Union was there. It was the core of everything. But to the extent of the foreign news it was Vietnam. It was because Vietnam was so dramatic in that period. I mean you had '68 Tet, you had the withdrawal of Johnson, you had Nixon running on ending the war. Then you had the terrible year of '69. You later had the Cambodian invasion. This was all constant high drama, Kent State. And basically, to the extent you were following politics or international affairs, it was all oriented on Vietnam.

Q: Yeah. Well then, looking at the time I've got to cut this off for now. But we can pick this up next time.

JEFFREY: Sure.

Q: When you went to Vietnam. When was that?

JEFFREY: That was in early '72.

Q: OK, we'll pick this up then.

JEFFREY: All right.

Q: OK.

JEFFREY: Great, well thank you very much.

Q: So this is going very well. We parallel a lot of things.

JEFFREY: Vietnam and Germany.

Q: OK, today is the 10th of January, 2014 with Jim Jeffrey. And Jim, we are -- you're going to Vietnam.

JEFFREY: Right.

Q: So when did you go to Vietnam, and what did you do?

JEFFREY: Well, I finally got orders to Vietnam in 1971. This was after repeatedly volunteering to go, because it was just impossible for me to imagine having served in the army that was totally shaped by Vietnam, and not going to Vietnam. But the war was obviously ending, so it was hit or miss. Of the regular army officers, combat arms, from

1969 about -- which was my cohort -- about half went to Vietnam and half didn't because essentially we were rapidly withdrawing troops after the Cambodian invasion in 1970. So I got orders and then I was immediately horrified because I wanted to go to an American unit. I thought that my role in life was to command American troops. And instead I was going out as an advisor to a South Vietnamese unit. Two problems. One is I'm not commanding U.S. troops, and that was much of my motivation. Because I didn't really at this point think that the war was a very good idea. I wasn't going there to save democracy in South Vietnam; I was going there to serve my country by commanding U.S. troops. And this was an advisory function. The second thing is, we could see the writing on the wall already for the spring 1972. It became the Easter Offensive. The North Vietnamese Army did a major invasion of South Vietnam. So therefore, being out there with Vietnamese troops was not going to be a happy experience. And the (1971) Lam Son 719 operation, where Vietnamese troops were sent with American air support, into Laos was not, again, a very successful experience, and the Vietnamese did badly.

Q: This had happened before.

JEFFREY: Yeah, this is 1971. So this shapes my perception.

Q: By the way, were you getting what you think -- I mean through whatever sources, a pretty good idea of what was happening and all?

JEFFREY: Yeah. Yeah. I mean on Vietnam, as we talked earlier with the Stars and Stripes and such, you didn't get a whole lot of general news. But on Vietnam I followed it like a hawk and have been following it like a hawk since 1965. So I knew what was going on. Then when I got -- so I went through, the army had a special forces training center at Fort Bragg for people who were going out with Vietnamese units and the MACV (Military Assistance Command Vietnam) CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support) and ARVN (Army of South Vietnam) programs. And I went through the latter. Then when I got to Vietnam the word came out that captains no longer were being sent out to be battalion senior advisors because they had a cut back, plus they were losing too many of them. And they wanted to reduce casualties. So they had to find us all jobs, ironically most of us back with the U.S. Army. So I was assigned to MACV (Military Assistance Command, Vietnam) Special Troops as the commander, as it were, of a little base right on the edge of Saigon to the southwest of Tan Son Nhut Airbase, which was a logistics center, but it was in a fairly rough area. And so I spent six months basically sitting on top of that. It was not particularly dangerous work, but I mean we were constantly worried about being overrun, but nothing really bad happened. But Vietnam was Vietnam. You got shot at, you got shelled.

Q: Where were the enemy troops coming from?

JEFFREY: Well, basically these were Vietnamese infiltrators, Vietcong infiltrators. There was a large refugee population around the camp. And many of them had infiltrated into that. There was a very hostile, if you will, environment between us and the refugees. And there was a fair amount of not serious, but I mean shooting back and forth. It just

kept things a little bit lively. The offensive did occur in Easter and was a great success for the United States because the South Vietnamese Army did hold. I got a chance to go up to the positions to the south of An Loc where there were two Vietnamese army divisions locked in combat with an equal number of North Vietnamese troops. The North Vietnamese had tanks, artillery, and this was all within 60 miles of Saigon. And so basically it was a conventional war. I mean the U.S. -- well, not the U.S. troops, there were no U.S. troops -- the Vietnamese troops were dug in like World War I, and it was artillery and street-to-street fighting. And the -- what I -- I mean obviously as a close observer, because at one point we actually considered evacuating Saigon things were looking so bad. But -- and we had about 25,000 U.S. troops, almost all of them rear echelon support troops. We had only one brigade of combat troops in that part of Vietnam. But the decision came down almost immediately. There's no way we can evacuate, it won't work, so we have to win. And what I saw through these meetings and staff analysis and such that I was involved in was the application of American power in a massive way, the mining of Haiphong, putting bombers over Hanoi, and combined with the diplomatic offensive with the Chinese and the Russians.

And it was masterfully done, but also there was tremendous pressure on the Vietnamese to do things they had never done. You understand the system where South Vietnamese divisions all were the personal property of the four South Vietnamese Corps commanders who were kingmakers in Vietnam, and the last thing they wanted was their troops to go away. Most of the fighting was done by either elite South Vietnamese units, the marines, the Special Forces, the Rangers, or the local forces, the regular South Vietnamese. Divisions just kind of held territory. We pulled a whole division up from the Delta and put it into the fight in An Loc. And this was the first time that a division had been moved across a Corps boundary in the entire war, which shows you the state of the South Vietnamese participation in their own war. But Vietnamese troops did quite well and I was much impressed with John Paul Vann, who at the time was technically a USAID (United States Agency for International Development) Foreign Service Reserve Officer. And he basically was given a command in the central highlands. He did brilliantly, and then he got killed. And, but that made a big impression on me. Then I volunteered, we then decided that we needed some kind of local security battalion-- because we got rid of the brigades that we did have. It's part of the drawdown. And so now we have no capability to defend ourselves. So we started forming security battalions out of essentially rear echelon troops. And I volunteered to be a platoon leader and so we had a battalion, it was securing part of MACV headquarters in Tan Son Nhut Airbase. We had M-113 armored personnel carriers that were left behind, and we were basically under an MP battalion. In fact, you would know it. It was the 716th of Tet fame in 1968, was still there. And so, the -- and that was fairly exciting and I got to lead troops in some fairly difficult situations, but nothing overly dramatic.

Q: Granted you were dealing with selected troops, but how did you find our military and being an officer leading a military at this stage of the game?

JEFFREY: That's a good question, because as I said, these weren't carefully selected troops; these were just whoever we could grab. And we had to basically teach them

small unit tactics, and that was one of my jobs. And I was very nervous going out to the middle of nowhere for a firing range where we would let them do things like fire M79 grenade launchers and machine guns. Because they hadn't done that. I mean most of them were just barely qualified on their rifles. And, and so, but I have to say, if you were leading them, if you were out there with them, they would do well. In one case I had a guy in a searchlight tower who thought there was enemy movement through a graveyard in one area and we thought -- and we were very worried about that, it was a major area of approach and we often had helicopters covering it. And we didn't have any helicopters that night and he thought that he saw movement. And so, I went out with my Jeep and my driver had a rifle so I deployed him. And anyway, the kid in the tower said, "OK, I think there's something out there." And the normal SOP (standard operating procedure) was you didn't put your light on obviously, you only put the light on in an emergency if you thought something was out there. And I thought -- and the rest of the company -- my platoon was deployed all around, the rest of the company and the M-113 personnel carriers were back some distance away. And I thought, you know, if somebody's out there we have to slow them down for a bit and make a lot of noise. And so there's got to be resistance. I got one guy with a rifle, another guy in a tower with a rifle. He's dead as soon as he turns the light on. And me with a pistol. So I turn to the guy in the tower, I said, "Look soldier, you got to give me your rifle before you turn the light on." The kid stopped for a second, he thought of what I was saying, and he realized the import of it. He handed me the rifle. He turned on the light, there was nobody there. But that's not the important thing. That says all I want to say about American troops.

Q: Mm-hmm. Yeah. I mean did you find problems -- because there was so much talk about, I guess by this time, of drugs, fragging of officers --

JEFFREY: No, that was, that was basically in -- that was a -- I mean I know a lot about this, but that was basically in infantry units and other tactical units on fire bases that didn't have enough to do. And with a general breakdown of the army from the breakdown of non-commissioned officers, particularly in the combat arms because they'd either been killed or they just didn't want to do a third or fourth tour.

Q: Mm.

JEFFREY: And so therefore I mean the best example is Chuck Hagel, had been -- was the first sergeant of the company with a year and a half of total army time. And whereas, interestingly, in the support services -- because this is where we got the people for this security battalion -- there were plenty of sergeant E7s, master sergeants, staff sergeants. And so there were plenty of career people because of course, you know, in those things for example I think I had -- in my platoon I had two sergeants who were from the mortuary unit, and two sergeants who were from an IT (information technology) unit. We had just started deploying computers. And so these guys were, you know, they were good NCOs, but they weren't subject to the constant drain of going out and being killed for seven years before 1972. So they were still in the army. And they were, they did a very good job. I mean they needed a little bit of infantry brush-up training, but all in all they were solid. So by that time in Vietnam, because all the troops were out, you had Air

Force, you had support troops, you had that kind of thing, it was a different environment in fragging, drugs, there was some of it going on. But you really didn't notice it. It was, it was something that you didn't worry about. I had a sergeant who tried to massacre a group of Vietnamese civilians one day in front of me. And he was clearly -- I don't know if he was high on something, but he had been in what was one tour too many. I mean he was suffering from some kind of extreme post-traumatic stress disorder. But that was one of the more dramatic things to happen was watching somebody empty an M16 into a group of Vietnamese. Fortunately, and to my surprise, he didn't hit anybody, which also shows you how hard it is to hit things with bullets.

Q: Yeah.

JEFFREY: So you really are unlucky if you hit with a bullet basically. But shrapnel's a bit different. But no, my experience with Americans was good. My experience with the Vietnamese, given the fact that they fought for their country, was also good. And then, you know, I was there for the Christmas morning when the peace talks broke down and Nixon put the B-52s back over Hanoi. And I was terribly impressed with that. Because I could see that we were simultaneously -- that's an argument I make to this administration -- negotiating with the Chinese, the Russians, and the North Vietnamese on a whole variety of things, while using power very, very ruthlessly when we felt it was necessary. And the idea that this would alienate and break down the talks, it didn't break down the talks with anybody. In fact, it made them take Nixon and Kissinger more seriously and led to breakthroughs with all three countries. You have to be careful applying this rule, but it was one that I have forever kept with me. So my experience with Vietnam, I, I was ambivalent -- I had basically figured that the war was lost when we went there. As I said, I was going there only to command U.S. troops, I felt that was my duty. Only got -- well, I got some of that because my little base was U.S. troops there and my platoon was U.S. troops, but it wasn't what I expected.

But on the other hand, I learned a lot about Vietnam because I was right in the middle of a Vietnam milieu in the outskirts of Saigon. And I much respected the society, much respected the willingness of Vietnamese to fight and die when they were well led, when they were well supplied and equipped, supported by us, which was the lesson of the Easter Offensive. And so I left upbeat and felt that this thing could actually work. And it did work until Congress pulled the plug on, on U.S. support. The air strikes, the bombing of Cambodia, and such. And so in the end the country was left demoralized and the North Vietnamese repeated the 1972 invasion in 1975 and we all know the result of that. But by that time I was back in Germany. Now, I was still in the army because my girlfriend was still at the university and I couldn't figure out any other way to go to Germany but stay in the army. And so, the army was happy to send me back there and then they gave me orders to go to Nuremberg. And Nuremberg is a long way from where my future wife was, near Frankfurt, Bidingen. So not knowing what to do, another officer -- I mean we were just army captains and we had only been in the army three years each, said, "Ah, you should write the inspector general." And so I wrote the U.S. Army Europe Inspector General with the tale of my woe, I couldn't be near my girlfriend.

And I mean it was a totally foolish stupid thing, and I got the most wonderful letter back saying, "We support our troops in Vietnam. Your orders are being changed." So I was assigned to a unit in Friedberg, Elvis Presley's old brigade, that was 25 minutes from my wife's house. So I was a company commander there in an armor battalion for 18 months. There we did see the breakdown of the army because we had the last elements of the draftee army. These kids really didn't want to be there. The more you could get them in the field, the more you'd get them shooting things, the more you could do things like -- I was a headquarters company commander, but I would find helicopters and move them around on little air mobile exercises and such. And the more you did combat training, just like my experience in Vietnam when they're actually faced with combat, these people are just fine. They were terrible in garrison because they didn't have enough to do. They would stand down in weather like we have today, barely above freezing, drizzling rain. As you know, that's a typical August day in Frankfurt, and let alone a November day. And with their, you know, hands in their pockets of their field jackets looking miserable, supposedly working on their vehicles. Well, how much time can you work -- even army vehicles -- I mean they don't require, you know, 8 hours of checking oil and topping off the fuel and making sure your battery levels are OK. It was just insane. We had nothing that we could occupy them with.

Q: Did you have problems with the relations with the Germans?

JEFFREY: It's a good question. In Bidingen in my first tour with the cavalry squadron, as it was so integrated, because it was a small post, the officers' club and colonel's house were downtown. The -- even the BOQ (Bachelor Officer Quarters) and that was important because that's where we would entertain our German girlfriends, was technically off the compound. It wasn't behind the wire or in front of the wire. And so you, so it was easy to integrate and there was a long tradition. Friedberg, less so. I had no contact -- between the company command job and my German girlfriend I was pretty well occupied -- but there was *very* little contact with Germans. It was very different from Bidingen. I don't think that was a difference in time. I think it was a difference in the relationship of the post to the community. We had a German partner battalion, a tank battalion, we did a lot with them. But that was of course military-to-military. With the civilian population, no, I'd have to say that there was -- reflecting back on it, because my battalion commander was single and he lived off post in, you know, in Bad Nauheim, which is a ritzy step up community from Friedberg next door. And he had a Mercedes sports car and he was obviously a man about town. And he was interested in getting us out to do things with the community. So once a month we would have a kind of battalion officers event at a restaurant or a tourist site and such, and my girlfriend and I organized a lot of these because we could speak German. She obviously could, and I could speak it well enough. But the fact that they had to turn to us, nobody else could speak German. And I mean in Bidingen my squadron commander was married to a German, the S3 was dating and then married a German. Everybody, seemingly all my friends, all had German girlfriends. They were just -- you were encountering Germans all the time. This was like taking these people from the battalion to an alien planet. Ooh, you know, these, these, these exotic things. They had no idea of the world that they were in. It was very, very

different. It's a very good question. As I said, I think that probably my first experience was unusual.

Q: Well then, I mean, was there a difference in feeling about the likelihood of the Soviets coming through the Fulda Gap? Or I mean it was sort of every year the feeling of threat was diminishing, or not?

JEFFREY: The feeling of threat was diminishing because after the Cuban Missile Crisis -- after the Berlin crisis and the Cuban Missile Crisis people felt that the Soviet Union was in a defensive mode at least in Europe. It would defend its perimeter, thus the Prague Spring intervention. But it wasn't going to actively bully the West in Berlin or any place else. Now, this all came a cropper in the 1973 Yom Kippur War, which is -- was a very significant event in my life because I'd just gotten back from Vietnam and I figured OK, that was my experience with war. Had enough war, had enough excitement in my life. Now I have a girlfriend, have to be this company commander but I mean, you know, it's almost a garrison existence. So focus on the girlfriend, focus on what I'm going to be doing with the rest of my life. And then I was in the midst of the Yom Kippur War, when the Israelis struck back and isolated the Egyptian Third Army with their backs to the canal the Russians alerted three airborne divisions and started rattling sabers about how they would intervene in the Middle East.

And it turned out Nixon was drunk, we now know, and I've talked to Henry Kissinger, who took it on his own authority as national security advisor to put us all on Red Con 3, which is essentially nuclear alert minus. And my brigade, most of the officers were out on what they call a terrain walk, where all of the commanders go out and maneuver around with Jeeps pretending they have the whole battalion. It's a cheap way to do training and orientation on the terrain. And so there were just five captains back as the rear attachment commanders of the four battalions and the brigade headquarters. And we had all the troops but we didn't have much authority. So we got the encoded top-secret telegram putting us all on alert, but nobody could figure out how to decode it because the people who had the codes were out in the field. So then we turned on AFM and we -- by this time the news had leaked, so we all looked at each other and said, "OK, we're on, we're on nuclear alert. What are we going to do?" And I remember the scene from the movie, "From Here to Eternity," when Pearl Harbor is attacked and the Burt Lancaster character says, "Everybody go draw your weapons and go lie on your bunks." So I said, "Let's get everybody to draw their weapons, but no ammunition," because we didn't trust these kids with ammunition, "and go sit on their bunks and we'll tell you what to do when we figure that out." But this was significant for several reasons.

First of all, that event and one day in Iraq were the only times in my life where I felt, to use Ulysses Grant in his autobiography's term, "trepidation," as opposed to concern or -- I was actually very, very nervous. And I realize why. My father had just died, my mother was dying. This was a huge blow to my brother and me because it was a nice tightly knit family. And, my mother had to go through my father's death. She had a brain tumor but she was in remission at the time, but it was obvious where this was going to turn out. It was the same thing Teddy Kennedy had. And, and I realize on top of

everything else she had, the one thing, her son comes back from Vietnam, now I'm going to go off and die in the desert. Or die in the Fulda Gap. Because we didn't know, you know, how quickly this would escalate into World War III. And I was totally frozen. I hadn't, I hadn't been aware of this. And this is, to some degree it was a whole, probably the culmination of really big -- there's only so many events in life that are transformational. A great love, I had that, death of parents, I was experiencing both, and an extraordinary typically dangerous experience, Vietnam. Well, I had all three of these things wrapped up in the preceding two years. And now I was facing yet another thing. And I was totally, I didn't know -- I mean I was frightened, which I normally wasn't. I mean I'd been through a fair amount in Vietnam, I was never frightened before, during, or after. And I was, I was basically frozen. I couldn't figure out what to think about -- It was just dominating my mind. And then I stopped and I said, "Wait a second. The guys who are leading us are the guys who lead us through the Christmas bombings, they led us through the Haiphong mining, they led us through the spring offensive. These guys knew what they're doing. You have to trust your leaders. These leaders have earned my trust. So I'm just going to chill out, follow orders, lead my troops, and let's see where this brings us." But there was no enthusiasm. I didn't want another combat patch, another ribbon.

Q: Yeah.

JEFFREY: But at that point I had calmed myself down, which was important. But the, the, the -- again, the lesson that I took was leadership is real. Leadership makes a difference. Leadership can inspire people and bring them out of their frozen trances and get them to actually do things. And these guys by what they had done -- and they were of course a very controversial pair in American history -- in terms of the period 1972, 1973, repeatedly at great risk made the right decisions using diplomacy and military force brilliantly, be it in Southeast Asia, be it in the Middle East. And to this day, I'm still in awe of them and what they did. But it had, as I said, a very personal impact on me.

Q: Well, to capture that period in time when you were on high alert, what -- using your girlfriend at the time, you had a girlfriend -- what, sort of what was the reaction of the German community? Did they realize how dangerous this was?

JEFFREY: I have no idea. She didn't. Because she was occupied in commuting to Frankfurt University every day and she's a very serious student and she's doing all that. And there were no protests or anything. That came later, like '76 and such with the, essentially the expansion of the Baader-Meinhof Gang, and I can tell you very personally -- I'll tell you a very personal incident about that. You didn't have the kind of protests. I mean even though they might have been fighting in one's backyard. The other thing is this lasted about 18 hours. When the Russians saw the nuclear alert they said Jesus, do we really want this?

Q: You know, I'm thinking about this. I think this is '72 --

JEFFREY: '73.

Q: I was in Athens. And it doesn't --

JEFFREY: Yeah.

Q: I mean, you know, I mean, I mean obviously things, we would have been caught up in it, but it just doesn't ring -- and I mean, you know, it's one of those things you read in the paper and that's interesting, but I didn't have that feeling of oh, my God.

JEFFREY: We probably -- of course we did this without -- this wasn't a NATO alert; this was a U.S. alert. It was unilateral. Probably nobody bothered sending out, at least initially, cables to all of the countries saying hey, we're in this situation. This is why we're in this situation, this is what we want you to do, you know, the normal diplomatic 20 steps. I don't think that was done, it was too quick. And it got a lot of play in the American press, it got a lot of international play, but as I said, as soon as the Russians saw that within hours there were people talking back and forth, two things happened. The Russians stood down, we stood down, but as part of standing down we talked to the Israelis and said, "You can't wipe out the Egyptian Third Army."

That led to the ceasefire. Basically Kissinger arranged a ceasefire, that was part of the thing. And the Third Army lived to fight another day -- or not fight another day, as the case may be. And so the Russians to some degree were able to -- it was a typical Kissingerian thing where it wasn't win/lose, it was the Russians could say, "See? Because we put our troops on alert, in the end we got what we wanted, which was that the third army was not overrun. And the Israelis would not have been in a position to storm across the Suez Canal and attack Cairo."

So we achieved something and Kissinger could say, "Well, we showed the Russians." So it's a good example of, again, diplomacy combined with military force. But to my way of thinking, diplomacy is the command and control of military force, trade policy, energy issues, military and financial issues, and the whole vague realm of rule of law, morality, international legal systems, and organizations. It's all of that put together, and how you orchestrate it is diplomacy.

Q: This is how you're thinking now, but at the time and any time in this period we're talking about today, did diplomacy and being a participant of diplomacy cross your radar at all?

JEFFREY: Only vaguely. I was in Vietnam after the ceasefire and my job -- and I actually got a medal for it, which along with a State Department medal I'll talk about later, the two lowest medals I've ever received, but are the ones I'm most proud of. That is for 24 hours I was involved in the ceasefire. I know I'm going back in time here, but the terms of the Paris Accords, there would be a peacekeeping force of Australians, Romanians, Hungarians, Poles -- two Communists -- Australians -- no, Canadians, and I think Indonesians. So we had them all flying in. And then we had the POWs (prisoners of war) who were held by the Vietcong coming into Tan Son Nhut, and we had the

Vietcong and NVA (North Vietnam Army) delegations to the four-party -- it was called the "international commission." It was the -- it wasn't the ICS (International Control Commission)), that was the one set up after '54, it was the ICCS (International Commission of Control and Supervision) I think. And it was a new organization, U.S., South Vietnam, North Vietnam, and Vietcong. And so we had all these people coming in, and I was one of the people responsible for sorting them all out and organizing them.

And the first thing that happened was the Vietcong mortared the airfield fuel tanks at dawn, where I was just before the ceasefire went into effect. So you've got, you know, burning oil tanks and black clouds going up in the air, as A-1 South Vietnamese Sky Raiders, which were propeller planes zooming around, it looked like a World War II movie. I mean much of Vietnam looked like a movie to me. But then all these people were coming in and I was running around with the Poles, but -- and it was -- and, and at one point embassy guys were showing up and I was working with them. And I was thinking, "That would be an interesting job." But then I -- and then afterwards I was assigned as a liaison officer to the Vietcong and North Vietnamese—I could speak some Vietnamese from my Fort Bragg training and just hanging around Vietnamese -- at the North Vietnamese and Vietcong compound. And so I was sitting around with them drinking Ba Mui Ba ("33") beer and then while there were supposedly two delegations it was clear that the lowest ranking North Vietnamese member of the ten-man delegation was more important than the highest ranking member of the Viet Cong delegation. I mean it was a very, very blatant and obvious differentiation, which of course -- and my feeling was that the Vietcong had done most of the fighting. But it was all very interesting, of course, to be sitting around with your enemy of -- well, in this case a few days ago. Because I had been the target of their attacks. We all were. So that was fine and that was a little bit diplomatic. So yeah, I was beginning to think about that.

But again, nothing -- by the time I was in Europe I was looking at -- I knew I couldn't stay in the army because I didn't have enough credentials as an infantry officer. So I was looking at the paid legal program where they would send you to law school at the University of Virginia, or very much, the army's foreign area specialist program. But I was blocked from that. The law program, it didn't work with my timing and my wife's graduation, but the foreign area specialist program I was blocked from because you couldn't have a foreign wife. And this is interesting, because essentially the military was picking up -- because they didn't have that rule elsewhere -- they were picking up the State Department rule at the time that FSOs could not be commissioned FSOs if they had a foreign national as a wife. And I'll come to that little adventure in a bit too. So I was without any real job or any real future. But then when I was in -- finishing off my company command time I was offered a very good job in V Corps headquarters in the G-3 doing training issues and G-3 being a good place to be in an interesting job. I took that immediately, but I was still looking for a long-term --

Q: G-3 is what?

JEFFREY: G-3 is operations, planning -- at the time it was also planning, now the military split it out into a G-3 and G-5. But at the time it was planning, training operations, and various things like that. It's the heart of the corps headquarters.

Q: Yeah.

JEFFREY: And we were actually the G-3 Air, which is why you had captains as action officers, because at a corps level the action officers would all be lieutenant colonels and majors. But we were watch standers in the G-3 Air Operations Center, which would be a joint operation with the U.S. Air Force. They would have a command that would plug into the corps headquarters, and it basically would control air support for the corps in a time of war. But that, ironically that -- we were not permanently stood up as watch standers. You would only do this when we'd go out on exercise with the Air Force. We had another operations center where you had a bunch of captains who would be doing that 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Because the corps was an active organization in a quasi-combat zone. But we didn't have to do that so the army had something, had to figure out what to do with us. And as it was a, what's called a table of organization and equipment army corps, that is it's designed to fight, they didn't have a training directorate because training is not a combat function. So they had -- you had plans, you had G-3 air, you had current operations, you had nuclear operations.

But there was nobody to do training, which is what the corps did every day. And so they gave it to us, the most junior people in the entire corps, the job of managing the corps training program, which was ironic but it was a great opportunity for me and for the other captains who were doing this. And I did all of the funding, the rail movements of armored vehicles to training areas, and the tank gunnery program. And, this was a wonderful job. I commuted to Frankfurt every day. And then in 1975 I got married and my wife became a teacher and lived in -- we lived in a place called Camberg, which is north of Wiesbaden towards Limburg, in fact she taught in Limburg. So, things were fine and I really enjoyed my job. And eventually we got a guy, whom I'd mentioned earlier, named General Donn Starry, who's famous in the army, as the corps commander, and the first thing he did was fire me as tank gunnery officer. Because his adjutant called me in one day and said, "Jeffrey, you're an infantry officer when we, when you're on a corps staff you don't wear your branch of service insignia," in my case crossed rifles, "You wear a general staff insignia," which is a --

Q: Shield or something?

JEFFREY: It's a star, it's a star with a shield inside it. And then -- but sometimes I would also wear my cavalry swords from my first assignment, because those are neat and not everybody has them, whereas infantry officers are a dime a dozen. So nobody knew I was an infantry officer except somebody ratted on Starry so Starry's guy with a grin said -- because Starry had been -- he was a famous armor officer, had commanded the armor center and commanded the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment Vietnam. And he with a laugh said, "Jeffrey, Starry's got to find something else to do with you because he can't have an infantry man as his tank gunnery officer."

And I said, "Look, I really know the business. I was in two armored units in your corps since 1971."

And he said, "I know it, but he'll find something else to do with ya."

And he did. And one of the things I did for him to help him is basically a little think tank that he set up. Starry was the most creative officer in the U.S. Army. The U.S. Army's problem after Vietnam was it had totally focused on counterinsurgency warfare for a decade, kind of like the U.S. Army today. But it had a real mission, which was to fight Soviet or Soviet style armies, and it hadn't put much thought into that because of the constant rotation to and from Vietnam in the very different form of warfare you would do in a counterinsurgency environment. So Starry's conclusion -- and this is extraordinary -- was that the American army, with its extraordinary amount of training if you did it right, and we did it right even during the Vietnam War, hundreds of main gun rounds were fired from every tank on very realistic moving engagements in these ranges, even then and it's even better now, could fight outnumbered and win. That was one of his mottos. And he started thinking about this and he developed something called air-land battle, which became the primary war fighting doctrine of the U.S. Army and was proven brilliantly correct in the Gulf War, 1991. They were fighting -- we were fighting off of Starry's script. At the strategic level it was Colin Powell and the Powell doctrine. At the tactical level it was Donn Starry. And those are two of the three most brilliant generals that the U.S. Army has produced since World War II, the third being Petraeus.

Q: What was the essential of the air-land battle?

JEFFREY: The essential of the air-land battle was adopting essentially what I call armored cavalry tactics, which we learned for the use of mechanized forces. First of all, close integration with air power, both attack helicopters and close air support, and deeper strikes, and secondly, very rapid maneuver so that you would get inside the thinking curve of the other side. They would think you're here, but you'd already moved to here. So their artillery was going on that. And this was particularly useful with the Russians who tended to plan things all in advance in well-orchestrated -- they were not good at calling shots as you move. They were very good at planning massive firepower. Starry also concluded that while we had only in NATO about 5,000 tanks, to the Russians 18,000, that we were thinking of this incorrectly. It wasn't their tanks versus our tanks, it was their tanks versus our tank rounds. And we had a hell of a lot more than 18,000 tank rounds. So Starry's figure is if you can hit their tanks with your first shot and outrange them -- and our weapons by and large outrange theirs -- and if your crews are really well trained not just in shooting but in maneuver, you can essentially defeat them before they get close enough to defeat you, inflicting severe casualties on them. And you can be sufficiently flexible and mobile to avoid massive artillery barrages. And, that's what he trained us for. And he trained continuously.

He would find ways to get the corps out training. Normally if you want to train a corps you have to stand down the other army corps. Corps is about 65,000 troops. Because to do an exercise, rolling around the German countryside with all those troops, you need

controllers everywhere, both to carry out the scenario, but also to control the movement. I mean these controllers who were officers with every company or with every battalion, and they're also sergeants out there. And you have to say, "You have to stop here because the tactical situation is such." And it's a very, very convoluted thing. But as I said, you have to stand down half of the U.S. Army Europe to send a corps up. Starry said that's foolish and he sent us all out and he just came up with 30 officers that he put with each battalion and he gave each of them bags of 10 Pfennig pieces. And he said, "Every time you drive through a German town go to the little yellow telephone and dial one of these numbers and we'll have a bank of people operating on it. You report your position and your code number for who you are and if we want you to stop your unit we'll tell you. If we don't, you just keep on going." And this simple -- I mean this was creative. And thus we had 65,000 troops rolling around doing an exercise without having to get the other corps commander to put up literally several thousand troops -- not troops, several thousand leaders, which essentially would stand down his corps for weeks.

So Starry did this kind of thing. He was really a brilliant general and I got to know him quite well. And then he went on to be the head of training and doctrine for the U.S. Army, and then as I said, he had this manual published -- the army published it -- but it was his inspiration, air-land battle, and he became the grandfather of the modern heavy army that -- where this is of great strategic importance in our time is that Starry's conclusion was that we didn't need to go nuclear. That we would actually defeat these guys by conventional forces because everybody trained like we trained. The British, the Germans, the French. And so, one of my missions one day was to find out what the Russians did. And I ran into considerable problems with the G2 people and we said, "That's too highly classified."

And I said, "Wait a minute, we have this information to be used." No, this was, this was the army 35, 40 years ago. Far more bureaucratic than today. So I, you know, got angry and jumped up and down to the extent a captain can get any attention in a large headquarters, and finally they let me in. And when I found out was that the Soviets had their tank crews fire three rounds a year in what's known as a KD range, a known-distance range. That is, it was a thousand meters away, each tank would trundle up. They knew it was a thousand meters, they would set a thousand meters on their sights and clink, clink, clink, they would hit their targets and they would consider themselves qualified. As a crew member of a Sheridan-like tank, after weeks of training and firing literally hundreds of rounds of main gun ammunition and countless machine gun rounds, you go on a course where we had to fire our missile because the thing was mounted with a missile, and then we went on a course that was three kilometers long where you had all kinds of targets, you had to engage with both machine guns and with different kinds of ammunition from your main gun, and you would never know where your next target would come from. You're actually being engaged by tank hulls because they mounted these flash-bang simulators on them so you had to watch because you would have maybe 20 hulls all around you, 1,000 to 2,000 meters away. And you didn't know which one was actually an engagement until suddenly you saw a flash, a bang, and saw smoke and you knew you'd just been "fired on" and you had so many seconds to swivel a gun around and engage that target. Or then while you were doing that they had

these cardboard tanks and trucks mounted on rails, and suddenly off in another direction you would have one of these things moving along. There's a moving target, you would then have to swing the gun around. If it was a truck you'd engage with the 50-caliber machine gun, if it was a tank you would engage with another kind of ammunition from the ammunition you used on the hull. And I mean doing things like this really honed crews. And now they don't do it individually; they do it by platoon, but the American army was moving to this, other armies were doing this as well, and there was just no comparison with the Soviets who did nothing like this with their crews.

Q: You know, one of the things that I get from people who served in Moscow and all, they're saying, "Well, yes, the economy was lousy and all. But really, they turned out very good equipment and all that. But did you get a -- I mean was there, as you looked at this did you have a feeling that these guys aren't 10-feet-tall?"

JEFFREY: The equipment was good. That is, the tanks were small, which is good, as a target. They mounted powerful guns, but it was the little things. They weren't as reliable as ours, they didn't have the maintenance and support to repair them like we did, because almost all their army was combat troops. They didn't have the spare parts and all that capability. They didn't have the ammunition capacity. And they didn't have fire control. That is, the sights and the other -- they had a hard time communicating with each other. They were, they were more primitive in those things. What they did was reliable equipment that did the basic things, so the range of the gun and such was still a little bit less than ours. We had better optics, we had better fire control, range finders, stabilized guns. We were ahead of them in all these things that helped you hit a target at a greater range. Now, fast-forward 15 years to 1991. This is why we defeated the Iraqi Army, which was equipped with top-flight Russian weapon systems and trained by the Russians, with essentially no losses because the Starry tactics were applied in an environment, the desert where they were most effective because you couldn't be ambushed. I mean, you know, you would see these guys 5,000 meters out, but you -- they'd already been hit by, again, air-land warfare, they already had been hit by the close air support and the attack helicopters would have come in and meanwhile all of the information on where they were would have been passed back to the forward units. They would move up and they would start engaging at 3,000 meters. And it was just a slaughter. And that's how Starry saw the whole thing being. The Russians would have been more of a challenge because they would have been attacking and they did have extraordinary artillery. But if you could stay flexible and not let them know where your front lines were, I mean even mass amounts of artillery from shells if they're landing in the wrong place are not going to change the battle.

Q: No.

JEFFREY: So this was -- so I was at the center of something, so this was another big lesson I got. I mean the first one was the whole Christmas bombings, Easter Offensive, and the ceasefire, and then the Yom Kippur thing, that was '72, '73 was very dramatic. And from the distance observing, high-level military diplomatic activities and how in a crisis situation, or several of them in the Far East and then in the Near East, the right

policies actually succeed. Then the second one was watching how a single general, lieutenant general, isn't that senior, but with the right reputation and the right ideas can transform an entire army. And it wasn't just that he provided this strategy or the tactics for the army, a new way of doing things like a new rifle, it was that he gave the army a mission. The army was searching for a mission. Its mission was to fight heavy armed armies, be it in the Middle East, be it -- because we had the wars in '73 and '67, I mean there was a lot of attention to heavily armed armies, be it in Korea because the North Koreans had a very heavy army with a lot of tanks and armed vehicles, or be it in Europe. That's what the army saw its mission as being, and Starry gave them a way to actually focus on it and think about it intellectually in a very powerful way. And that made an impression on me, aside from the fact that, as I said, and Starry's theory was the assumption that we would have to go nuclear in a war in Europe with the Soviets was incorrect.

Q: Did you find that you -- I mean looking back on this -- that you were, I won't say unique obviously, but one of the few seeing how sort of the intellectual underpinning of this whole concept was? I mean do your fellow officers, were they thinking the same terms, or I mean was that encouraged, or not? Or?

JEFFREY: Starry encouraged intellectual thinking but it was no accident that we were using captains to do this. A lot of the colonels and majors had been locked into a mindset. They had been -- many of them had been wounded in Vietnam. They were kind of -- this was very hard for them to grasp.

Q: Yeah. It's -- you can imagine that the navy fixed on the battleship in the beginning of the Pacific War and all of a sudden --

JEFFREY: It wasn't fixed on the -- it wasn't -- it wasn't that these guys were fixed on counterinsurgency warfare. They got it that you couldn't, you know, have platoons with machetes hacking through the forests of Germany. But Starry was very hard for a lot of them to grasp. Because what he wanted them to do was to think outside the box. I'll give you an example. The corps G3 -- Starry needed -- Starry was worried about the Russian Spetsnaz, which were these special forces that would land behind the line. So his idea was who do I use to fight my rear battle? And about a third of the corps, in terms of strength, were engineers, maintenance, transportation, MPs, other units that were armed and were organized, they had radios and such, but they didn't have any armored vehicles, they didn't have any heavy weapons, and they really didn't think of themselves as combat forces. Well, Starry wanted to reorganize them so he could use them, some of the engineers and the MPs actually are quasi-combat forces. Others are, you know, far from it. And I'd obviously had experience doing this in Vietnam as a platoon leader of a rear echelon unit that was thrown into security work. And so I volunteered for this. And we were looking at things like getting, as we've now done, heavy armored vehicles for the MPs, finding ways to use the engineers who were technically combat troops to actually, you know, beef up their equipment and their training and all that, and I was coming up with all these proposals.

And one day I had a, a, a set of ways forward, ideas and suggestions and things that could be purchased and changes and stuff, and put together a plan that was sent up through the G3, my boss who was a full colonel. And Starry said he wanted to see us on it. So anyway, I had several meetings with Starry before on this, which was sort of unusual as a captain, but I mean Starry was like that. He would talk to whoever the hell was actually the action officer on things. And so we went to his office and the colonel was a classic example of a by the numbers colonel who didn't quite know what was going on, but knew how to present himself as a real believer in whatever it was. And so anyway, Starry starts pushing back on some of the things. And it wasn't an argument, it was a discussion with Starry saying I don't think that's right. I said, "Look General, you know, I've looked into this. Da, da, da."

And after about 10 minutes of this the colonel got very nervous at it, somehow decided this must be a bad paper, that's why Starry is questioning it, that's why Starry is challenging it, that's why Starry is going into it. This is like a critique. Well, the captain works for me so somehow I might be, you know, held responsible for this idiot that I should have -- didn't even look at the paper, I just signed off on it and sent it up, and now he's in a debate with the goddamn, you know, corps commander, would he please shut up. And so anyway, the guy turned on me. He had been quiet up to that time and he said, "Captain, I don't know how professional this thing is. I, I, I'm -- maybe I should have looked more into this. I'm really worried."

And Starry got furious. And he turned to the colonel -- and this is a G3, this is his main operator -- and said, "This is a very good paper. This captain has done a great job and we're having a very good discussion. Do you get it?" And the colonel just shut up. And that was the problem we had with many of these guys. The G3 before this one was fired by Starry's predecessor. He didn't know the battalions in the corps. I mean there's only so many combat battalions, there's only about 27, 28, and he couldn't figure out where they were and what they were, or anything else. And his usual answer was, "Sir, I don't have any answer at the tip of my tongue, but I know where to get it."

And I would look at him and say, "What? You're the G3. You need to know where every tank is, where every infantry unit is, where every artillery battalion is, what kind of artillery, what their range is. Jesus. And this is fun stuff. Who wouldn't want to know this stuff? I know it. And, and my," -- our fellow captains knew it, and we had a lieutenant colonel who was a great guy, and he knew it. Why doesn't this guy know it? And the answer was, nobody had told him that he needed to know it. And he finally was fired. So we had a lot of problems with people who just couldn't maintain the intellectual pace of somebody like Starry. And it wasn't just a question of rank. Obviously there were colonels who did great with him. But it was a very -- it was an intellectually stimulating experience.

Q: Did that play later in your operation as an ambassador?

JEFFREY: Well, I did everything. I was deputy national security advisor. I mean, you know, my -- I mean first of all there's two kinds of Foreign Service Officers, those who

have been in the military or have had extraordinary exposure to the military at a relatively young age, like on a PRT or in a Command and General Staff College, or everybody else. And because diplomacy is the integration and coordination of all of these tools and the most important single tool is military, it makes a huge difference in an entire career. But I had these sets of experiences, you know, where -- well, Vietnam was very political because that was a year when we were taking huge coordinated diplomatic strategic military steps, the Yom Kippur thing was obviously diplomacy and force combined together. And what Starry was doing was essentially challenging the basic Cold War theory that the most important theater, Europe, would be -- would degenerate into a nuclear war very quickly if the Soviets attacked. Now, there were huge political implications of his theory. When Kennedy nudged at it a decade earlier, a decade plus earlier, and built up the army there was a huge flap in Europe. It was one of the reasons why De Gaulle wanted a nuclear weapons future for France, because they thought that America was backing out of the nuclear commitment that we would in fact lose Detroit to save Bonn. And so there were huge political implications to what Starry was doing. And I was basically somewhat aware of them, because I was doing a lot of reading on my own. And so I saw the geopolitical significance of all of this. Plus, by this time I had taken the Foreign Service Exam. Just by a fluke I had heard AFN had broadcast a little thing that the consulate in Frankfurt, your old post, put out, you know, for people to take the test. And it was a lark because I didn't know what I would be doing. And the army had made it clear to me when I went back on my honeymoon in 1975, look -- they looked up my record and said, "This can't be."

And I said, "What do you mean?"

They said, "Well look, you've been in the army six years. You've never been in the States. You've been in Germany, then you've been in Vietnam, you've been in Germany. You've never been in the infantry unit. How have you managed to do this?"

And I asked "Is there a problem?"

And the guy said, "Yeah, you're never going to go anywhere in the infantry. But meanwhile, you can't stay all that longer in Germany." I was on my second extension.

The guy said, "Sooner or later we're going to pull you back and we're going to send you to Fort Benning and turn you into an infantryman again." And I couldn't see my wife at Fort Benning.

So I said, "OK, I'll take that on board." And then I knew I had to find a new career. So my plan was -- because my wife was studying in Germany -- you enroll at -- one of the things you can do when you go to university is enroll in a teaching program. And basically your major and minor are in the fields you will study, in her case English and social studies, but you also take teaching courses in the school of education. It's different from the American system, where you do everything in the school of education. In Germany you actually have to, you know, become academic in the university sense. And, but you then go through essentially a program that leads to a master's, but with a lot of

student teaching. And then you're guaranteed a job as a teacher at a high level. And it's very, very prestigious, it pays well, it's a lifetime tenured job, it's really neat. And this is what she was going to do. So my conclusion was, "I don't think -- she may want to marry me, but she doesn't want to marry me and go off to the States, particularly if I don't really know what I'm going to do there. So we can stay there, I like Germany." I had by this time lived in Germany on my own. And I started studying at a Boston University extension program for a Master of Science in Business Administration and figuring that I would get a job at an American firm some place. So that was my plan. And so I was basically not indifferent but I didn't worry that much when the U.S. Army Infantry Branch told me that my infantry career was looking very bad. I mean I was having a really great time being married, I was having a really great time in Germany, I was having a really great time working in the corps headquarters, and I figured I would do something as a civilian when I finally had to leave the army.

But meanwhile I heard about the Foreign Service and I -- and then I thought about my experiences in Vietnam and my interest in diplomacy and I think I maybe mentioned to you, but I always seen State Department people as folks like Alger Hiss, you know, a law clerk for a Supreme Court Justice and go to Harvard and that kind of thing. And that wasn't me. And I'd spent much of the preceding six years in basically outdoor work. And, and of course a master's in business didn't seem all that relevant, although that also turned out to be pretty relevant. But I took the test, I did well --

Q: Where'd you take the test?

JEFFREY: In Frankfurt at the --

Q: That's where I took mine too.

JEFFREY: Yeah, so we have another thing in common.

Q: Yeah, I had to take --

JEFFREY: This was when you were in the Air Force.

Q: Yeah. I had to take -- it was a three and a half-day exam when I took it.

JEFFREY: Yeah.

Q: And I had to get the extension, had to go back to my captain and say, "Please sir, can I have another half-day?" Because normally you had a three-day meeting. And he sort of growled and what's this all about and reluctantly gave it so I came rushing back and took the rest of the exam.

JEFFREY: Yeah, I have a similar story. So you know, I took the exam, it was an all-day exam. And I always did well in multiple choice exams, so I did quite well in the exam. And now I started getting excited about it. And then I was invited to take the oral. And

so my colonel -- as I said we were working for a lieutenant colonel who was head of the G3 air training. And he was a former enlisted man, but he was very sophisticated and a great, great guy. Once I had been chewed out by a brigadier general on a project we were all working on, and he was the head of the project, he was a corps, I don't know, support commander or something. And I was the G3 rep and he didn't like what I had done. So the next meeting my colonel comes with me. He was a kind of, you know, Bantam Rooster kind of guy, about 5'4 but very tough. Won the Silver Star in Vietnam by rescuing a pilot in Cambodia. And, and he had no political sense, but that was a plus, not a minus for me. So anyway, the general gets up and he starts going through his spiel. And suddenly the colonel stands up and says, "General! I understand you got a problem with my captain. Tell me, you got," -- I mean he's walking towards the general up through the room, you know, everybody's sitting -- he's walking to him saying, he said, "You got a problem with this captain? You've got a problem with -- then you've got a problem with me. You got a problem with me, General?" Saying -- Jesus, I'm thinking what have we done? But this was this guy who was tremendously loyal.

(He also never made full Colonel. But he has at least two admirers; me and the pilot who made it home to his family in 1970.)

So -- and he loved the army of course. And so I had to report to him and I had to take leave to go to Washington to take the oral. And he said, "When is it?"

And I said, "It's a Friday."

This was in early June and -- no, it was in May. And he said, "OK. You get a day and a half leave. You can fly out Thursday night, you can come back Friday." He said, "I want you to flunk. I don't want you to go. I can't believe you're leaving my army. So I'm going to make it as difficult for you as possible."

So I flew out, got in that night before, was totally jetlagged, couldn't sleep, and couldn't find -- you know, was SA-18 over in Rosslyn someplace.

Q: Oh yeah.

JEFFREY: And I almost missed my appointment because I couldn't find it, so I was totally -- I was totally discombobulated. And I passed the oral.

Q: When did you take it?

JEFFREY: This was in 1976. I passed it, but it was a vote of two to one because the panel -- and the guy who was the head of the panel came out to tell me. And what he said was, you know, "I'm very unhappy that you passed." He was very blunt. He said, "I don't believe you should be in the Foreign Service."

And so I really felt bad. I felt so bad that I eventually went back and used a Freedom of Information request to get the file. And sure enough, this guy had really argued against

me. But another guy saved me by saying, "You know, this guy would have been OK if he'd had two beers." And so that was how I got past the oral. And, then the next event of some significance was my wife and I took our physical exam. So we came to Frankfurt and we had lunch in the officers' club at, you know the geography, V Corps headquarters. And we left there and we went to the -- was it the 21st, 23rd Field Hospital, which was the U.S. army hospital in Frankfurt, which was about --

Q: 57th, but --

JEFFREY: Yeah, whatever it was. And anyway, we went up there and as we walked in there are all these sirens and they told us just to stand to the side. And what had happened was the follow up to the Baader-Meinhof Gang, the Rote Armee Fraktion, had placed two bombs in trash barrels, one in the officers' club that my wife and I walked by, and one in the foyer of the V Corps headquarters where we also walked by. So we passed by both these things literally minutes before they went off. And 18 soldiers were wounded, many of them seriously. And so my wife and I stood there. And I, I mean I had seen things like this in Vietnam, but she hadn't. And so it was quite dramatic and traumatic, although she is -- as I later experienced when she was in Iraq -- didn't -- she's hard to faze. But I mean it obviously made an impression on her, seeing all these very badly wounded people, shrapnel injuries. And so that was another little adventure, another close encounter with --

Q: Do you remember any of the questions asked to you by the oral exam?

JEFFREY: Yeah, one of them was on Jerusalem and I got it wrong. Something about the legal status of Jerusalem, and I had no idea. So I, I unfortunately invented, and that was one of the things that the guy who voted against me counted me off on. But nothing ventured, nothing gained. And so now I'm getting enthusiastic about this, but I have a problem because my wife is of course finishing off her essentially graduate school. And then she gets a blow because -- this is in the post oil crisis period of time -- in Germany for the first time since the war has to ratchet back in public expenses, expenditures. So they decided that they could no longer guarantee jobs for everybody coming out of these teaching programs. And so my wife is basically told that she would be appointed as a temporary teacher, but that she had no tenure and it could disappear anytime. On the other hand, there was also the possibility that they could get more money and she would become a career civil servant, and thus have this lifetime thing. Well, so the deal we did, the two of us, was whoever got a permanent assignment first, I was looking at jobs with consulting firms and had some offers and worked for a while for V Corps as a civilian in the interim, but nothing really permanent because I didn't want to take anything permanent in case the State Department did come through. But if she got her job as a -- she got permanent civil servant status then there was no way I was going to move her out for something like that, for something risky in the States. But as it turned out, they didn't make that offer to her. A year later they brought everybody in, but we didn't know that at the time. And I did get the State Department offer, so she agreed to -- she thought -- I mean she likes foreign languages and likes to travel, so she said, "I'll give it a try." So I joined the Foreign Service.

Q: OK, well I'm looking at the time. I've got to --

JEFFREY: OK.

Q: Shall we pick this up -- but do you want to cover the time -- you went back to Vietnam, didn't you?

JEFFREY: No.

Q: OK. So we'll pick this up when you come into the Foreign Service.

JEFFREY: Yeah, and I can be a lot quicker on that.

Q: Well, we'll take our time.

JEFFREY: With one real exception I can do the first 20 years of my Foreign Service career in about 20 minutes.

Q: Well (laughs), I'm not going to commit to that.

JEFFREY: No, no. Because what I'm trying to do, and the reason I took so much time on this was there were a number of very dramatic things. Vietnam, in particular the time I was there and the experiences of it, the Yom Kippur War and the nuclear alert, the whole period doing this very strategic thinking in V Corps, and almost getting killed in a terrorist attack. I mean these are all themes that keep coming back and getting in the Foreign Service.

Q: You might just quickly explain what the Baader-Meinhof was. This is for somebody who isn't familiar with the period.

JEFFREY: Sure. It was a left wing offshoot of the '68 worldwide student rebellion. What we know now is that a fair amount of it was supported by the KGB and other eastern intelligence services. And many of the Baader-Meinhof members became members of their successor group called the Rote Armee Fraktion, the Red Army faction were actually given refuge in East Germany, and you can't quite say that they were directed or controlled by East Germany, but they had a lot of ties with East German Stasi. And, but this didn't come out for 20 years. So it targeted both German government officials and American personnel, and in the end about 50 people were killed. And this thing continued on until the early 1990s.

Q: OK. So we'll pick this up when you come into the Foreign Service when?

JEFFREY: '77.

Q: All right. This is February 1st and we are continuing our oral history with Ambassador James Jeffrey. We left off with him just as he was entering the Foreign Service in 1977 and planning his first tour to Tunis, Tunisia.

JEFFREY: Mm-hmm. So I arrived in Tunis after French language training in March of 1978. My assignment there was a bit uncertain. It was a rotational assignment, thus in the system of that day was controlled by central personnel rather than the bureau. But there was some question as to whether I would rotate within the Admin Section or in the embassy as a whole. I had entered under one of the many variants in the cone system. The year I came in we were all given tentative cones and told that we could change these cones if we didn't like it. I was given the admin cone, obviously I had managed people in the army, I had a Master's in Business Administration. It didn't seem illogical. Once I got there I had two rotational assignments, first in the Budget and Fiscal Section and then the GSO Section, and very quickly I was pretty sure that the admin cone wasn't what I wanted to do. And I went back and forth with the admin counselor, David Fields, future ambassador and assistant secretary, one of the best officers in our service. He understood the problem. He had to make a decision himself. He gave me the pluses and minuses. And I decided that I would feel better in the political cone. But meanwhile I'm in Tunis and so I finally rotated into the Economic Section. And as things would happen, because people left by the summer of 1979, I was the acting Economic Section chief.

Not much of any significance happened in Tunisia. It's the only post I've ever been in, including in the army, or worked with, where the United States is not the most important outside actor. It was not until the Arab Spring that it was of any strategic significance to us. So what it was, was a really pleasant place to party, go to the embassy, and enjoy two superb ambassadors. Bob Mulcahy, who was from the town next to me, Melrose, had been --

Q: And that's Melrose --

JEFFREY: Massachusetts.

Q: Massachusetts, OK.

JEFFREY: Had won the Silver Star as marine company commander in World War II and was an Irish Catholic guy like me. He was a superb ambassador. Kissinger talks about how he was bullied by Mulcahy when Mulcahy was just a deputy assistant secretary in the Africa Bureau on Angola. So this was a guy with real integrity. And then he was followed by Steve Bosworth, another really extraordinary ambassador. And this starts a long series of distinguished ambassadors that I served for, and -- served with -- and my conclusion is any capabilities I developed over my time in the Foreign Service are based upon the good fortune of serving with really good ambassadors. Because the first thing they did was to show an interest in me, they and their wives as well as the DCM Barrington King. I figured any institution that would have guys with names like

Barrington King had to be OK. My wife was also much welcomed by this community, by this Foreign Service family, if you will, and that clicked for her as well.

Q: Just a very quick question about your wife. This is 1978 Tunis. Did she feel comfortable in an Islamic society at that time?

JEFFREY: Oh yeah, Tunis was, first of all, this was the very end of an era, an era in the Middle East. It was the era of secularism. It was the Bourguiba era, particularly pronounced in Tunisia, sort of the Arab version of Ataturk's Turkey. But this was common everywhere, no matter where I've been in the Middle East people talk about, you know, getting drunk in Basra back in the '70s, bikinis on the beach back in Kuwait. It was a different era in the Middle East in general. And of course we were in a cocoon of embassies that was a very active international community. And there is -- and this is an aside -- Foreign Service officers, particularly when they start off, will encounter, if they're perceptive or sooner or later if they're not it comes up, that we're different than everybody else in many posts because we are, first of all, we're much bigger, we're much better informed about some aspects of our country, particularly its foreign policy, its security relationships. Usually what's going on politically, although other embassies can surprise you in the depth of their knowledge. But, we also have a different relationship with the host country in many, many countries. Tunisia was an exception.

We weren't the most important country for them. Italy, France first of all, Spain, and the EU generally, Algeria, Libya, and Egypt were all more important than the United States. So therefore it was easier to be part of a diplomatic community, and it was a classic Mediterranean environment. It was a lot of fun. But we didn't do a whole lot of serious work. We had a couple of sub cabinet level visits, apart from that, nothing dramatic, only at the end with the events in Tehran. I left just before the embassy was seized, but we were all attuned to what was going on. The Department began a push that has become an obsession of trying to figure out what the Arab Spring is thinking. So that was the only policy thing of any note in Tunisia. It's the only posting I've ever had in the army or Foreign Service where I could say that. So I had to figure out what I wanted to do.

Q: One other administrative question at this point. Your rotational tour, and this is your first tour, was between admin, be a GSO, and, and econ, usually you have a consular tour. Did that happen later? No.

JEFFREY: That happened later. And there was some debate as to whether this was an admin rotational tour, or it was a rotational tour. But it was a centrally controlled assignment, and like anything else, a good ambassador will decide what he or she would like to do. And in this case, the good ambassador decided to put me in an Econ Section. So I spent half my time in the Admin Section, half my time in the Econ Section. At the end, Bosworth offered to bring me back to Washington to EB, but I thought that would send me toward being an economic cone officer, and while I enjoyed the work very much, I really had my heart set on being a political officer and getting into the whole European thing that I had basically done for six years in the army. And I was smart enough to know that as an admin cone officer I wasn't going to get a political cone

assignment in Moscow, but I figured if I bid on jobs in Eastern Europe, I would have a chance and I would get a Slavic language in.

So I bid on a list of them and I got my last choice, which was a consular job in Bulgaria, and that turned out to be an absolutely wonderful job. First of all, I got five months of Bulgarian, which is basically easy Russian. And then off I went to what my wife described as a place that looked like 16th century Germany. But in 1980 the general context was we were approaching a new Cold War, a final chapter of the Cold War, and it was a nasty chapter with -- and this is politically controversial, but I mean I can posit it any way I want. With the domino theory proven itself correct, with the Soviets on the march with the SS-20 in Europe, Nicaragua, El Salvador, deployments to Cuba, Angola, Mozambique, and most importantly, Afghanistan. So we were in a totally different situation than we had a few years before. The other context had been the Helsinki Final Act and the possible detente from 1975 on. But by the end of that decade Carter himself had basically turned over a new leaf and was very confrontational. The Carter doctrine in the Middle East and, again, the first steps against the Soviets in Afghanistan.

And then Reagan came in with a much more aggressive policy, but it was basically in response to an aggressive policy by the Soviet Union, which was trying to gain ground in a very comprehensive way. This made Bulgaria an interesting place, because the Bulgarians were the most loyal of the Soviet vassal states, for many reasons. First of all, same religion, almost the same language, Slavic ethnic identity. Russia had liberated Bulgaria militarily in 1876. And there was a lot of -- there had been a strong relationship between the two for a long, long time. And my consular job was -- I was the only consular officer. An embassy at that point, and it's not a bad model, we had one of everybody. We had one ambassador and one DCM, that's not a surprise. We had for the front office one secretary, for both of them. We had one political officer, who was also the Pol Econ Section chief, one econ officer, one secretary, one consular officer, one admin officer, one GSO, two military attaches, two military techies, two IT guys, and an intelligence presence that reflected a very similar model, and six marines. So we were about 25. And then my wife got hired as the community liaison officer just as that program -- at the time it was a family liaison officer as that program was starting. So even though we had just gotten a child, she was working at the embassy, which was a lot of fun because there were a lot of interesting things to do there. Bulgaria combined high policy, and almost as much fun as Tunisia, because the countryside is beautiful, wild, mountainous, and at a place called Borovets we had a lodge that slept 16 in a ski resort, and the Bulgarians were basically developing this ski sector so you could ski at one point up to 10,000 feet and it was exciting skiing because there was no ski patrol, there were no marked trails, very rustic, the foreign minister of Bulgaria had actually been killed skiing on Mount Vitosha above Bulgaria a couple of years before. Now, whether this was an accident or whether he'd gotten on the wrong side of somebody, we don't know, and I'll come back to that. And then there was a nice international community because the Europeans took Eastern Europe seriously. And as a consular officer I did the whole range of consular affairs, including visa work. But that wasn't too onerous. I had two Bulgarian assistants and one of whom we were pretty sure was a colonel in the Secret Service, and the other one, her father had been an embassy employee before the war and

he had lived with her in the ambassador's residence after the war when we didn't have relations in order to keep it up. And it was really very, very nice.

Q: Interesting.

JEFFREY: So now, very quickly I got a secondary job. Again, my goal was to enter the political cone. And one of the reasons that they had, they didn't even have a consular officer there previously. They had used another agency guy. But in my case, I was also the CSCE officer, because under the Helsinki final act one of the big areas was family reunification. And so, I had to deal with that as a big issue in the consular area because it involved immigration and visas and all that. But it was also obviously policy, and so very quickly for many reasons I was given the portfolio of the CSCE, the Helsinki three baskets, which of course included human rights and religious freedom, and all of that. So essentially I was getting an ever more political portfolio. And we had a -- and part of the reason for that was I really worked hard on my Bulgarian. And the officers in the Pol-Econ Section did not have strong Bulgarian, and this was very important because the ambassadors and DCMs were all Soviet hands. This was the way the European Bureau worked in those days. Eastern Europe was a colony in the mind of the European Bureau of the Soviet hands, the Russia hands, in part because of the, the culture, the political issues, and the languages in most cases other than Hungary and East Germany and Romania. But I mean the others, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland obviously, knowing Russia and Russian was very helpful. So Jack Perry and Bob Barry were the two ambassadors. They were old time Russian hands and they really put a lot of emphasis on speaking Slavic languages. So you know, being a junior guy and trying to get into a different cone, i.e. their cone, I basically used them as the model and I spent a lot of time working on Bulgarian and getting around and meeting people.

Q: Now, as a consular officer, I imagine you used it every day in some way.

JEFFREY: Exactly. All of the interviews -- and the other thing is we were very isolated and they watched us like hawks. But I was the one who could have contact with people. So I would have contact with people, my wife would have contact with people, and then a couple things I picked up. One was there was huge antagonism towards Russia and communism in the population. You could just sense that the way people were thirsty for any Western European culture, and -- but then there were some incidents. For example, I was at a function with Ludmila Zivkova, the daughter of the president, she was the minister of culture, and OK, I was still a junior officer, but it was just a different era and you could just float around. If you were at all active; it was a pretty small place. And there was some function. It was me, the Russian ambassador, and Ludmila. She had an interesting bio. She went to the London School of Economics, which was very, very unusual for any high ranking Communist. And she had given a talk in English in Washington just before I went out to Bulgaria. And so she was very much somebody who wanted to open up more to the west. And I'll never forget the conversation we had, because it was three-sided and it was in English. And she decided in English, although she knew I could speak Bulgarian. And she opted for that rather than Bulgarian, because the Russian ambassador obviously could speak Bulgarian too. So I thought this was a

subtle message that just because he's a Russian ambassador -- or she could have spoken in Russian for him and then translated for me -- but anyway, it was, it was fascinating.

She then died of what supposedly was a brain tumor a few years later, and of course that was in the era of Bulgarian umbrella murders and so forth, and so the population very much felt that this was, this was an assassination. So we were very much involved in all of the human rights, religious freedom, this whole churning that was going on under the surface. And of course we had ambassadors and DCMs who were constantly, you know, flagellating us, so to speak, to get out, meet people, talk to people, figure out what was going on. And so we did that. I remember once I smuggled Jack Perry to a church where I had established contacts with the parishioners, drove him in my little Volkswagen. He had crouched under the front seat (*laughs*). I drove him there so that he could meet with people. And then a couple of other incidents. One is covered --

Q: Oh, mention who Jack Perry is for the --

JEFFREY: This was Ambassador Jack Perry who was, again, a long-time Russia hand. He had been the DCM in Prague and Stockholm, and was just a superb ambassador and very, very outgoing. And so there are two incidents that certainly shaped my career. One is -- and this is all covered in Bob Woodward's book, *Veil*, about the CIA in the 1980s. But he doesn't give me credit for it. But as the story is all out there I can talk about it. A Libyan colonel showed up one day saying he wanted a visa for the States. And I thought, "This is interesting." So of course it got reported back through the various channels. And then it got decided that the intelligence community, again, as Woodward reports, wanted to get hold of him. And so they decided to make an offer. The problem is they didn't want to have any of their people do it. So there was much back and forth within the Department and the Agency, and I was deputized to make a pitch where I had to get a little tradecraft course and everything else. So I made the pitch and, again, it's all in the *Veil* book. And my only achievement in that whole thing, which was much appreciated by the Agency, was that I reported that the guy was missing the first index of his pinky finger, and of course that's the kind of thing they really like so they know the same guy that I saw would probably be the same guy who showed up in the unnamed German city, but not that Gaddafi wasn't capable of chopping off the finger of somebody else to -- but still. So that was a lot of fun.

The other thing, which is much more serious, was in June, Memorial Day weekend, of 1981, right after the Reagan administration came in, there was a hijacking of a Turkish airplane out of Istanbul. It had five Citibank executives on board. The hijackers were all DHKPC, which is essentially a left-wing, communist, very violent Turkish organization, still underground, and which had done two of the last three attacks on the American consulate and embassy in Turkey. I mean they never go away, they're like the Baader-Meinhof gang. And so they hijacked the plane and they apparently knew that the five Citibank guys who were on it, and they were on a big high-level visit, because this was after the embargo over Cyprus in '74. And there's Kissinger and then Carter and then Reagan had pushed to reopen things with the Turks to end the embargo and get the American business community engaged. And Citibank of course is like Exxon and

Boeing, they're the flagships of American industry. So this had a lot of juice behind it, had a lot of publicity and bang. These guys are hijacked and the plane lands in Burgas in Bulgaria. And so anyway, Perry immediately calls a country team meeting. And I'm rushing around trying to find things on what to do in hijackings, because of course these are American citizens, I'm the consular officer. So I'm running around, throwing on a suit. And my wife said, "Uh why are you wearing a suit? This is just a meeting, right?" I mean she was imagining -- we were going on a trip to Greece a week later and she didn't want to be screwing that up.

And I said, "Oh -- I'm going to have to do this."

So anyway, I was a little late getting in there and everybody else was there. And Perry, who was very indulgent of me, looked up. And everybody was in their tennis whites. And, you know, their jogging suits. And he looked up to me in my suit and said, "Well, I guess Mr. Jeffrey has decided who's going to go to Burgas and deal with this. So my job as ambassador is just to approve it." So anyway, we all had a good laugh about that, so off he sent me. Which was kind of amazing for a second tour officer. And anyway, I spent about three days there and my counterpart was the undersecretary of the Turkish prime ministry, who came in and gave a public announcement that if any Americans are killed all 50 of the DHKPC people in Turkish jails, who of course the hijackers wanted to be released, would be executed immediately. This sent Washington into a tizzy, so I got an instruction to go in and talk to the guy and tell him to stop saying that. So again, this was a real diplomatic experience. And then we were --

Q: How did he take it when -- because I mean you're delivering some pretty strong talking points at that point, junior officer to an undersecretary.

JEFFREY: I decided to do it in French.

Q: Ah, OK.

JEFFREY: I don't know why, because I figured -- and correctly -- all Turkish guys know French. If I go in and speak English with him he'll think that I'm adding arrogance on arrogance, and that turned out to be a good thing. And I knew the guy in my Turkish tours subsequently, Kanderman. And so we have had a good laugh or two about it. So anyway, so there we -- I had to coordinate with them, I had to coordinate with the Bulgarians. I was using a security service telephone to communicate with Perry. And it was really, really hard to negotiate. And they actually threw the Japanese consul out because there was a Japanese person on board too, and the consul was hogging the line so much. So I had to negotiate back and forth for a couple of minutes block and then an hour later another couple of minutes block, and meanwhile -- and we couldn't negotiate directly with the terrorists, because that's our policy and Reagan had just underlined it. But they would bring a couple of guys off and they would be right in front of me and they would talk with the Bulgarians, and then they would -- Bulgarians would tell me what they were saying and I would, you know, give 'em our position is no negotiation, release

our hostages, do not harm them, you are going to be sorry, da-da-da-da-da. And so, we went back and forth for several days without any sleep.

Then at one point they were going to kill the Americans -- and I was trying to provide as much intelligence as possible because of a possible rescue. And there are all kinds of ways we could do that. And then, at one point when they were about to kill the hostages, and so Perry tried to -- had an open line with the Op Center and tried to get me to have an open line. I just said, "Look, I can't do that. I'm just going to have to call you back. Because if I don't" -- at the time he was really furious at me, but then when the Japanese ambassador called him a few hours later and said, "Hey, can you get any information from your guy? My guy has been thrown out because he insisted on using the phone and said he was a diplomat, so they just banned him from the building." And anyway, the takeaway from that is trust your people on the ground even if it's not what you want, they'll probably -- they'll have to deal with the realities on the ground. And of course this is something that had been drilled into me in the military and as far as I was concerned it could be the Op Center, it could be the secretary of state, it could be, you know, Perry -- you know, my job is to get the job done and that meant not losing communication, losing -- not losing communication meant not trying to hog the telephone. So in the end they didn't execute the guys and --

Q: Why do you suppose -- because, you know, we're right on the edge and, you know, they're -- there's nothing so far in your description that would indicate why they would negotiate or, or -- in other words, what was your perception as to why in the end they agreed to release?

JEFFREY: My perception was to some degree the Bulgarians were working with these guys. There was an ideological affinity. It's not that the Bulgarians put them up to it, but as we've since found out after the end of the cold war, particularly with Germany and the RAF, but also all these groups had one or another connection with Moscow, and they certainly felt themselves as part of an ideological empire with them. So they wound up perhaps colluding, and I also think the Bulgarians definitely didn't want five American guys killed on their territory or a lot of other people. But the Bulgarians also were very reluctant to storm the airplane, which of course was what we were asking them to do. And then on day two the incident actually ended when two of the hijackers left the aircraft for another negotiating round. And by that time, there was a local employee of Citibank who later went on to become the deputy treasury secretary in the Turkish government, became famous out of this incident. He concocted a scheme with the pilots and a lot of other Turkish passengers to basically seize control of the plane. So the pilot said that for the air conditioning or something they had to start the engines. So they started the engines but basically, essentially the functional equivalent of keeping it in gear while keeping their foot on the brakes, and then they just released it, sent the plane screaming down the runway, and then hit the brakes again. Everybody goes flying. So the two terrorists, they're shooting, trying to throw their grenades, and guys are jumping on top of them. And one terrorist is tossed from the plane and breaks his back. But another guy manages to escape. And so he's running down the tarmac and a group of Turks from a plane are chasing him and the Bulgarian Army, police troops, are firing

their Kalashnikovs over their head, so it's total mayhem. The Turkish undersecretary decides he's going to rush out and take charge, and so right in front of me he's beaten down by rifle butts by the Bulgarian police and I was a little bit more sedate, I didn't get beaten. But anyway, finally our guys are all rescued, everybody -- everything works out well. And I got a nice cable from Al Haig to Perry thanking me, and then Walter Wriston, the head of Citibank at the time came to the department and gave a Steuben Eagle to Haig to commemorate the event and thanked me. So I felt oh, this is great. And anyway, the embassy felt so highly of my performance that they gave me a meritorious service medal for it. But like some of my army experiences, the lowest medal I have means the most to me, and that certainly means more to me than anything else I have ever gotten in the Department of State. So --

Q: Go back one second. The one hijacker who was running, what happened to him?

JEFFREY: He was grabbed by the police. That is, they shut down the Turks chasing him and --

Q: And they did it themselves.

JEFFREY: Yeah, and as I said, once the Turks got their blood up, literally, everybody wanted in. In fact, I had -- I was told to go interview everybody, and the Turks would keep on pushing guys forward to -- and, and you weren't a real man if you didn't have blood on you, from either your blood or the blood of one of the terrorists. And they gave me one guy who they were very proud of because he had wrestled the pistol away, and then he was going to shoot the guy, and then they had a little conversation saying, "Now, this is Bulgaria. If you shoot him you're never going to get out of here." So, but -- and then despite the bullet holes the Turks flew the plane back with all the passengers in it. I mean there were a lot of lessons out of this one. So that was Bulgaria, it was a wonderful experience, and then -- and the European Bureau meanwhile had promised me a political job.

Q: At last.

JEFFREY: At last. And so, I went back to Washington to the mid level course in early 1982. I'm one of the few people who have actually taken that. And those of us who took it in the spring of 1982, we actually, had the most positive experience with it. And then of course the program died very quickly, which is a shame because the military does that all the time and it was certainly a break. It's the only break other than a week at Aspen I ever got in my entire Foreign Service career. And so after that my wife and I started Turkish training. And she got pregnant so she dropped out after four months, but that was enough. And she is over her four tours a superb Turkish speaker, and that's a big plus too. I mean the fact that we train wives, our spouses, you know in languages; I can't underline how important that is. Not only for the person enjoying the tour, but more importantly, it really makes a huge impression on everybody.

Q: And Turkish is not an easy language to learn.

JEFFREY: Turkish is a really hard language. It's the only language I know that's harder to understand than it is to speak. And we all had that experience, because it's glutinal and it's just, there are many reasons why it's a hard language. But my assignment was pol-econ officer in Adana.

Q: Now, this is now in 1983 or '82.

JEFFREY: '83 when I went to Adana.

Q: Oh, OK.

JEFFREY: And Adana basically had two missions, one was to monitor the huge American base at Incirlik. To provide everything from consular services to essentially informal political advisor. And then secondly, to cover the Kurdish southeast of the country because our consular district basically ran from the Turkey-Armenian border all the way down to Iskenderun on the Med in Hatay province, where the Russian plane was just shot down (Fall, 2015), and west to Mersin, so much of the southern coastline. And so we're in Adana and it was a three-person post and we had a secretary who was a wife of someone, a captain at the base. So counting him there were -- and the three spouses, there were six -- eight of us, who were associated with the -- we were in the Sabanci building, and this is one of the biggest families in Turkey, the Sabanci-Holding family. And so we got to know them, and that was a lot of fun. And this is a city that's entirely Turkish other than us, because the Americans in Incirlik all lived on base. But 20 miles away -- so you're totally immersed in a Turkish environment, and this was really good for language and for learning things about the society, and the first thing that came along was the elections. Turkey had been under military rule since 1980, which was another reason why the Citibank hijacking was important to give a signal that we were willing to cooperate with the military government. But we assumed that they would return to democracy, which they did. Essentially they were smart, the Turkish generals in a way that General Sisi is not smart. So the 1983 elections were going to take place in the fall, so right after I arrived there.

And so my job was to figure out what's going on. And I attended the various rallies and there were three candidates. The military ran a guy, General Sunalp, who was a total loser. There was a sort of vague left of candidate and party-- because none of the -- all of the parties had still been banned, two famous parties, the Republican People's Party, and the Democratic party that was associated with -- what's his name? President Demirel. And the Republican People's Party associated with Ecevit. And these are guys who for 40 years dominated Turkish politics. So they're banned from politics, the parties are banned from politics, so people formed new parties from people who hadn't been banned. And so there was a sort of left of center party with an unknown guy named Calp who was running for prime minister, and then the third party was called the Motherland, and they had a cute little honey bee as their symbol, led by a relatively unknown guy named Turgut Özal. Now, Özal had been a member of the religious party there, the National Salvation party, which was one of the main parties the military targeted. But he hadn't

been successful in his run for parliament in 1980, so therefore he wasn't on the ban list. But obviously the military didn't want a guy who had been part of the Erbakan (National Salvation Party leader) clan elected, so that's one reason they ran Sunalp against him.

But Özal had also worked for the World Bank, he was a very successful guy -- World Bank or IMF, I don't know which -- and turned out to be an extraordinary Turkish leader. But that was later. And so, my job was to go around and talk to people and to attend rallies. So I watched in person Özal, Sunalp, and Calp, and my conclusion was, hey, Özal has real spirit and really can move the crowds. These other people are total losers. And I had a somewhat passive but nice guy as principal officer who basically gave me free reign to do whatever I wanted. So I start sending these reports to Washington. Now, the problem is our ambassador in Ankara, the famous Robert Strausz-Hupé who was on his sixth embassy. He was in his early eighties at the time, he'd been ambassador to NATO, and had been a leading intellectual that left Austria before World War II and set up the foreign affairs cell at the University of Pennsylvania as well as Orbis Magazine. He was just well known. He was just -- he was the competitor with Kissinger to be national security advisor in 1969. But so anyway, his consolation prize was a series of ambassadorships. And Strausz-Hupé was tight with the generals, and they were telling him Sunalp was going to win. So we had a dispute. But to Strausz-Hupé's credit, he didn't try to censor reporting out of the consulates. And this is of course a big issue and embassies do it often. Embassies dictate what consulates can send or not send. Strausz-Hupé, to his credit, didn't do it.

Q: So just an administrative question here, when you wrote a cable about your, you know, review of the political scene, did it literally go first to the embassy in Ankara before it was transmitted, or --

JEFFREY: It went to both simultaneously.

Q: Ah, OK, OK. Because in other words, if you had a comment that the ambassador in Ankara perhaps didn't like, they would hold the cable and say look, you know, you have to fix this because we don't like it?

JEFFREY: No. They did not do that. I was surprised.

Q: OK.

JEFFREY: And, but then I also put a certain pressure on myself to not pontificate too much, because I realized I was just so -- essentially I would report straight facts. This was a very active crowd. This was the most people, business leaders, conservatives, there's a lot of momentum building for Özal. What I didn't come right out and do is predict Özal would win.

Q: OK.

JEFFREY: Because how could I? How could anybody? First of all, the generals could have rigged the election. I mean there were various scenarios. And I'm sure -- you just -- you can't guess elections. Anybody who thinks that that's our job. You just basically report on it, and if you report well, then you won't go too far afield. And I think my main contribution was not so much suggesting indirectly that it was how it went, but that Sunalp was a total loser. Because nobody supported Sunalp. I could find nobody who liked Sunalp. And when the election results came in, nobody voted for Sunalp, almost literally. So Özal wins and goes on for a decade and a -- well, for a decade -- to be this extraordinary leader. We now forget in the shadow of Erdogan, but he had many of the same powerful traits Erdogan had, while also being instinctively pro-western. And so, I was very pleased with that particular part of the job. But then the other part was traveling with -- we had two political locals, one covered Adana in the area, an older fellow, and then we had a young guy named Hamza who up until -- certainly he was still working at the embassy, at the consulate, when I was ambassador there. He was a young Kurdish guy. And so we used him to travel to eastern Turkey. Galup Bey, the older guy, didn't like to go out to the Kurdish areas. And Hamza of course came from Adiyaman province. So we would go out there. And the countryside is absolutely spectacular, the eastern third of Turkey. We went to Nemrut, this famous archaeological site, we traveled to Lake Van. We did all kinds of trips. And then in 1984, the PKK insurgency broke out.

Q: Ah.

JEFFREY: And so my job was to do all the reporting on that. So Hamza and I were just going out there, trying to go as close as we could to the fighting. And this made for, of course, exactly the kind of Foreign Service reporting that you try to get. And you know, to focus on what the Turkish military out there were doing, what the governors were doing, the police, but also what the human rights groups and the people who were close essentially to the Kurdish community were. And that wasn't too hard because the mayors were all popularly elected and they were all Kurdish and they all had ties of one or another sort to the Kurdish moment. So that was really excellent. By this time I had been promoted to FS-2 and one day the embassy asked if I would like to, after my two years in Adana, move to Ankara and to the Pol-Mil Section. And I said sure. And so, I basically direct transferred to the Pol-Mil Section in Ankara. Strausz-Hupé is still the ambassador and I was working for a great boss, Mort Dworkin, the pol-mil counselor. And that was in some respects the job I learned the most from in my Foreign Service career.

Right after we got there -- this was 1985 -- we had the TWA hijacking where an American sailor was killed. And so Washington put the 48th tactical fighter wing, which was an F-16 wing that had deployed for training to Incirlik on alert to be used against Syria, because we figured the Syrians were behind this. The problem with that was the Turks were very, very sensitive to this kind of use of Incirlik, as we've just seen with the use of Incirlik against ISIS. And this goes back to World War I where two German warships fled the British to Istanbul -- Istanbul when Turkey was neutral, and then reflagged as Turkish ships and sailed off and shelled the Crimea, and this dragged Turkey into the war, and every Turk knows this story and therefore they're very sensitive to

people, other countries, militaries based in their country going off and bombing or shelling someone. So the Turks went crazy and I had just gotten there. But fortunately I knew Strausz-Hupé because I had been out in Eastern Turkey with him. And I don't know where the DCM was, the DCM didn't get too involved with the policy stuff, and Dworkin, who was superb, hadn't come out to post yet. So I was the number two in the section, so it was just me and Strausz-Hupé trying to figure out what to do, and, and Strausz-Hupé very quickly realized this. So we managed to get the Pentagon to stand down these airplanes before the Turks, you know, sent an armed squadron of fighters into Incirlik to counter all of our F-16s. Because we had done this without consulting with them, without telling them, and, and it was a good example that, don't do anything in the pol-mil world without talking with the Turks.

Anyway, it was a very exciting time because we were ramping up our FMS grant assistance to a billion dollars a year of money we're giving the Turks. And for a total FMS program of several billion more. Because again, we're still in the throes of the Cold War, the struggle -- Gorbachev was just coming on the scene towards the end of my tour in Ankara. And Turkey was one of the main cockpits of our containment strategy at the time. We were doing a new military agreement with the Turks, that's the basic security agreement. We were also doing a separate SOFA to augment the NATO SOFA, which I was negotiating, and then we were doing a nuclear stockpile agreement, which I can't get into in detail, but that was a very sensitive agreement involving where Turkey was on NATO's nuclear planning. And so these are really high level stuff, which -- Richard Perle was the assistant secretary of defense for International Security Affairs. Turkey was his special project. We dealt with Perle all of the time on these negotiations.

Q: And now, just a quick sort of clarification question. A new military agreement and an SOFA is the agreement on --

JEFFREY: The status of forces.

Q: The status of forces --

JEFFREY: They were separate. Essentially the military agreement is similar to those you have with all countries with -- where we have sort of a military presence and military training and equipping and all of that, security assistance agreement or whatever. It was the overarching agreement we had with them. And it spelled out in the main thing -- it was my colleague who was negotiating how much money -- or the Turks wanted us to spell out how much money -- we of course were avoiding that, but basically commitments to provide money, their commitments to provide various bases for various activities and other things.

Q: OK.

JEFFREY: Status of forces agreement was a tweak to the NATO SOFA, which the Turks had signed up to, to give us additional privileges in line with our privileges in non-NATO places. And that of course is controversial because it involves judicial immunity and

things like that, so I was negotiating that. But also, a thousand ridiculous things like customs and other things that in most countries aren't too important, but with Turkey the Turks focus on everything.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

JEFFREY: And then a nuclear stockpile agreement simply involves one or another relationship between a NATO country, the United States, and NATO's nuclear capabilities and policies. And that was very, very sensitive because it was -- because it was not part of the INF negotiations, many of the things that we dealt with were related to things we were dealing with in the INF, which of course focused on similar tactical nuclear capabilities but with Pershing and Cruise missiles. So it was very, very active, it was really exciting. There was an awful lot of high-level work directly between Strausz-Hupé and the foreign minister. And Strausz-Hupé would take me along and essentially let me negotiate with the foreign minister, Halefoglu often on some of these things because Strausz-Hupé didn't want to be bothered with the details, and I of course wasn't going to encourage him to not let me do this. So in terms of training, the Turks are very, very precise, they're very tough, they're very, very professional, they know their accounts, and what they will commit to they will do, but it is very hard to bring them to do that. So the negotiations were constant, they were very high level, we were getting visits all of the time.

The only other issue of real drama there, but it was pretty significant, was in the spring of 1987 the ongoing crisis with Greece over the Aegean led to the Turks threatening war, and this was because both sides, the Greeks and the Turks, thought that there was oil out there, and there are seven or eight separate disputes involving territorial seas, militarization of islands, air space, and they come in various -- and undersea rights and all this -- and they come in various colorations. And so the Turks send out a ship called Seismic Two to go explore for oil. The Greeks mobilize their military forces, and we came close to a conflict. And I and an officer in the Political Section saw where this was heading, and so, again, it was just how the embassy was set up. We wound up having to ring Strausz-Hupé's bell and get everybody to calm down and so Strausz-Hupé engaged with folks in Washington, and finally calmed things -- but that was a real experience too.

The other thing that was, that I got involved in, was, again, the Aegean dispute and the militarization of the islands. This had become a big problem at NATO because the Greeks kept on announcing on their list of forces, identified to NATO, which every country does, troops on Lemnos. But Lemnos is supposedly demilitarized, according to the Lausanne agreement, and various other agreements. And the Greeks maintained the legal position that Lausanne had been superseded. And the State Department legal office had basically taken a neutral position but leaning towards the Greeks, because after all, it's Greek territory. So anyway, Shultz comes out on a visit to both Greece and Turkey, and he's furious because all he hears about on both capitals is Lemnos. So he grabs Strausz-Hupé and tells him, "I want your best international lawyer in your staff to come up with an analysis of Lemnos and who's right, who's wrong, and what position the State Department should take."

Well now, Strausz-Hupé could have said, "George, what are you talking about, man? We don't have international lawyers on our staff." But this isn't Strausz-Hupé's way. He basically said, "Jawohl." And so then they looked around, and I got the task of being Strausz-Hupé's best international lawyer. So I did a lot of historical analysis, talked to a lot of people, talked to the State Department, Geographic Office. And anyway, came up with an argument that the whole series of agreements from 1914 to 1947 involving any Greek island in the eastern Mediterranean, came to the conclusion regardless of which set of outside powers were involved in it, and this was through five agreements, that the islands should be demilitarized. Or otherwise you have militarized islands with interlocking territorial waters. If you go to 12 miles territorial seas and block off Turkey's access to the high seas, the Turks had claimed this was a *casus belli*, and they drew it -- so anyway, I made this argument. The argument was actually accepted by the State Department Legal Office, so I was very happy about that. This was one of my real accomplishments. So I really had a, I thought a pretty productive two years, I learned a lot. But meanwhile, State Department had concluded that even though they've sent me out as a pol-econ officer to Adana, pol-econ is not a political officer position, so I hadn't served my two years as a political officer. Now --

Q: Even with the work you did in Pol-Mil in Ankara.

JEFFREY: Well yeah, but the problem with this is, I had my first real review for FS-1 six months, in fall of 1985, right after I'd gotten to Ankara based upon my prior work. I was still an admin cone officer because I couldn't re-cone. And so therefore, at this point -- nobody had worried about this up to FS-2, but when they start reviewing you for FS-1, the primary consideration understandably is capability in your cone. And as I had no capability in the cone other than briefly in Tunisia, I was low ranked and they warned me that if you get low ranked the next year, you know, by State Department regulation you're terminated. Now, they almost never do that, but this was a real shock while I'm working real hard, doing all these fun things that I'm describing. Suddenly I realize that I might be out of the Foreign Service. And so -- and I realized that next year I would still be a little over a year in the pol-mil job, which was unquestionably a political position, but I wasn't qualified to re-cone or apply to re-cone on the basis of that. So what I did was I had kept every single exchange or document I had from Personnel since 1980 in Bulgaria, and so I read the whole thing, got AFSA to support me, went in and convinced the Grievance Board that they basically not been upfront with me on, particularly on the Adana assignment, but on several other assignments, that they'd made a commitment that they would give me a political job, ergo that I could compete to re-cone, and they gave me a job that wouldn't allow me to re-cone and now I was low ranked. And so, you can connect the dots and as a result I won the case with the condition that the department said that I couldn't share any of my arguments with anybody else. And I took this as both a backhanded compliment, but also as an example, which I have kept with me to this day, that of all of the bad things about the Foreign Service that are threatening our very existence, the cone system is right at the center. And now an aside, twice, in the mid-1990s, and then I'll get to this later, then just two years ago, I mounted a major effort through AFSA and directly with the department, to fix this. And my way of fixing it is to

get rid of the political cone, make everybody a political officer, and then give everybody a secondary designation as admin, consular or econ or maybe pol-mil. And --

Q: And now public diplomacy.

JEFFREY: And now, I'm sorry, public diplomacy. And basically because the whole logic of the cone system is you need specialized skills, and there is no -- as a longtime political cone officer there is no specialized skill for a political officer. The skill set is a skill set of being a diplomat. And -- which is why we let political officers do all sorts of jobs. And the way I would have done this was take all the IROG generalist positions and make them political cone positions. And I've done the math, that's half of the positions in the Foreign Service, so everybody could have served half their tours as a political officer. But I'll get to this later on why many, many forces opposed this. But anyway, so we're stuck with the cone system. So I managed to get myself into the political cone. I then went to --

Q: OK, so we are now in 1987.

JEFFREY: Yeah.

Q: OK, OK.

JEFFREY: I can do this very quickly and then I have to run. So anyway, staying with EUR, Southern Europe, I was offered another job as the Greek desk officer, which I thought was cute because I had no experience in Greece but had spent two tours in their bitter enemy. But this was in the Papandreou era. And anything the Department of State could do to insult the Papandreou government it was happy to do, so I was part of that. But also, I mean I worked with all these people, they trusted me. And with Greece we had a very active relationship, because we're also doing a status of forces agreement. And basically trying to keep Greece in the alliance, keep it stable. The high points of that were -- was the status of forces agreement, and my work indirectly, or maybe not so indirectly, overthrowing the Papandreou government. The background to that is there was a businessman, Koskotas, who was supposedly a friend of Papandreou's, but had been involved in various scandals and criminal activity. So he was arrested and placed in a high security prison guarded by the new counterterrorism force that we of course had trained. And one day he walks out of the prison, hops a cab to the airport. There's a private plane and he flies to South America. Everybody figures Koskotas has the goods on Papandreou, and Papandreou managed to let him go. And so we were just kind of following that. But then on -- and many things happen on holiday weekends. On Thanksgiving weekend, 1988, Koskotas decides he's going to go to the United States. So he flies to Massachusetts, not to Boston Airport, but to Hanscom Field, which -- Hanscom Air Base also is a small plane field. It's not a port of entry. So therefore, we just got, through the various ways we get things, news that this guy was coming. And there was a red notice, an Interpol red notice that the Papandreou government, pro forma, had put out on him once he had escaped supposedly so that they could grab him. So there was an Interpol notice. So we had the capability of grabbing this guy, but we had to go to

the ambassador, Papoulias. Well, my boss was gone, Towny Friedman, who had a lot of experience in Greece, and he was gone for the weekend and so this was sort of left to me. And looking back over all these years in looking at the Seismik II incident and the Burgas incident, and this thing, I keep on thinking, "Why is an FS-3 and an FS-2," and I think I'd just made FS-1, at this point, you know, why was there no adult supervision over me? It was a different Department of State in those days. And if you were taking initiative and not in just doing -- you could just take initiative and do things.

So -- and I cleared it with my DAS and went to Papoulias and he signed the papers. So we then went to -- and this was just, I mean it sounds easy, but we went to the Department of Justice, the FBI, and the local police, and had this guy arrested and then put in the Salem Jail, appropriately. And he started telling all these stories about relations with Papandreou and everyone else. This led to a huge crisis in Greece, which was fine with us because the last thing we wanted was Papandreou. But again, we hadn't done anything deliberately. We had just done what -- I mean they had put out the red notice on it. But then, the elections occurred a few months later, and under the shadow of Koskotas, Papandreou did badly. And Mitsotakis in the Conservative Party was running neck-in-neck, and there was a liberal party that had won, oh, somewhere less than 10 percent of the vote, but they were now the decisive force. They could form a coalition either with the right or with the left. And we signaled in all kinds of ways -- and I, again, have no idea at what level this was cleared, but I suspect it wasn't cleared too high that maybe it wouldn't -- because these were all buddies of Towny Friedman from his tours in Athens, and we all knew each other and we had a -- Bob Keeley was a very experienced Greek hand ambassador out there. We kind of let it be known that it would be really good if the party made the right choice. And so the result was we got rid of Papandreou. We thought forever, but as it turned out, alas, he came back a few years later and lived to haunt us into the 1990s. *(phone rings)* Oops. I'm sorry. I'll call him back. So anyway, that finished my desk officer tour.

Q: OK, you were on the Greek desk. And so at that point you had not learned Greek. They didn't give you Greek for that, OK.

JEFFREY: No, but that didn't stop me from going to all the Greek American community functions, which I loved because they were very friendly and of course there was Senator Sarbanes and I knew Sarbanes, and you spent an awful lot of time with the congressional delegations and with the Greek American community. The only problem is these people would all happily ask me, "And have you served in Greece?"

And I would say, "No, unfortunately I haven't been so fortunate."

And then they would ask, "Where have you served?"

And so I had to tell them, "Well, I had a couple tours in Turkey."

And that usually would chill the relationship.

Q: (laughs) Understood, understood. All right, would you like to break now?

JEFFREY: Yeah.

Q: And we'll pick up again right after, from the Greek desk you went on from there to?

JEFFREY: To Germany.

Q: To Germany. All right, we will pick up again then in Germany for our next session.

OK, today is July 22, and we are continuing with Ambassador Jeffrey who is now going to his tour in Germany having finished Greece.

JEFFREY: As I may have mentioned before, my goal in the foreign service and my promise to my wife who is German is to get a German assignment. So, I finally got one after 12 years. I was delighted to go to Munich because Bavaria which the consulate covers is a little bit like Quebec except its peculiarity is it is even more pro-German than the rest of Germany, but it is also very particularistic with its own version of a blue and white flag, not the Quebecois flag but the Bavarian flag over everything. Everybody knows this from beer and BMWs but Bavaria is a very successful icon in Germany and in the world. We had about \$10 billion of trade with Bavaria at the time annually and the Bavarian CSU party was important because it was a junior partner in the Kohl government with Theo Waigel the head of the party as the deputy chancellor and the minister of finance. Had a key role but the Bavarian CSU is basically like a state party the Christian Socialist union which is the quasi sister party of the CDU. The CSU only operates inside Bavaria, the CDU in the rest of the country. But it has its own peculiarities. It is more to the right and is far more populist which in German is called *Stammtisch* which is your favorite table at the beer hall that you hang out in. So, it appeals to a broad swath of the population. Of course, it is a Catholic majority place and is very different from the Germany I had known but is absolutely delightful.

When I arrived there in August of 1989 you could already tell something dramatic is going to happen in Eastern Europe. One of my jobs, I was the deputy consul general and head of the political and econ section and I was the political advisor to Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty. Their job was to broadcast to Eastern Europe as a quasi-independent government funded institution somewhat different from the Voice of America. They had a huge research establishment of academics and we provided some advice to them, although as I said, they were pretty independent and their only stricture was not come out against U.S. policy. They didn't have to, unlike VOA, advocate it. Many of their researchers had clearances and so we spent a lot of time bringing classified documents to them. This meant that we had to follow extensively what was going on in Eastern Europe, which had been my beat previously in Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria in any case. So that was enjoyable as well and I had a ringside seat to what was going on.

So, the most fascinating thing about all of this was the fight within the U.S. government after the wall came down. There had been a problem of imagination in the U.S.

government since 1946-1947 we had locked ourselves into a cold war. The cold war infused all of American foreign policy other than bits and pieces at the margins. People were not uncomfortable with that. It is what we do. We had fought two major and innumerable secondary conflicts. Suddenly it was all melting away. There was considerable turbulence in the Bush administration. Reagan got it by 1987, 1988 with the INF treaty and other measures to support Gorbachev. When the new Bush administration came there was initially some speculation about whether we were going to bounce Gorbachev. I will never forget when Dick Cheney, the newly minted Secretary of Defense was asked in the spring of 1989 where we stand on the reunification of Germany. He said, "I will have to check back with you." Well that had been a pillar of U.S. policy since Potsdam that we supported the unification of Germany and saw the division as an artificial creation of the cold war that should be overcome. Not something that we could go back and check the measure of the lens that day. This is just an indication. I am not singling out Cheney, it is an indication of how nervous people were that they were going to let this thing go that had taken so long to build up because there was always a team B, and we saw this and these people lived through this in the 60's and early 70's. They were afraid that if they stepped off the gas on containment and deterrence policy the whole thing would crumble and we would be faced with a Vladimir Putin. They had a point. It is just that it took 25 years. But for the moment with or without our very presence Europe was moving this way.

While I did a lot of monitoring work on Eastern Europe I focused on Germany because that is where I played a role along with everybody else in the mission. After the wall fell there was tremendous confusion in the United States because the core of the cold war politically was the division of Germany. That was the biggest of the Russian spoils. East Germany; along with Sakhalin Island. This is what they really gained out of the war, Germany was important, as Germany has a quasi-magical place in Communist doctrine. Obviously, Marx and Engels were German. The Soviets had fought a terrible war and lost somewhere around 30 million citizens. Fighting Germany. The division of Germany was central to their view of the world. Something that we were pretty sure they would fight over for in a way they wouldn't for Bulgaria or Estonia. So the government of East Germany in a way and the population made it very clear they wanted communism to go which went very quickly. With the election of De Maiziere as the East German chancellor. But they wanted unification. This led to a huge debate in the U.S. government that lasted a number of months. It was driven by two things. First of all, obviously we were very nervous about the Russians and how they would react, but more importantly the four powers. Russia was obviously very concerned and also France and Britain were opposed.

Q: And this was when Margaret Thatcher was already, and you would think somebody who was as strong line on democracy and promoting democracy and so on it would be consistent with her policy even that extending democracy to East Germany would be

JEFFREY: It was basically she grew up in a world where Germany was the enemy and you had to think in realpolitik terms. She had cut her teeth dealing in a liberal society

where many people no longer thought in realpolitik terms. In realpolitik terms a divided Germany is better than a united one. Mitterrand was opposed but first of all the French had far better contacts than the UK in Germany and he saw that this was inevitable and therefore he was intent on buying it by essentially blackmailing Germany into giving up two things that Germany had and that France wanted and had wanted for a long time, one was to sacrifice the D-Mark and the D-Mark based currency system as it is known affectionately in Spain and France and other countries and Britain at the time that basically put the German central bank in a predominant position financially in Europe, and the second thing was he wanted to wean Germany away from NATO as its primary security alliance, which has been part of French policy since the 1950's. So, it made sense in 1989 to press a trade which led eventually to the Maastricht agreement with its two pillars of the Euro currency and the European security and defense policy. For the moment Mitterrand hadn't moved that far and he was still making negative noises.

Actually, when he was making very loud negative noises the Russians were happy. And in Washington once again there was a mindset that all of the things that were holy about the cold war the holiest was Germany. We were all issued a book, "American Documents on Germany" about this thick, blue paperback. It was about 800 pages of documents on all of the intricacies of Potsdam, Yalta, four power arrangements, status of Berlin. This is all that I can equate it to is the liturgy of the Catholic Church. All kinds of backroom things. For instance, before I was promoted I was selected to be the liaison to the Berlin Senate. My job would have been to have an office there along with representatives of the other three allied missions in Berlin who collectively oversaw Berlin and we blessed the otherwise routine assumption by the Berlin Senate of West German laws. But if we didn't like those laws we could block it because we were the sovereign. This is the kind of strange thing you had going on in Berlin. You had a whole category of people, the German Mafia which I really wasn't because I had come to Germany late as an FS-1 after 12 years. I was just able to get a job because I had very good German.

Q: This is very important. Most people in the foreign service at that time included me, who wanted to get into German politics or some in Germany had to get through this German mafia of foreign service officers who had been doing Germany forever. It wasn't easy so you're getting in was a big deal.

JEFFREY: I would be saved by Bill Bodde (EUR DAS) and I returned the compliment by selecting his son as deputy ambassador in Iraq many years later. He just took a liking to me. The only thing was I had with Greek desk officer I had one, two, three, four European tours in a row. I had 4+ German. I had lived there six years, but it was still hard to do that. There are all kinds of machinations. I was going to actually go to Berlin as head of the political section but they gave me Munich to clear the way for an FS-2 to be moved up into that position because he was on the German desk. This is the kind of thing I emphasize, and it was interesting because in its day Germany was the center. It is no accident that only the most select foreign service officers, John Kornblum and who was there before him, Chuck Redman, the very top European bureau people had a chance to get Germany. Almost never did top European bureau people get it. Or rather the embassy. We had one guy go to Britain so in my whole career we had two guys go to

Germany, not to Paris or to London. You just did not give foreign service officers a big European post. But also, Germany had the combination of being a great place to live right in the center of a bustling Europe, plus good English schools. We had all these German American schools where my kids went in Munich and it was as cutting edge as Afghanistan or Iraq or Moscow is today without any of the hassles. You can understand why it was really hard to get into it. So, I was happy to be there whether it was Munich or Berlin or Bonn.

But the problem with setting up a mafia like this is people will think it will go on perpetually. The implications from a bureaucratic standpoint of a unified Germany meant two of the three missions we had there, U.S. Mission Berlin and U.S. Embassy East Berlin would go away and they were big missions. And secondarily Germany would no longer be a front-line state, it would no longer have as the cockpit of the cold war the thing that Le Carré wrote his first two novels based on and that sort of thing, A Small Town in Germany about Bonn. So, it would lose some romance; it would lose importance and you wouldn't get promoted any more as rapidly. This I think colored some of the perceptions of what was going on.

Q: It was also Mitterrand's loophole for spying.

JEFFREY: Well yeah there was also that too. Of course, Munich; the two spy centers of the world were Munich and Berlin. I will leave Berlin out but in Munich we had the Bundesnachrichtendienst, the German intelligence service was located in Munich not in Bonn. So, you can imagine the role of the CIA in Munich. We had all kinds of Eastern European things that I kind of discussed at the clearing stations for some of the people who came across. We had the 10th Special Forces with the job of parachuting in behind the lines, at Bad Tolz down the road. We had a huge NSA operation that has now become famous because of the spying scandal in Germany about Merkel's telephone. It just went on and on. Munich and Bavaria were the gifts that kept on giving in the intelligence world. It was certainly part of the embassy's job to support. Then at the consulate our other big job besides Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty which was huge was a big VOA operation. So, you had all of these in their own little world and this world was going to be shattered if the two countries came together and if really the cold war ever drifted away. Germany as an economic giant just isn't the same thing. So, there was a real debate.

Obviously, it was led by the embassy in East Berlin in part because the post-communist government was composed of a group of people typically coming out of the upper middle class. These were the dispossessed who had opposed communist rule in East Germany and came from the ranks of preachers such as the current president of Germany. And the director of the Leipzig Philharmonic and some political figures as well, and on and on. These people all had an East German identity, they were just not communist; in a way they had defined themselves as, we are East German patriots. We just don't believe in Communism and subservience to the Soviet Union. They were dominant in the transition governments and they were also the people the embassy talked to. The problem is they were more than that, ten or twelve million East Germans I think and they all, not all but

many of them particularly the younger ones didn't want anything to do with East Germany. They had yearned for the west since they had growing up. I had seen that same yearning in Bulgaria and I saw it later in Albania. This is a magnetism which the whole alternative universe I experienced in the middle east definitely does not reflect. But I am getting ahead of myself. Because that is Iraq.

But at the time these countries including East Germany had this yearning to become part of the west. The only issue was that in East Germany there were two competing nationalisms. German nationalism versus East German nationalism. You didn't have that problem in Poland or in Romania or Czechoslovakia or Hungary because you could still remain Hungarian and be part of the west. You just changed clubs. But with the East Germans they had to change their identity and shift from a particularistic view of being a German as one of several states which is how Germany had lived up until the 1870's, to the idea of but ein Staat. So there was a lot of resistance. Washington initially came down on the side, Jim Baker, that is, of our ambassador in East Germany, Barkley who was saying that we shouldn't rush this. We shouldn't encourage this. This is not going to come soon and might not be a good thing. The problem is our ambassador in Bonn Vernon Dick Walters, Lt. General Walters was listening to Kohl and the other political figures and they were very strong that re-unification was coming because they had their own sources. It tied us up as reporters of the situation but to some degree we might try to influence things because this didn't look like a great idea, not tentacles out to the population. The thing is too, Bavaria was very focused on that because they were wondering whether they should expand into East Germany and become a national party competing with the CDU and this whole issue tied up the CSU for months. It tied up us as false reporters of the situation but to some degree we might just try to influence things because this didn't look like a great idea not re-unification, but the CSU expanding because it was something that was dominant in the CSU until finally the elections in the middle of 1990 showed that the party they were supporting had no legs but they certainly supported the idea. But in the process, they were very strong and I was very strong in my reporting.

My boss, the consul general, said that from our perspective and from the perspective of the Bavarians unification was coming. Of course, what you are hearing is "if the D-Mark doesn't come to us we will go to the D-Mark." Because the first thing that happened when the wall came down the frontiers were open and suddenly the autobahns all over the west Germany were full of these little Trabants as people just drove around to immerse themselves in the west. So, this thing was really romantic. Now the day the wall came down everybody sees pictures of the Brandenburg Gate. It was actually quite traumatic in a negative way because we were actually very worried that that happened because there was a fear that Soviet troops, the Soviet forces in East Germany there were some 20 divisions, it was a large force of 400,000 troops. It was larger than our force. It wasn't larger than the NATO force in West Germany but it was certainly larger than the American forces in a much smaller area and a much smaller population. So, there was a belief that the Soviet Army would crack down, so the first thing we did was to contact the Second Cavalry Regiment which was the U.S. unit responsible for securing the border. Technically Germany was responsible for securing the border but it was the Second

Armored Cavalry that did it. So, we were asking them to report if there were strange things. Meanwhile the deputy interior minister Peter Gauweiler, who was one of these flamboyant characters you run into in Bavaria and nowhere else in Germany, was really pitching himself as a German patriot, and he is still a figure of some infamy in German politics. He is still around. Anyway Gauweiler decided on his own authority he would lead police into East Germany. This was the kind of thing we were worried about but it worked out pretty well, so we had to get on the phone with Gauweiler and Gauweiler's bosses be careful and all of this, so it was a very dramatic that weekend.

But to move forward again to 1990, there was still a huge debate in Germany that needed to be won by the unification people and in Washington on what was going on. Should we support; first, did the Germans really want this, A; and B, if they did should we support it; and C, if support it what do we do about Britain, France, and Russia. So, this led to the two plus four negotiations. I am getting ahead of myself. But it first led to a decision as to whether it was going to come. And as late as early February every year in Munich there is something that used to be called Wehrkunde now it is the Munich Security Conference. It is kind of Davos for people focused on security and it is where Putin made his big speech in 2007 "the biggest tragedy of the 20th century was the collapse of the Soviet Union." This kind of thing, so it gets a lot of international attention, and the first problem it was run by a guy named Edward von Kleist. As the name suggests he was a baron of the old nobility. A highly decorated and wounded soldier in WWII. His father had been a German general who was executed for trying to kill Hitler. So, von Kleist with extraordinary status, it's a family that goes back hundreds of years. There were von Kleists in every battle Germany has ever fought. So that and his pedigree as the son of one of the guys who tried to take down Hitler made him an untouchable character. He was old and very crusty and very aristocratic. He really ran this thing with an iron fist. He had slotted Dick Cheney for a Sunday morning, and Cheney was busy with all the things of the world and said "No, I need a slot on Saturday." Von Kleist said, "You get a slot on Sunday or you don't come." So, Cheney threw a little fit and said, "I am not coming." So now we have got a little crisis in the U.S. government because right when Germany is the center of all the attention and this event is going to be the seminal thing that gets all kinds of media we don't have a representative.

So, at the last moment Scowcroft was sent out as the National Security Advisor and he arrives in Munich and I am in a room with him, Dick Walters, and my boss, Dave Fisher. We looked at Scowcroft's remarks that were prepared in Washington, and they were all wrong. They tried to operate on the assumption that unification was one of the options that needed to be looked at carefully, and there were downsides. It was kind of posing as an option but was something that maybe wasn't a good option. So, Fisher and Walters basically persuaded him on the spot to change his mind. We wrote a more neutral stance. Meanwhile not long after this time, when was this? This was a year later we had a big drunken all afternoon feast with the senior leadership of Bavaria and Walters who could speak good German was explaining what had happened. Essentially Walters' argument was that his boss, Baker, was opposed but the president was on Walter's side. Now Walters had a relationship with Bush because when Bush had been in the CIA Walters had been the deputy director of the CIA and he had all kinds of ties with Bush. Of

course, Walters has this extraordinary reputation but Baker was being influenced by people who felt that this needs to go slow and we have got to worry about it. Walters said, "This is a mistake. We are going to lose Germany. We are going to look like the British and the French. We have got to be in the forefront." He was absolutely right. This was our recommendation out of Bavaria. Not just the CSU people but the city itself. Munich was the citadel of the SPD in Bavaria and they were all for unification too, so we just couldn't see where the downside was going to happen. So, there was a fight back and forth.

Finally, Walters got to Bush and Bush decided we are going to go with this. Therefore, the Americans weighed in and that led to what we called the two plus four talks. That is East Germany and West Germany as two sovereign states and the four allied parties got together. Then the big signing deal that was done during all of that was there were two sides. First of all, there was the United States and Russia which Jim Baker led and that led to the first of the commitments on the NATO forces where at minimum Baker promised that we wouldn't put U.S. troops in Eastern Germany, a pledge which we have held to to this day. But as I sit back, another of other commitments made later in '94 has led the Russians to argue that we wouldn't expand NATO and this was highly controversial. I was in the foxhole and would just say it was part of the framework we were all dealing with. Because this was a huge thing for the Germans as well. That is, they did not want to become neutral. One of the main side themes of the whole cold war was keeping Germany from going neutral. If Germany goes neutral, NATO as we know it goes away. If NATO as we know it goes away deterrence and containment go away so therefore our job one is keeping Germany non-neutral and on our side which means indulging their Ostpolitik from time to time. But standing tall in Berlin. There are all sorts of the usual subjects you round up to do this. So, the job of Baker was to get the Russians to acquiesce not only to unification but in contrast to the initial position which was unification yes, NATO no, a neutral Germany, to agree to a Germany that could take its own decision.

Q: At that time was it clear in the language, do you feel it was clear in the language that we truly intended no expansion?

JEFFREY: I think Baker truly intended that. I think that was the price we were willing to pay. And I think there was no doubt we committed no new U.S. troops in the DDR and possibly it was the Bush administration. It's a good guess that expanding NATO into Eastern Europe was a bad idea. They were already by the end of that looking to the CSCD now the OSCE as a way to have a security relationship with Eastern Europe over Russia that wouldn't raise the NATO thing. That was my next job so we will get into that later. But this was really an extraordinary debate going on in the U.S. and with the other side. Aside from the two plus four there are two other key negotiations going on. Us with the Russians to make sure that the Russians would acquiesce to a Germany that would join NATO or rather be united and stay in NATO. The second negotiations I mentioned was the German-French negotiations essentially done at the top with Mitterrand and Kohl that led to the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and 1993. I think '92. Then the third thing which was intra-German but it preoccupied us was the issue of the Oder Neisse line. The

Oder Neisse line had been the border of the essentially eastern quarter of Germany established at either Potsdam or Yalta and it led to a significant amount of Silesia which was traditionally German territory being given to the Poles; There was actually a mixed population there but the Germans had held it well Prussia had held it since 1740. But there had been German territory in the Reich since the middle ages.

So therefore, this was a big thing. And it was a particularly big thing in the CSU because the CSU was the center of German patriotism and nationalism on the political spectrum and the CSU had a very significant group of Sudeten Deutsch. These are people who had been driven out of the Sudetenland after 1945 what is today the Czech Republic. They still had a real sympathy for not giving up German soil. So it was a big debate within the CSU as to whether the Party would go along with it. In the end the CSU opted yes, they would do this but this took an awful internal high debate as well as our weighing in. It was something we were interested in because you weren't going to get an agreement under the two plus four if you didn't get an agreement on the boundary. So that was something we spent a lot of time talking with the leadership of the CSU, talking with people throughout the CSU trying to get to yes, and there it was very important the way the U.S. played it. A strong U.S. role after Walters got to Bush supporting unification while the French and the British were still wavering. And the strong support for Germany staying in NATO, that was another thing the Bavarians liked, gave us the leverage to persuade these people that "Yes you have lost Silesia forever." You are just going to have to swallow it. If you want to be unified, you have got to be unified. At the end, I remember Teo Waigel the Deputy Chancellor and CSU Chief thundering at a party conference saying you want unification you get unification with the Oder Neisse line or no unification.

Q: Now the only thing is of course is the Sudeten Germans had been forced out at the end of WWII. I thought the Silesians had also been ethnically cleansed and were essentially gone.

JEFFREY: Yeah but the Silesians were spread all over Germany. I know this because part of my wife's family comes from Silesia and remember they had been ethnically cleansed after WWI from part of Silesia and then the rest of Silesia went after WWII. They had to spread out. The Sudeten Germans just went right across the border into Bavaria and there they formed and so whenever you would have the German I mean other German stock. Bavaria plays the role of Texas for the rest of Germany. That is on Saturday nights on the main entertainment shows we used to call Ed Sullivan but that wouldn't have much recognition these days, the Eight o'clock at night show with music and you get a known figure who gets up and entertains people for several hours. But they are always full of these Bavarians in dirndls and lederhosen, leather shorts. Slapping their shorts and singing with these Alpine horns and such. Well as somebody who spent a lot of time skiing and hiking in the Alps, the Alps only extend about ten miles into Bavaria and that is it. And there are probably 300,000 Germans who live there. Kind of like how all Americans feel a little bit going to Texas and cowboys, Germans feel drawn to Bavaria, so therefore they all dress up in their eighteenth-century costumes and the Sudeten

Deutsch were really prominent. We ran into these people all the time. They were hard to move, but finally they were moved, so everything came together.

Russia acceded to Germany staying in NATO. France acceded to unification; the Bavarians acceded to the Oder Neisse line and everybody was happy except Margaret Thatcher. She held up to the end and then she basically was just crushed by everybody. So that was 1989-1990. I will just finish Germany quickly. Just as that was occurring, on the second of August, Saddam invaded Kuwait. In 1990. Now the final act was Germany was unified in September and there was the Paris summit of at that time the CSCE. Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe now Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. That was the equivalent of the peace treaty that ended the state of war from 1939. Everything was fine except that we now had this other problem –Kuwait -- you might say well how does that influence Germany? Quite dramatically. This was the first real threat under the new organization of the world, so the first question wasn't one for Germany but it was one for Russia. Would Russia support the U.S. and the international community acting, and the answer turned out that Russia did support it against Saddam.

But this led to a huge crisis between Germany and the United States because of the very deep pacifism that had built up in Germany. This became a huge issue in our relationship, meanwhile by the fall it was determined that the forces that we put into Kuwait and into Saudi Arabia were not sufficient and that we would have to pull the VII Corps and two divisions about 70-80 thousand troops out of Germany to go to Saudi Arabia. The VII Corps was headquartered in Stuttgart across the border in Baden-Wittenberg, most of the troops were in Bavaria however so were basically our military so we had an awful lot of liaison with them. So therefore the Second Armored cavalry regiment, the First Armored division, and a brigade of the Third Infantry Division and a lot of support troops were all sent and this was a huge logistic thing, but we didn't get involved in that. But then you have the problem with what you do with hundreds of thousands of dependents. Normally when the troops go to war the dependents are flown home, and nobody wants to do that. So, you left the dependents essentially in the middle of Germany without both their husbands in most cases, and in a few cases their wives and but also the support structure as well. Units would leave rear detachments but basically the whole command structure that needed to go out and fight the war was also the command structure that ran this huge collection of bases. Unlike in the United States where you have on Fort Hood you have a two-division base. These people were scattered in one, two, three, four-thousand strong detachments all around Bavaria. So, there was a huge effort to try to get the Bavarian government to help these people. We had to really work hard and get all kinds of programs. We had to get passports for these people, so there was a huge consular and huge support role we played.

Most of the focus was however on the political debate in Germany and the role we had in it. There the CSU again was our best ally because the CSU by its nature is not a very pacifist organization. Obviously, the SPD, true to its tradition, was very negative on the war. As was the Green party. But what surprised us was the CDU. Richard von Weizsacher, the president who had been very pro-American. I met him once in Bad Tolz,

where he had a summer home. A very wonderful guy; people respected him. He came out against using military force. By the late fall it was pretty obvious that Saddam wasn't buckling. Sanctions, and UN actions and deploying troops was not going to be enough. Sooner or later there was going to have to be a military action. He came out against it. Kohl, I think to his permanent disgrace, would not take a position and this was very problematic. Public opinion was very much against it. We really worried about this because Germany was now so central.

You just got this whole two plus four and now things are starting to unravel. We began to wonder wow we were so supportive of the Germans, why aren't they supporting us. There was a great deal of irritation on this. Walters handled that brilliantly. At a certain point, what they did was unleash all of us to use whatever means you could to persuade politicians, anybody and everybody that this was going to happen. I found this very exciting and at the time my consul general David Fisher had left, but for these six months I was the acting consul general, so I had a lot of access. I basically devoted myself almost entirely to giving talks, participating in forums, getting on TV, working with the editor of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* which is the major Munich paper and the biggest paper in Germany. That was very difficult. I finally had to go to the editor and explain to him very clearly what the position of the U.S. was and probably went too far in terms of information that I had sensitive access to. Where we were in negotiating with Tarik Aziz, the Iraqi foreign minister. In the end, the *Süddeutsche* changed its position in a lead editorial and things like this were happening all over Germany.

Q: Now very briefly, this is the kind of thing that you get an award for in the foreign service because basically what you are doing you are practically freelancing with a set of instructions and that is where your ability to use all of your contacts ended up war and actually convinced them to change point of view and go along with the U.S. not just on something relatively low level but on a gigantic world historical thing like support for a major military action outside of your region in the middle east. And that is a huge thing.

JEFFREY: And this became critical because then the issue involved the Turks. They were being threatened by this whole thing and therefore they raised not article V of the NATO treaty which is a country under attack but Article IV one step below that to demand that NATO send forces to defend Turkish air Space. Among the forces tapped were German Alpha Jets. They were part of the reaction force, so this meant that the Germans were going to have to deploy to the damn war after all. They were very unhappy. This was a huge battle within Germany that now suddenly became of some importance because you had I think they also deployed patriot batteries but I remember the Alpha Jets. Which were an almost useless aircraft, one level above trainers. But they were what the Germans were equipped with to do an emergency deployment so away they went. This was really dramatic for Germany to participate in all of this.

In the end, the Gulf War was another triumph for the Bush administration. The Germans got in line and came out in support of the war. The story is if I can confirm this, I am pretty sure it is right, that the inspector general of the German military General Naumann because after WWII the Germans of course don't have a commander. Or a chairman, they

have an inspector general. He supposedly went to Kohl and told him in a private conversation how dare you not support the Americans after what they did for Germany. So, Kohl came around and it was a happy ending except we didn't have Wehrkunde that year because the American congressional delegation decided it was too dangerous to travel to Germany which was terribly embarrassing and it was also tricky because Walters said OK, Jeffrey you have to do the security evaluation. We can't influence you one way or the other. You basically give us the sense of this. It was Senator McCain who led the Senate delegation. I don't know who did the other. So, send me the security evaluation. So, I sent a security evaluation that basically it was safer than Washington. It still didn't matter and so they didn't come. Von Kleist was so unhappy they canceled the whole conference. The only time this thing has ever been canceled. So that is it. We then eventually in the summer got a new consul general, Andy Thomas, and after two tumultuous years it looked like I would have an easy last year. I knew everybody in Bavaria by this time.

I was having a great time. You know, this all sounds very exciting and dramatic and pounding the beat 24/7 which we did, but it was also a great post for my wife and my kids. I had a terrific time seeing and traveling all around Europe to Italy, France, Prague, Berlin, you name it. So, it was really the perfect assignment. So, then I had the last year with really not much going on so we could have a relatively relaxed year except they decided the G-7 summit would be in Munich. So, I spent the whole year being in charge of preparations for the G-7 summit for the new ambassador, Bob Kimmitt. I got to know Kimmitt very well because he and I were in ranger school together back in 1969 -1970, so he and I had that tie and Kimmitt and I are still buddies. But it was just a long grind and it was somewhat anticlimactic. So, I will stop there.

Q: Just one question about the transformation of the German opinion on participation in Kuwait. Did USIA play a role or did they essentially say the political officers all know this better, let them do it?

JEFFREY: Now something like that....

Q: Because that happens periodically. USIA will say this is an extremely difficult military related kind of thing. We are not really prepared for that kind of outreach. We will do all of the other civilian things and you go ahead.

JEFFREY: Well first of all certainly in Munich and in most cases the USIA people including in particular the German national staff set everything up. The technical job of setting up appointments with media and who are basically flogging you as somebody who wants to go on 60 Minutes that sort of thing. They were doing that, so the technical job they were doing, in terms of who is doing this, in terms of the media, first of all you have to have 4-4 German. You cannot go on national TV and explain something like this particularly in a debate or questions and answers if you are not really fluent in German. And of course we had zillions of people who had gone through German but we had maybe the political counselor and a couple of other guys you had seven or eight people in all of Germany who could do this. In fact, John Kornblum who was the DCM to NATO

and Kornblum would show up sometimes to the irritation of the ambassador because Kornblum knew everybody having spent so much time in Germany. The other thing is this is a self-selection which is also with the media. This was a huge issue particularly when it dealt with German deployments, so they were looking for people that they could just like it is now on something like the Turkish coup, CNN. BBC, they are all reaching out who do we know who can explain the result well. Who do we want to put in front of the cameras? They knew who they wanted.

Q: I see.

JEFFREY: You know you try to sell Joe Blow who had perfect German because he had grown up there, but if they didn't know Joe Blow, and they didn't think Joe Blow knew the substance of the issue and because I had a military background I knew the substance of the issue very well. But then we had George Ward the DCM who had been a marine officer in Vietnam and George had good German. The political counselor had good German. But it was essentially Walters took the decision don't bother clearing anything. Don't waste a lot of time. Do whatever you need to do. I want victory. I am sitting there running my own post for the first time thinking this is exactly the kind of instruction I wanted. I had my USIA team and so we worked together every day to get as many interviews and get out in front of the camera and on the radio as much as possible. The more you do that frankly the better you get at it. That is what I do in my life right now. The more often you are on BBC or CNN or NPR the more you will get calls. If for a few weeks you are not in front of them everybody forgets you. It was the same thing then. So, I had about 60 media events in a couple of months. It was very dramatic. My kids were driven to school by the Bavarian police every day because everybody was afraid of the RAF the successor group to the Baader Meinhof gang who had almost killed me and my wife in '76 as I mentioned when I was still in the army in Frankfurt. They would attack us. We know they were going to attack us. We obviously had information. So, we were horrified they might go after kids. Someone said RAF people might go after kids so my kids were driven to school every day by the police. Which my son absolutely loved. My daughter was just horrified. We had our kids sleep with us because their room was right across from the English Garden and I was afraid they might attack from there. It turns out I was right except they didn't attack us in Munich, they hit us in Bonn across the river because the embassy is right across the Rhine. Across the river it is hilly-forested terrain. The RAF set up three positions with automatic weapons and fired hundreds of rounds into the embassy. Fortunately, it was 6:00 or 7:00 at night. Not many people were here. One of them was Dick Walters who claimed it was his ninth war. He claimed as far as I am concerned he was under fire in the Gulf War, the Greek civil War, WWII, Korea, Vietnam and several conflicts in Central America were on the list of things he had done. This you remember was the guy who was in the back seat with Nixon in Caracas when they attacked the car when Nixon was the vice president so Walters pops up in all kinds of crises. I won't say he was delighted, obviously this was a serious thing. But he seemed to have a kind of mischievous smile every time we talked about what it was like jumping under his desk as the bullets were flying by. Anyway, that is Germany.

Q: All right, very good. So, we will stop here and pick up the next assignment.

Q: OK, today is November 8, we are continuing with Ambassador Jeffrey. He is leaving his post in Germany to go to Washington DC in 1992.

JEFFREY: Exactly. To put this into context, mid-1992 was the time of a huge transformation or the end of a transformation in world history and certainly American foreign policy. Now it was marked by two things that were of relevance to me. One was the CSCE summit in Helsinki that operationalized the CSCE which eventually became the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe as a pan-European promoter of values of security, peace keeping, arms control and government to government people to people organization that would cover all European states most particularly Russia. Secondly the 1992 Munich G-7 dinner, on the invitation for the first time, Helmut Kohl invited the Russians to attend. In that case Yeltsin. The other event...

Q: So this is where it became known as the G-7+1.

JEFFREY: Yeah. And in fact that was done by Kohl without telling the rest of the G-7. He came as Kohl's personal guest. We found out about it because as the consulate our job was to do the support for the huge American delegation of 1000 people, and the first thing you think of on support is hotels. So, we went to one hotel, a very nice one near the Munich Olympic stadium and tried to inquire for 800 rooms there. They said "No, 300 of them are reserved for the Russians." You know on the basis of that we informed Bonn and I don't know what went on at the very highest levels after that but Yeltsin did show up. But most importantly and that comes from mentioning Yeltsin, aside from these two bookend international major events, the year 1992 saw the culmination of the trends that had begun essentially in 1987 when it became obvious that Gorbachev and Perestroika were real. When you saw the first rumblings of real opposition throughout Eastern Europe collectively no longer like in East Berlin in 1953, Budapest in 1956 and Prague in 1968. Rather you saw everybody; things were bubbling over everywhere and that trend and you also had the defeat of the Iranians in the gulf with the Russians taking no action because they were withdrawing from Afghanistan. So those events were the beginning. Then of course 1989 was the real shift but then that culminated in 2002, actually the end of not 2002, 1992, the end of 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union and creation of Russia. So, going back to Washington I was assigned to the office of European political security EUR RPM which is a sort of combination of the 82nd Airborne and the French Foreign Legion in the foreign service. It saw itself as a very elite, arrogant, obnoxious operation because it was very operational and dealt with the military issues of war and peace but it was also snob European. This is a bureau whose staff aides' telephone number still today is 7-1848.

So that is the background of going back to the European bureau in terms of the working environment. But in terms of the larger situation, essentially America had the job of capitalizing on this extraordinary set of events from '87 to 1992 and anchoring, solidifying, and expanding the American political security, economic, financial but most

important the values order around the world. . The first job that occupied much of that next decade from 1992 to basically the other end is 9/11 in 2001 was dealing with domestic situations in the Balkans, around the perimeter of what had been the Soviet Union, and in the middle east. My career was like a ping pong starting off with the European bureau and then two years later I was in the Near Eastern regional bureau. Then I was pulled out of there and sent to do the Bosnia Dayton implementation. Then I left there and went to Kuwait and dealt with the near eastern chaos for three years. Then left and went to Turkey to do a combination of European and near eastern chaos until 9/11 occurred.

Q: A quick question here because this is an excellent sort of strategic level view of where we were right after the collapse of the Soviet Union and communism and the famous Francis Fukuyama and history idea. How much was it believed that we had won the cold war inside the State Department as you were operating there in 1992? We had won the cold war and so certain things we could do now or not do now as a result.

JEFFREY: Very good question and it is the setting for the very dark period which starts at 9/11 and continues to go until quite possibly November 8, 2016 and the world we are coming into. There was real hope and optimism but this was not equivalent to Great Britain at the end of the Napoleonic Wars when it finally started without a rival and then moved off to secure what they had been doing for 200 years, anchoring its system around the world for its own benefit. Some degree we did that but I believed and still believe that it was for the benefit of everybody and not for the expansion of American power. Now, two sources. One is my friend Zal Khalizad at the Department of Defense at the end of the cold war was tasked by then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and then Undersecretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz to come up with an explanation or justification for the American military presence at the strategic level. Zal did an internal paper that basically said that American's job is not to allow any peer competitor to rise militarily. This paper leaked most certainly by people who didn't like that point of view and it was immediately condemned by the Defense department, the White House and since then it has not been seen in any official way. The Defense Department just ignored it. But it was in the back of people's minds. Now at the same time the United States did an extraordinary reduction in force structure. Particularly ground forces but also naval and air. And we continued to put emphasis on arms control agreements.

Q: This is the peace dividend.

JEFFREY: The Peace Dividend. And this was a major interest of Bill Clinton's and Al Gore's. So, on the one hand we no longer faced the threat of total war including nuclear war. We obviously had no near peer competitor so the question is why do we need such a big army or military? And the answer to that to some degree was to help us deal with the chaos generated by the end of the cold war because the Balkans and the area around the Soviet Union were chaotic. We still had the problem of North Korea. We weren't so sure where China was going so we thought we needed a reserve there, and the middle east had been the source of major U.S. conflicts and major U.S. military interventions including in the Bush and Reagan administrations, the Gulf War. We still had that unresolved problem.

We were in a confrontation with Iran. We still had the unresolved problem with Iran. Qadhafi, the Syrian Military and the Reagan administration engagements with Qadhafi and various terrorist groups, the budding Al Qaeda movement so the middle east was also a problem as well. But more generally there was a feeling and this was written about in a dozen books, but we felt it very much in the European bureau, the argument on one hand between Madeline Albright and Colin Powell and the forbearer to some degree Larry Eagleburger on Bosnia versus Jim Baker. So a huge military force to buttress our diplomacy. Which again was to anchor, and expand and make permanent. In essence, we were the journeymen laborers to this vision of reality.

Q: I will just say that is very much how it was felt on the ground. I was at the OECD the organization just as it became an organization for several years and that was the coin of the realm. No return to the previous era. That was what guided all of our diplomacy at least with regard to the OECD.

JEFFREY: Multilateral diplomacy essentially the Wilsonian agenda in national organizations. Multilateral diplomacy, peaceful settlement of disputes. Rule of law, economic integration lubricated by ever more free trade, and if there was a threat, collective security. Exhibit A, the Gulf War, with armies from 30 countries and a set of UN resolutions backing it. But we did not want to do another Gulf War when the issue was how to deal with these underlying problems. And again in my five assignments in a period of extraordinary to think, nine years it was EUR, Near Eastern bureau EUR near eastern bureau and then Turkey where you covered both. I had a pretty good view of two of the three major areas of interest because in the middle east, for me the middle east is not just the near eastern bureau's middle east, it is the whole Islamic area of Africa from Somalia to Mauritania; it is Pakistan and Afghanistan and to some degree it is Turkey. Interestingly what we began seeing in this era was an even greater focus on the middle east and Europe.

With Asia, it was more a major military /diplomatic effort with North Korea which took up a lot of time in the Clinton administration. A wariness with China that at times, the famous two aircraft carriers in the Formosa straits, meant containment of China. We needed to much more importantly advance a helpful effort to integrate China into international institutions and organizations most notably trade and economic and essentially working with what we thought were the tigers of Asia. We basically put that in a leading category with those two, well North Korea wasn't minor, with one major but not existential issue North Korea, and one potentially big one for the moment manageable, China. The rest was simply securing the American order. Until 1997 where the Tigers' economies tanked, and a precursor to the 2008. I am getting ahead of myself but when after 9/11 that was actually a transitional period between 2001 and 2008. It has really been bad after 2008. I will get to that later.

So, the focus was other than these bits and pieces of Asia, the focus was primarily on Europe and the middle east. Central and South America which had been major battlefields of the Cold War and had seen American military interventions in Panama, Granada, the Dominican Republic, twice in Cuba from 1960 on and a major war that had

raged in Central America involving obviously Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala essentially as well as the Colombian FARC thing which we were involved in, all that series of things dried up almost immediately. The one exception was Colombia. That is just an asterisk. It soaked up a lot of American resources particularly USAID and elite efforts, special forces, Drug Enforcement Agency and State Department. And also, it is a good example where we were successful in transformative diplomacy, one of the rare examples. But again, set that to one side.

Sub Saharan Africa, if it wasn't involved in the Middle East and terrorism, Somalia obviously in the Clinton Administration, essentially fell off the charts. It was slowly developing. Other than the Congo which nobody wanted to mess with. There weren't any really big wars or security issues of any sort. Idi Amin was gone. Most of the reasons to put attention into Africa other than the Islamic problem were over after the Rwanda thing of course. The decision not to go into Rwanda was an example of how the region was seen. We in the end did not go into Rwanda. We went into Bosnia even though it was in terms of pure slaughter was just a fraction of what happened in Rwanda. So that is probably more than I need to say about the bigger picture. But understand I was bouncing back and forth by this time, but I wasn't being groomed for high level leadership. My peers, we had already identified them. Mark Grossman who went out as DCM to Turkey, I worked with him to prepare him and Mort Abramowitz when they went out as DCM and ambassador to Turkey in 1989, and the two Burns's both whom I met while I was in Munich. We kept on getting these high-level visits in Munich. The vice president, the president, the secretary of defense, secretary of state, so with these people it was obvious Grossman, Bill Burns and Nick Burns and Toria Nuland were the elite. Nobody would put me in that category. Nobody wanted me for a special assistant job, but what they did need was people who understood political military affairs and knew something about the middle east, and because of my tours in Turkey and Tunisia I knew something about the middle east and knew a lot about Europe and particularly at the time the Balkans because I had a tour in Bulgaria, I had been the Greek desk officer and Turkey is a Balkan state as well. So, I was essentially part of this fire brigade. There were a lot of people who served with me, Stu Jones for example served with me many times over my career, Frank Ricciardone. Stu is also interesting because he went back and forth between Europe and the middle east repeatedly for this period and then on. But there were many others.

Q: Just briefly here. When you mentioned you were not being groomed for the seventh floor, this is something that is a general feeling or general understanding among the personnel in the department and those whose eyes are open know whether they are being groomed or not. You can pretty much figure out when you have a clearer path up as opposed to when you don't have a clearer path up. So, you are in a moment when you feel that you have not been necessarily selected for rapid movement or rapid advancement.

JEFFREY: Now the little asterisk on that is I did very well in Munich particularly the six months that I was the acting consul General and I was encouraged to open my window which for the people who are listening to this thing probably mostly know that means that

you now have six annual promotions cycles to be promoted to the first rank of the senior foreign service FEOC counselor rank or you are immediately terminated at the end of the sixth review. I did that because you know I thought it was a correct assessment because I got a very good EER and superior honor award for running consulate Munich at a very tough time with 400 people so I felt that checks the management thing and we have the policy side.

Q: And that was a moment when superior honor awards were not being given out like candy.

JEFFREY: That is right, and the other thing was I also knew the European bureau, and you had to look at this. The European Bureau unlike the near Eastern Bureau or most other bureaus, people at my grade, FS-1, almost never were DCMs other than the laughable places, Luxembourg, Malta. They are the only places where you could be an FS-1 normally and be a DCM, also Prague and Stockholm for some strange reason. Everywhere else DCMs were OC', senior foreign service. The same thing with consuls general with very few exceptions. So, because while it is all informal, in promoting people by cone for obvious reasons seeing people doing this when they are not told to tie or triage promotions among various bureaus, political officers much more than other officers are identified with bureaus. So, I think within the European bureau I am very competitive because I have got this managerial job. And the average FS-1 is the deputy political counselor in Berlin or the political consular in Lisbon. They didn't have all this exciting stuff and I got along very well with both Kimmitt, the ambassador and Dick Walters, his predecessor. So this made sense. So the 1992 promotion records review came out; I was recommended for promotion. I was number 13 or 14 and they promoted 11. So, I said, OK, that was my first time out.

I will be fine, but I wasn't fine. What I failed to know was I had gone back not only for professional reasons but I had been in the foreign service by this time for 15 years, and I had only one tour in Washington but also my family needed some stability. I had to get my son through high school, the usual foreign service reasons. So I was locked into Washington. Now what happened in the European bureau? The European bureau went from something like I think in the CSCE we had 35 countries to 54. Why? Three related reasons. One, Russia broke up and generated 13 new countries. The Balkans got shook up and when Yugoslavia broke up; that generated, we obviously kept the embassy in Belgrade but then you had Montenegro, Kosovo eventually, Macedonia, Bosnia, Croatia, and Slovenia. That is six more and even Czechoslovakia collapsed and Albania opened up. So you have all these new posts. So, for various reasons we grabbed FS-1s for these posts, not only as DCMs but in the case of the three Balkan posts three FS-1s we made them ambassadors. So suddenly the European Bureau where I had decided I was very competitive in terms of having a high-level management job, then I had no competitiveness whatsoever. Because there were many people who had jobs as DCMs or in a few cases ambassadors in very exciting places on the ground.

So therefore, for understandable reasons, I wasn't promoted the next four times I was reviewed. Which had sort of a cloud over my career and also, I had to think about what I

was doing after that. But my basic assumption certainly by the time Mark Parris grabbed me out of RPM to go work for him in the near eastern bureau I figured I had somehow been identified as essentially a fire brigade member and I knew people who were like that. I mean one of them I knew very well. Called Ryan Crocker whom I had known in Tunisia. So, I think I will be like these guys just going from one place to another, I had experience in the army and my early career with war and terror and all that. This will be fine. It is something I enjoy and something I am good at. So, my job in RPM was to be head of the new CSCE office. So, backstopping our first real CSCE ambassador, John Kornblum. I won't get into the details because at the time CSCE actually had two halves. There was the forum for security cooperation where we had a separate ambassador and a separate office supporting that. That was mainly essentially arms control issues and open skies and that kind of thing. CFE fell under it I think.

Q: Yes it did. I worked there in 1992 so you are right it was all of the conventional arms control.

JEFFREY: But the OSCE and this was the big change that had been generated by the Helsinki summit that actualized the CSCE as an active security human rights and even to some degree economic player to integrate Europe. The focus was primarily on security because you had all these messy situations. John Kornblum's vision was to, he had been the guy who had set up the Helsinki Summit, was to with American leadership have the CSCE become the premier low intensity peace keeping force. Or even the negotiating feature behind major non-UN peace-keeping forces. So almost immediately you had the Minsk group whose job was to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute and when I came in in the summer of '92 the U.S. had already committed to provide the airlift for the significant peace keeping force to go in. But meanwhile between the folks out in Vienna and some of us back in Washington who came up with another concept which was essentially civilian peace monitors, without being threatening, to put into all these crises. Within six months we had mobilized CSCE for preventive diplomacy missions which is what we called them in Kosovo and Transnistria, in Macedonia, and Estonia, and Latvia and Georgia for South Ossetia, the UN which was its only role in Europe at this time got the Abkhazia slice in Georgia. So those were seven or eight missions. In addition, we had Nagorno-Karabakh, the Minsk group thing, we had a Minsk group ambassador who I of course was backstopping. We had Max van der Stoep who was the CSCE human rights coordinator; was working on a separate issue with Albania and Greece for the CSCE. We also deployed sanctions monitors around Bosnia so we got involved in the Bosnian conflict. So that was our mission and meanwhile we were trying, we were simultaneously very operational. There was no game book on this kind of thing and of course there was no budget or personnel or anything, so we were having to grab people because Kornblum's idea was that the Americans were behind this idea; we had pushed it, so we had better provide the lion's share of resources and money and people particularly the leadership of these missions. So, I was going out trying to find all kinds of former ambassadors whom I had served with who are really good and both of my DCMs in Bulgaria said OK. Bulgaria I referred to and some of the very famous people went out and did these jobs and did them wonderfully.

Q: Just a quick question. As part of the general idea of how we are going to be using the OSCE now as sort of the more low-level peacekeeping or peace prevention. Didn't NATO play a role at least conceptually as a military force that could be called upon if needed by the OSCE to assist in some of this?

JEFFERY: Yes and this would be other than a little bit of fun stuff about what it was like to work in the EUR, that is the other issue of that period. And that was aside from simultaneously doing all of these operations which was exciting and as I said we were still like the 82nd Airborne at the State Department getting these teams out, putting them in. It was very special forces expeditionary before we coined that term and I think it is still in the foreign service DNA, I think of Daria Fane, I am surprised she is still alive because one day I got an Email from her saying Look I am no longer in Uzbekistan but basically this war that we had been working with brought her into Afghanistan. At the time, we had no relations with Afghanistan; it was just obviously the Taliban raging there. And we didn't know how to get her out. So, I asked to find a paragraph in the regulations saying if you are assigned as an American diplomat to an international organization to a country, you are not under the ambassador for security, so therefore the ambassador couldn't order her out of the country or even order her back into the country because this was Afghanistan. So, there were these kinds of things, but my feeling was frankly if we wanted to do this. This was all new, you had to be edgy; you had to be cutting edge and you had to recruit people who were far more than average, rather fire brigade people, and these fire brigade people are going to get in trouble. God bless them, just send them out there and today they are worth their weight in gold, and I had a tremendous support from John Kornblum on this who knew that the reputation of these people was very high.

But the other thing we did as you said, was we tried to figure out what was the architecture of Europe. Here we came into a big dispute. My vision and Kornblum's and certainly the Russians was that the CSCE, later the OSCE should be this umbrella organization. It should be the basic forum for security discussions, diplomatic military political, thus you had the conventional forces in Europe thing. Thus, you had open skies etc. And you would hang on to it other organizations. So, the Russians were of course busy hammering together their ersatz Warsaw Pact. And the EU, which should have been more focused on the CSCE weren't unfortunately because of one of their two or three basic revolutionary decisions. There were three. One was to move towards the EU constitution and the second one was of course the Euro and the third one was the EU would have common security, the Common Foreign and Security Entity, CFSE I think and they had, being Europe, later on did several different things. ESP, European Security Program and that has developed all these things, no resources or troops or anything.

To try and play a role. That started undercutting us from one area. The best example as I said we did the sanctions monitoring for Bosnia in the beginning and I think mid '93. We didn't do the big basic civilian expeditionary role in Bosnia. The EU had already picked that up. Something called the EUMM the EU Monitoring Mission. That had gone out, to be fair, in 1991 before the CSCE had developed its capability but it was an example of how there were people in the EU that wanted to push the EU in exactly the same

direction that the CSCE was going. That is relevant not because it ever developed because other than the EUMM they never did that. They have an EU mission in Kosovo which my son is assigned to, was assigned to as a liaison, but basically it is kind of like an overall EU management. They didn't even after Bosnia when Carl Bildt got the job they didn't even get that to take off because we didn't want to see that happen. We kind of broke it. But meanwhile what that did was to reduce the ability of the EU to weigh in against the plan that started being developed in Washington with a lot of help from the newly free lands in Eastern Europe. That was to expand NATO.

Q: Just one quick thing here. You have been in Vienna during this time. The EU countries really gave off the feeling that they weren't sure what they wanted to do. There were lots of ideas out there. Some little groups within the EU liked some of those ideas. Some did not. Some were uncertain. There was a general feeling that the EU ought to be playing some new role but they couldn't define it.

JEFFREY: Part of the thing is the EU aside from the fact that it is a terribly split organization and at its core, I once spent a lot of time at the EU. You have dysfunctional parents, Germany and France. France saw the EU in a contradictory way, as a way to create a new European entity rather like Napoleon's vision to be dominated by France that would maintain all of its national characteristics. Thus, the French pushed so hard for the Euro because they wanted to create an organization that they could get control of. Which they did, but they allowed it to be in Frankfurt because people would have snickered if they said Paris is the financial center of Europe, but the first president was French I believe and that was one of their major areas, and the other, the common foreign and security policy was the other because they wanted to push NATO to be essentially a subcontracted creature of the EU if you will just as we were looking at that from a pan-European perspective.

This gets to when NATO was created, one of the things that formed the way that NATO was set up was the tragedy of 1914 where military planning in response to alliance commitments dragged Europe like a set of dominos into a massive war without anybody stopping and thinking of what is the political purpose of us all slaughtering ourselves and going to a mass war like we haven't had for a hundred years. Thus, hard wired into NATO from the get go was the idea that NATO would not only be a military but a political alliance and it would coordinate European diplomacy, or North Atlantic diplomacy. We always threw in the North Atlantic because of the Canadians but we really meant European. This was tremendously resented by the French in particular. It is one of the reasons why de Gaulle pulled out of the military wing. So, the French thought it would be best, they wanted to spread their vision to all the Europeans.

Now the second dysfunctional parent was Germany which I knew a lot about, and the German problem was essentially the legacy of WWII and Germany's rude imperialist behavior from 1870 on, and the Germans had to atone for that. Atonement eventually became like most bad ideas, understandable but still a bad idea self-serving. Thus, Germany didn't have to be and still to this day isn't a military player. Are the German fighters stationed at Incirlik going to fight against ISIS. They take pictures; they don't

drop bombs. Anyway, this is classic German thinking. So, the German idea of the German elite which is even stronger in Germany despite some problems than elsewhere in Europe was we need to not just dilute, but rather dissolve our German identity in a trans-European EU identity and through massive immigration and refugees and everything into a multi-cultural civilization that has nothing to do with those awful helmets with spikes on Prussians. This Weltanschauung is very strong in Germany and thus the Germans lent tremendous power primarily financial to the French project of making Europe very strong. So that undercut the CSCE.

Meanwhile the Americans came from the other direction with this idea that we have got to make NATO relevant, again the political side of NATO because otherwise that will get leached out by the Europeans. So, it is basically a way to get NATO into this common foreign security policy. We started getting NATO into this realm and that led to the partnership for peace. So, I am sitting there in an office, RPM, that has traditionally been you know NATO had been its crown jewel, but I'm working on a different organization that is kind of getting bounced around by this effort once the partnership for peace was announced I think maybe in 1993, maybe 1994. If you read the mission statement we had peace keeping, conflict resolution and all of that it sounded like a dagger pointed at me and at some degree the EU's own things. So, these separate organizations competed. The Eastern European states of course really didn't want the CSCE; they had the Russians in there with a veto it didn't matter how successfully we were getting the Russians to go along. And we were very successful. The Easterns didn't want the EU, they wanted NATO for security. That was a factor in all polling. Many of us in America including the military wanted to expand NATO as well. They were doing this because they were worried mainly about the EU and they were responding to the appeals of Eastern Europe.

But the main victim of this was the idea of the OSCE of being this pan-European umbrella organization because the US was reluctant that it would undercut the budding child of partnership for peace. The EU was reluctant to give up things to an institution where the Americans had a veto unlike in the EU and the only ones who really wanted to see the OSCE other than we who were working on it was of course the Russians. So, a lot of our diplomacy including getting the Russians to go along with peace keeping efforts and all this was with the Russians a fair success. But it is almost like Act I of a play that turns out to be a tragedy. The denouement of act I of this play, the European architecture hopes, and how they collapse ultimately at Putin's 2007 Munich security conference speech was Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev at the CSCE ministerial in 1992 in Sweden. I didn't tell this story before.

First of all, let me take a step back and talk about the military engagement of the United States in the Balkan War zone. Actually, I will get back to the Balkan wars in a second but let me stay with this. You will see Eagleburger too. So anyway, this is the first time I had ever been with a secretary of state flying on the plane myself and with my boss, Jim Cunningham, who had a truly illustrious career as ambassador to Israel, to Afghanistan and consul general in Hong Kong. We went along because it was going to be a multistep trip to Europe as usual the American secretary doesn't like to travel three times in December so this December also we were going to go to Stockholm for the CSCE

ministerial, and then to the NATO ministerial in Brussels and then we were going to go to Geneva for the contact states meeting on Bosnia. So a three-fer. The significant thing was at the CSCE stop the Russian minister Kozyrev who was a very enlightened deep individual got up and gave essentially almost a word for word version of Putin's famous 2007 Munich speech where he went on and on about how you are taking advantage of Russia. You are encircling us. We know you are thinking of expanding NATO. This is not going to turn out well. Rather than embrace us as your friends through something like the CSCE, you are going in different directions and we will feel left out in the cold and the experiment we are making now in Russia will collapse. He essentially laid out the whole thing, but he did it in a very rough dramatic way. I mean the Russians are fascinating. I just spent a week with them on a Kettering Track II project which is one of the things I had been selected for and is still going on. They think deeply about things that are very individualistic and they often will speak their minds in ways that we are not used to with other people and it is basically speaking his mind but doing it in an exaggerated way saying this is the speech you will hear for real. People didn't get that.

So, Eagleburger runs over and puts his arm around him, Eagleburger liked him, to try and figure what is going on, why are you saying this? Then Kozyrev basically said, that is not what I really feel. That is what you are going to hear in a decade if you don't wise up. Nobody listened to him, and again the problem was if we had decided differently then we really wanted to get out of Europe. Kind of Donald Trump's vision and NATO can stay like a kind of hole in the wall kind of like, what, the Rio pact something like that with a brigade of troops training Eastern Europeans, that is fine. Then the Europeans not feeling that they had to compete with NATO might have given a bigger role to the OSCE. Or reverse, if the Europeans, if the Germans had basically put their foot down and said, "Look, at the end of the day NATO is our security." The Germans, the French and we have gone through this in the de Gaulle era. The Germans in the end, actually the German parliament pulled the plug on an effort by Adenauer to start up an alternative to NATO with France. So, if the Germans had done that again in 1992, but they couldn't because they had been bribed, smashed, blackmailed for unification by, at the time it was Mitterrand, brilliantly. And they couldn't do this. Mitterrand, what was the name of the guy. I can't think of it (Delors) but the French played their hand beautifully. So, the Germans went along and didn't realize what they were doing.

The result was these three organizations competing. The one that would have had the most chance of bringing in the Russians became in the end the least important. That is a shame because I think that was the best response. Now the bureaucracies of that are, you might say what about Jim Jeffrey, and John Kornblum? What were they doing? Well the problem is Kornblum is a good example. I mean as the DCM in NATO he was our soldier in NATO for six years. We were all NATO people and had a bias towards NATO. Secondly, this is a problem with having Greece and Turkey in one office in the State Department or India and Pakistan in one bureau. When there are basic divisions that need to be settled at the highest levels, having them bureaucratically in the same little entity in a way is bad because then essentially it was not politically correct to question the partnership for peace. Believe me I tried it. People looked at me weirdly. OK. I realized that I was in a new unit of an old, established, very elite organization that would have

liked to, if it could have, put all of its former members who became ambassadors' pictures on the wall, but they wouldn't go quite that far. They occupy the offices right across from the Assistant Secretary's office and they do whacky things like put little play crocodiles outside and also it is another you know it is things that set little elite units apart from the rest.

We knew we were from EUR, but we would never say we were from the European Bureau, we would say we are from RPM whether we were in the White House or any place else because everybody knew who we were. It was in many respects a very good place to work. It had this esprit de corps which is pretty good. But esprit de corps also brings with it a mindset. And the mind set was NATO uber alles. That meant that if we were a separate entity. Now I will get back to this because I thought about Bosnia. Where we broke that at one point. And I felt good about that. It was John Kornblum who broke it so he remembered this but he was constrained as well, so we wound up in a sub-optimal situation.

Now we were also involved (in Bosnia) because we were RPM. And I was involved because I was just a military guy in a lot of things to do with Bosnia. Again, the CSCE had a role because of the sanctions it monitored so I became part of the Bosnia team. But from the get to you had this division in the United States that is characterized by Albright and Colin Powell but it was clear even before then of how you would use military power in this period of time when there was no existential threat. And even if the region spilled over, you could let these things sort of flame out. In the fall of 1992 at one point Eagleburger decided, and this is when, this was after the election so the president could do whatever he wanted basically for that period of time. Clinton of course had been running on lift and strike I think as a much more active policy against Serbs through the republic of Srpska. So Eagleburger decided we have got to do something. So I was in RPM on a Saturday. I was always in RPM on Saturday but normally there were lots of people but that day there was only myself and, in the whole bureau, Tom Niles the assistant secretary and probably a staff aide. Kurt Volker, later ambassador to NATO, and what is her name? I will think of her, who worked in the FSC, a civil servant.

Q: Oh, Jennifer Lorendeau?

JEFFREY: No the other one. Everybody knows her. She went over to DOD.

Q: Debra.

JEFFREY: Debra Kagan. So, there was Debra and me and Kurt. So, the word came down from Eagleburger I am going up to Camp David tonight. I want a paper on bombing. So Niles called the three of us in and said do it. I was the most senior of the three so I put it together. Kurt didn't really get involved. Debra was of course really helpful because she always wants to take an aggressive position on things. So, we put together this paper on why we had to take action and what some of the political costs would be if we went to the military. Eagleburger took it to Camp David and it was shot down by everybody, by Jim Baker, by Powell, by Cheney, and by Scowcroft.

Q: Wow!

JEFFREY: Wow is right. So that was my introduction to the Balkan wars. My next little role in the Balkan wars when we went to Stockholm as I said we were with Eagleburger. And Eagleburger of course it was really a treat even though it was for only a short period of time. We finally had a foreign service officer as secretary of state. Eagleburger was a rather portly guy who just loved to have fun. So, on the plane of course I was taking everything very seriously and avoiding drawing attention to myself, "Who are you and such" and such. Because Eagleburger was famous for being kind of curt. So there was a new doctor on board. Of course that is the one Eagleburger saw whenever he had a problem. He had many ailments and so the doctor was clearly very nervous. Eagleburger could sense it. So, Eagleburger went to the back of the plane to talk to the press guys, he is then walking forward as he passes the doctor's seat with a degree of almost delicacy he spins around like a ballet dancer, grasps his chest and says "Oh, Doc. It's happening." And throws himself on the floor. I am thinking oh god I just watched the secretary of state die. The doctor shoots up, grabs his bag, and starts trying to resuscitate Eagleburger who breaks out in this huge laugh and says, "You have got to learn man," it was this sort of thing.

OK, so anyway Eagleburger is focused on trying to mend the Balkans at this CSCE summit and of course we went along because he was trying to get some of the details set before the contact group in Geneva. So, he was going to be with Gligorov, the president of Macedonia. And of course, Eagleburger's nickname was Larry the Macedonian because when he was assigned to Belgrade in the 1980's he went down there during a terrible earthquake. He was the face of America to the Macedonian people, and they didn't forget it. So this was going to be interesting. Back then there wasn't near the number of staff that you have now. So the meeting turned out to be Eagleburger in his suite, Niles, and me. No, I had nothing to do with Macedonia you know, but it is just we weren't bringing any EUR staffers other than Cunningham and me. And for some reason Cunningham even though he was senior didn't go along so I said, OK. So anyway, we go in and Eagleburger is just in a red shirt and no tie and no coat just rummaging around. It was a nice suite. Eagleburger says, "Who is going to serve the whiskey?" Well he chose me and said I know these guys. Anyway, in comes Gligorov with his foreign minister and his ambassador to Washington. How can I put it in these politically correct times? You probably would have thought looking at the three of them that the foreign minister was Miss Macedonia 1982 and the more junior ambassador to Washington was Miss Macedonia say 1987.

So Gligorov is a guy in his 70's, comes in with these two women who are actually sharp as tacks. And he sits down and Eagleburger starts off with, "Well what are you drinking?" Well they start talking. They were speaking a mix of English, Macedonian and Serbian. They are Slavic languages and they are sort of mutually understandable but they go back and forth. I spoke Bulgarian but it had been a decade. Eagleburger spoke Serbian. He spoke it pretty well, and I noticed this when he had come up to Bulgaria once. He kept on interrupting the interpreter. She was like Miss Bulgaria 1978. But how good she was

because he was following the Bulgarian and claimed he had Serbian. A mish mash of English Bulgarian, Not Bulgarian, Macedonian. That is a Freudian slip because Macedonia is the western dialect of Bulgarian and close to Serbian. I am trying to take notes on this. Niles didn't know any Slavic language so I was the closest thing. It was totally incoherent. Then Eagleburger says, "What are you all drinking?" Of course, from the Macedonian side, three voices went "Viskey." Anyway, so up we ran and opened the bottle and I was too inexperienced to realize this was a big joke. I had to catch every word. I am missing whole sentences. At least I could understand the ones that were in Macedonian or English. While I am doing this stupid Viskey. So, I grabbed a bottle and some water glasses and anyway ten minutes later they were empty so Eagleburger makes a gesture, well why don't we wait and get some more Viskey. But the interesting from all this of historical significance was Gligorov eventually says "There is one thing that you have got to fix and you know it. This is just going to be a running sore for my country. We will never be settled until we get our name, Macedonia. And you Americans can take a unilateral effort." So, Eagleburger said, "OK I will talk to Scowcroft." Who of course also was a veteran of Yugoslavia, and we can do this in this administration because there is no political cost. We have already lost. Once it is done.

Q: Right, it wasn't done.

JEFFREY: That of course is a black mark, something Eagleburger couldn't deliver. The only other thing on Bosnia, well my time there was part of those interesting things. Go back to 1995 to mention we had first of all it was the UNPROFOR which was a UN mission with about 20,000 troops all from Europe. They were essentially NATO troops under the UN, the EU was a terrible embarrassment as we finally saw in Srebrenica. It was just embarrassing to watch it. There was only one exception and it was a famous story. We were working on this in RPM. At some point UNPROFOR decided we need a little bit more firepower so they wanted a platoon of tanks. So, Denmark of all countries little peaceful place, said, "We have German Leopard II tanks which are probably the best tank in the world and we will send a platoon." So, the problem was you couldn't just fly them in. There was nothing that could fly a Leopard. This was before we had C-17s. Maybe we could have flown them in on a C-5, I don't know. Anyway, we had to get the Serbian government to grant a permit to use the rail system to move them to Sarajevo. So this took about six months. The Serbs said, "We don't want these guys to have tanks." Finally, they said, it is only five of them. So anyway, in comes this Danish tank platoon.

They get in there and basically the guys were not properly briefed by their commanders in the UN command that their job was to be wimps and above all things don't hurt anybody and we are not really here to fight. We are here to observe and to protect civilians and all of that. Well they didn't make it clear to this tank platoon. Tankers, from a former tank platoon leader, tankers are trained to react very aggressively and offensively to incoming fire. So, these guys are out on a patrol and some Serbian unit sees them and they are not used to tanks, UNPROFOR rides around in armored personnel carriers and jeeps or some other harmless thing all painted white. These tanks aren't white, and they decided God this must be the Croatian army or something. So they fire on the tanks. Well there was no damage because these things have such thick armor they

couldn't penetrate them. But the lieutenant forgot whatever briefing he got and fell back on his training which was very good on what you do when you take on fire. They launched an attack and tore through a large force of Serbian troops and it was really fascinating to read these accounts. Of course, the UN got totally outraged so you know this whole UNPROFOR thing was heading south even before Srebrenica.

One of the problems that finally led to us finally intervene behind the scenes was there was this constant effort again done by RPM, NATO had to play a role. Because the EUMM was in there and they got replaced by UNPROFOR plus a no-fly mission which was NATO's. Well NATO did the no-fly mission as if that was enough. Then the Europeans came and said "We need you to guarantee that you will extricate us if it all goes south." So we suddenly got a ground combat mission and a big and very complicated one of extricating and so forth. That should be remembered when we came to the crisis of 1995. After Srebrenica, after Chirac heard that a French unit in Sarajevo had been bullied into turning a bridge over to the Republic of Srpska troops he ordered them to essentially fix bayonets and retake the bridge. Three French soldiers were killed but they retook the bridge. You were beginning to get to a crisis point. And if the French attack had slipped the wrong way it would mean that NATO, ie the US, because the rest already had their troops there, the US would have to intervene in a big way to extricate these people from a mountainous area with no coastline. It had only a tiny little coastline and that was I think one of the underlying factors for Clinton's decision that it is so bad that in for a dime, in for a dollar. We need to go in to win this thing rather than have a bloody stalemate of Black Hawk down times 200 trying to get all these guys out. Anyway, that is Serbia. I think I should stop there.

Q: OK, I just want to get us up to date in terms of time. You got back to DC in '92 for the European CSCE things. But now you are kind of getting into the period when you are working with the whole former Yugoslavia Issue. That was a separate office?

JEFFREY: No it was part of RPM but RPM did the military side so the plans to evacuate, and the no fly zone these were all things done by RPM because RPM would just weigh in and grab from the poor EUR Balkans desk whatever, EUR/Balkans or not. Anyway, they would seize those things RPM played but because I was on the Bosnia team and because of the sanctions monitoring role I got to get involved. Also, because I knew the military stuff. I could explain what a LEO II tank was and what military plans were too. So I was very useful. I was the only person in RPM with significant military experience.

So, I will just do my next assignment so I can do this quickly. It was 18 months. I figured by this time in '93 I was not even recommended for promotion so I could see the handwriting on the wall. So, I was thinking of getting out of Dodge and going out and being a DCM in one of these places. But nothing turned out that way; I was interviewed by Dick Holbrooke for the job EUR/SE director which was a senior job which I thought I was qualified for having had three tours in Turkey or Greece as desk officer. But it went to another guy. He was a very good guy but he had no qualifications. More importantly he had no exposure to the region. But the most extraordinary thing about that was as

Holbrooke was interviewing me President Clinton was trying to call him, the president calling the assistant secretary of state which is pretty unusual. Even more unusual was Holbrooke saying, "Look, he is on Clinton time not real time. I have got to leave for the airport in a few minutes." He was flying to New York. Tell the situation room to get him on the line. Then ever more senior people came in and said, "Look it is only going to be two minutes. Please stay." Finally, he ended the interview and said, I am out of here. They can find me in New York. I just said, "Wow." I had never seen anything like that in my life. A true Dick Holbrooke story. Anyway, so I decided maybe if I do another bureau because at this point one, two, three, four, five, six tours in EUR albeit two in Turkey but still EUR and only one in NEA maybe they think I am too EUR centric. So I will try to get a job in NEA.

Well at that point Mike Parris was the principal DAS in NEA and Parris had a history of going back and forth between the Middle East and Europe, specifically the Russia desk. Paris wanted expeditionary kind of people and Paris knew RPM. When I was there the Russia desk the only real competition they had in EUR was the RPM people. So coming from RPM was really something that he wanted. So, he chose me for the deputy office director in the NEA regional office. At the time deputy office directors weren't bad jobs because traditionally they had been a senior foreign service officer so I figured maybe I will get promoted out of that. So, I went in there along with as office director Richard Lebaron who would be ambassador to Kuwait and we did essential regional kinds of things like the economic and political military and various things we had to manage the MFO, little bits and pieces of the whole thing. It was a big office and as deputy office director for the first time it was kind of like a normal department job. It wasn't the excitement of RPM or the Greek desk for the first year. But then right after that you had two major developments. First the Oslo accords in '93 and then in '94 you had the Jordanian peace. So suddenly we had a new Middle East.

So, I came to a new Near Eastern Bureau, and the Near Eastern Bureau rather like Europe had been shaken and we were trying to deal with this new architecture and were doing the same thing in the middle east. For the first time there was real hope. It started after the Gulf War. That led to the Madrid summit where there was a focus on integration, ending the whole Arab-Israeli thing. That had led indirectly to Oslo and to the peace with Jordan and so we had the chance of integrating Israel. Now meanwhile of the two main problem children or three main problem children of the middle east, Russia was off the map literally. Other than its little base everybody ignored Syria and that was a mistake. Iran was in this period of time under Rafsanjani and Khatami where we did have dual containment with the NEA assistant secretary focused on both but Iran wasn't a major player. There were little things about the nuclear account that we worried about, but Iran knew its place after the tanker war and essentially its defeat in the second phase of the Iran-Iraq war. So Iran was just a watching brief.

The only active one left was Iraq. We were running no fly zones in the north and the south. We were running a ground operation in the north with the Kurds and the whole political thing with the opposition and such. So that was basically the key issue in the

Near Eastern Bureau. But once we had this breakthrough someone said aha, 1989 has come to the middle east. We started unrolling the same kind of mindset that we had in Europe. We need essentially things like the OSCE and regional things. That was the job of NEA and that was the job of its regional bureau and because I had experienced all of that I suddenly got involved with this. So Toni Verstandig was the very creative DAS, she was the peace process deputy assistant secretary. But of course, the actual peace process portfolio was being held by Dennis Ross and Aaron Miller in a special office reporting directly to Christopher. So, NEA's job was to essentially put all of this together. That is still like John Kornblum. Think of John Kornblum, or better the EU after these guys would work on the big political and a little bit of the security process we would start putting together the sinews of a regional relationship. So, I first got involved in this in December, January of 1994 January of 1995 when we decided we would launch a middle eastern investment bank just like the European investment bank which people don't really know but it is not EU. We were actually one of the founding members of it and it is in London.

So, we decided to launch that thing. I got to be with the deputy secretary of treasury, famous name kept drinking diet cola. Went on to be treasury secretary. Anyway, Toni knew everybody. Her husband was a big time Republican. He had been an assistant secretary in the Reagan administration. Toni was a Democrat but she knew everybody, very close to Madeline Albright and the whole Aspen gang. She was a delight to work for. So, Toni was pushing us to do as much as possible in these multi-aterals. We already had set up after Oslo a set of multilateral things that had been kind of running on a low heat coming out of our office. Regional power and regional water, regional economic integration and environment and that kind of thing. We started really pushing that and expanding it into the bank and then we decided we would have a, this was largely Toni's idea, that we would have an economic summit in the region. Kind of like an OSCE. This is where we headed. This became the Amman Economic summit and the idea was we would partner with the Davos team, the World Economic Forum so I got to do a couple of trips to Geneva to talk to their folks. Because for some reason Richard was apparently doing other things, so I essentially became seconded to Toni along with a couple of officers from the office to run this whole thing, particularly the two economic things, the bank and the Amman economic summit.

So that was going to be at the head of state level or at least send Christopher. But the whole idea was we were going to try to manipulate this to try to create a similar architecture to Europe. It was a very ambitious thing. And it actually succeeded. At the Amman economic summit we had the heads of state of Egypt, Jordan, obviously, the Palestinians were there. Representatives of all of the Gulf States were there and Rabin was there as the honored guest of the King of Jordan. So, it was the coming out party for Israel in the middle east. We had these usual plans that EB and various offices would come up with, investment and trade liberalization and various kinds of stuff you do. But it was basically all political. It was traditional Arab politics, the interesting thing was essentially fights between Mubarak, King Hussein and the Qataris over who would do the next thing. This is the kind of stuff we were doing, Dennis Ross and I. This is the first time I got to work with Dennis. We were dealing with all of these people so that we could

get a summit document out. It was absolutely fascinating. I really enjoyed it and was very upbeat about this. The summit was a huge success and two weeks later Rabin was shot. That was essentially the end, the day the music stopped. Two months later I was back in the European bureau doing Bosnia, but I will get to that in a second.

Q: At the next session. Incredible. OK, wow, remarkable.

OK Today is December 4, we are resuming with Ambassador Jeffrey and his involvement with Bosnia.

JEFFREY: OK Just looking for assignments so we can get promoted over the threshold, and failing to get a NATO slot that I went over to Brussels for, I was basically delighted when John Kornblum came to me and said, "Look we have just finished Dayton. Holbrooke is moving on. Chris Hill is moving on. We need somebody to come in and we have appointed," oh gosh it was the assistant secretary for political/ military affairs. I just forgot his name, hold on. To be the Bosnia coordinator. And Bill Montgomery whom I knew and everybody knew as his deputy and Bob, what was his name?

Q: Bob Beecroft?

JEFFREY: No.

Q: Okay, what year is this?

JEFFREY: This is the end of 1995. Bob Gallucci, of course. He was moved over to be the president and secretary's special coordinator for Bosnia. So, they set up an office that reported to S as special coordinator. I was picked as the chief of staff. We had a staff of about 10 people. It was clear that our job was to do the civilian side of Bosnia, and that meant all of the programs to implement things formally and to carry out all of the assistance, democratization, reconciliation and other programs for which there were innumerable U.S., EU and other organizations all over the ground. Our mandate did not extend, and that was one of the flaws of the mandate, to the military side, which was done by DOD and obviously NATO. The trick is, and what Gallucci needed very quickly, was the mandate for the political level deliberations. This requires a little bit of EUR history to understand what is one of the unique roles of the European Bureau Assistant secretary; initially it is a matter of something that goes back to NATO early days with an informal organization called the quad which is the French, German, British political directors ostensibly the number three officials in the foreign ministry at the undersecretary level we would say and the U.S. assistant secretary. Because this elevates the U.S. assistant secretary to a sub-cabinet position it is much protected and is part of the lore of the European Bureau. Well the main subject for the quad, this is after the cold war is over, you don't have cruise missiles and no NATO double decision and this kind of thing anymore. The main issue was the Balkans.

Under no condition was the new assistant secretary, John Kornblum, going to give up on that. Gallucci wanted it. It was clear he wasn't going to get that and based upon that the role of the special coordinator was going to be operational and executorial in nature and

not policy. Gallucci left very quickly. But meanwhile I found myself trying to put together this huge organization that did try to exercise command and control over USAID, our role in the OSCE, our role in the UN and everything else in terms of moving assistance and on-ground reconciliation forward, the actual many provisions of Dayton, oh also police training. For almost every city, Brčko, Mostar you had a separate coordinator, typically an American coordinator and a separate bureaucracy trying to do that. We were trying to coordinate all of that. It was a nightmare shtick. Of all of my many bureaucratic battles this was the worst. Well in February, oh we also were tasked for the liaison, this is important, to Carl Bildt because Bildt became the high commissioner for the international community, I forget his title, for Bosnia. But Bildt is also a frustrated party because he did not control the political deliberations because he didn't sit in the quad either. Those remained over his head, and as a former prime minister and future foreign minister of Sweden it was very interesting and I got, I have to say over the many years I have known him, I really like him. He was furious at his role and felt he had been upstaged.

Then comes the final act. It did seem like a final at the time, but it made for a really bad scene. Holbrooke was still the assistant secretary. Gallucci had come in and then Davos started collapsing. Because Republika Srpska would not allow NATO troops into its part of the country. It basically said it didn't like the whole deal. And that it had been sold down the road by Milosevic for years, screw you. What are you going to do about it? We are going to go back to fighting. So, there is a crisis. What we decided we needed was an international meeting. Gallucci disagreed. The secretary asked Gallucci's advice. So Gallucci decided to do two things. One he wouldn't go out there to be Holbrooke's number two so to speak. And two he clearly decided because it became apparent some weeks ahead that he would leave the job because he was being undermined. He knows Holbrooke could save him but he also figured out that Kornblum would essentially be a new Holbrooke. So, he sent Bill Montgomery and me out to be part of the team. So out went the team.

It was the usual Holbrooke gang. Phil Goldberg as the kind of brains guy. Chris Hill as the enforcer. Holbrooke as the eminence gries and what is the name, I forget her name, kind of Holbrooke's staff assistant. But anyway, it was the usual core. And General Clark went along. So we were all there. Well where are you going to do this? So Holbrooke gets on the phone and talks to the foreign minister of Italy. So it is one of these Bela how are you conversations. We want to take over your entire foreign ministry in Rome for a weekend. I am going to invite everybody. They are all going to come and I am going to run this thing, but we need you to be kind of the official host because it is your country, and you are foreign minister and I am an assistant secretary. But it didn't matter, he is Holbrooke so he invites everybody. Milosevic, Tudjman, Izetbegovic, Snuffy Smith the NATO South commander and the guy who led the campaign and General Joulwan the SACEUR and of course Cal Bildt. And then the quad and the cast of thousands. The Russians showed up and everything but it was a Holbrooke operation. This was my first experience with Holbrooke other than bits and pieces of running into him and his dynamic personality. I was mightily impressed.

The very core of it was how we could get the Republic of Srpska to let the troops in. Holbrooke's scheme is OK we still have all of these UN sanctions on the Republic of Srpska and they stay until basically they comply with various international demands. It is a little bit like Iran. Until they meet all the criteria. Of course, it is the usual laundry list of 1001 criteria which every office in the Department of State had thrown into that plus the Europeans and such. Holbrooke said screw this. There is the deal. Let the NATO troops in and we will move forward with the lifting of sanctions. In the scheme of things, it had just so happened by whatever circumstance I will never know, I was the only guy who knew how to lift sanctions on the Republic of Srpska, because this is buried in the bowels of Dayton which Holbrooke and team were beginning to forget by this time. It required a very strange mechanism where the NATO commander in the field or SACEUR I don't know which was to report directly to the UN. I had gone through it. I mean this is very unorthodox. And there were several other steps, and I knew the steps. So, I sent anything important to Holbrooke as the guy so Holbrooke could just run around with me and with Chris, and Phil was there, and we had all kinds of adventures as we were trying to pound these guys into submission. I will never forget at one point Holbrooke is going off to meet Milosevic. He is walking down the middle of the corridor and he has got Joulwan by Joulwan's right sleeve and he has got Snuffy Smith by his left sleeve with his right hand. He is literally tugging them along to bring them in full uniform to the meeting to make the point to Milosevic that it is either me or it is these guys. Joulwan and Smith were pretty imposing guys.

But anyway, there were all kinds of other events. One I will never forget. We are in the hotel down the street from the embassy, the American embassy across the street from the American embassy. It was a shitty little hotel but it was convenient. There were all kinds of people getting involved. Our NATO ambassador whom Holbrooke just excluded. There was also the problem there was a conference at the same time the poor embassy was supposed to have a conference of U.S. European ambassadors. All the ambassadors were there. Grossman was there and everybody was there including our NATO ambassador, but Holbrooke just decided we didn't need him. It would have been helpful from my standpoint because he knows how the NATO system works. It doesn't matter. Holbrooke was very specific on who mattered. One of the people who got the short end of the stick was Cal Bildt. Who of course was the international coordinator for Bosnia. He felt that he should be playing a role that Holbrooke played. Nah. I will never forget watching Bildt, who is about 6'5" jumping up and down. He could really jump, saying "I am so angry" in his Swedish accent. "Where is Phil Goldberg? I am so angry." I am looking at this saying, am I seeing a former prime minister of an important European state having a fit over the whereabouts of an FS-3 foreign service officer? Wow I have got to record this.

Anyway, the dramatic event in this thing was, and this shows why Holbrooke was so extraordinary and so successful, a strategy meeting. So here is a strategy meeting taking place in Holbrooke's crappy little hotel room. Not a suite or anything good with things like a mini bar. There was a breakfast and Holbrooke had just his breakfast. He even had the tray on the bed and we were sitting on tables and chairs and everything, ten or fifteen of us and we are working out the strategy. One part of it was I was supposed to get

together with the military leadership and work out sanctions on everything, and Holbrooke had no idea of hierarchies. If you're in power Holbrooke would say OK, he didn't know my name. He kept on referring to me and said You... You get Joulwan and get Smith and sit them down in a corner and I want you to work out with them, I mean dictate to them what their message should be to the UN. As if I had a really big idea. I said, I had an idea. Basically, there was language in Dayton Annex number 213 wherever. That is what I was there for was to know this sort of stuff. So, I said "Roger that." Anyway, he wanted me to set up a meeting once we get it all in place and once he was able to lower the boom and go back to the Serbs, both the big Serbs, Milosevic, and the little Serbs and say this is the deal. He wanted this thing ready to go. He told me to get together with representatives of all the people who were involved. Somebody from the UN, somebody who knew somebody at the UN whatever. Whoever, either on Holbrooke's staff or on the staff who was following NATO.

Now John Shattuck our assistant secretary for human rights showed up to this thing; he kind of invited himself. And Shattuck could see what was going on. That we were about to lift sanctions even though there were a zillion things that various elements of the U.S. government and the bureau of human rights wanted the Republic of Srpska people to do, and regarded the sanctions as a lever which in a way they were. This includes war crimes and human rights, probably trafficking in people. Hey it is the Balkans. I will never forget this. It is terrible but it is just so unique. So, Holbrooke is basically giving me orders on how I am going to run this meeting Holbrooke's way. John Shattuck says, "Dick, I would like to be in this meeting." Well I kind of make fun of Holbrooke's lack of bureaucratic knowledge and hierarchies, but he quickly knew when an assistant secretary, this guy, wanted in. That is not a good idea, So Holbrooke kind of didn't respond. But Shattuck was to the point. "No, Dick, seriously I need to be in this meeting." A whole repertoire of things strategically; suddenly I saw this whole Kissingerian model of ending this conflict and getting the NATO troops in down the drain over one DRL bureau issue. So, he points to Shattuck and said, "John, you are going to be in the meeting John, but you have nothing to say. You got this, John, you have got nothing to say." Then he reaches over and grabs me under the arm and starts squeezing me on the arm and he said, "You." "Jeffrey." "Jeffrey, John has got nothing to say. You got this. John has got nothing to say in our meeting." I said, "OK, Mr. Holbrooke." And of course, Poor Shattuck, he just left. He just left Rome. It was just a total public humiliation.

Here is Jim Jeffrey's take on this having seen every level of government up to the national security council. This is really uncommon. It is also necessary. The reason things don't get done or if they do get done it is because 211 bureaucrats work until 11:00 at night for three weeks while you talk to your European counterparts, and they are off skiing and having picnics and spending their weekends sailing. You wonder why. The reason is we do not have clear cut authority, clear cut hierarchies and essentially a disciplined operation like I was used to in the military. Holbrooke was the exception. He was the general. He was the commander. He understood economy of force, objective, mobilizing everything to that objective. Not being derailed by other things. These are the laws of war for an army lieutenant. I saw him apply that repeatedly at this conference,

and that was the best example of it. It was really almost crude, it was unusual, it was blunt. What we are used to in this bureaucracy would have been "John I am so glad you are out here helping us address these challenges. It is really terrific to see you here this morning and you are going to make his meeting better... What's his name, Jeffrey is going to have so much better support with you with him. I am going to have some more guidance for you but I really look forward to sharing with you how we are going to move forward together." This is what you do day in and day out. This is why people sit around until 7:00 at night waiting for clearances from goofy offices nobody could find so that you could rescue people from a fire. That is the problem with the bureaucracy. Holbrooke saw this and started breaking through it. It wasn't pretty but it worked. He got the word Holbrooke snapped his finger and the people and I in the meeting got it done. We had all the papers prepared. The message was send the NATO stuff. Done, Bing, Bing, Bing it was like oh no, they are all going down.

Q: Let me just ask a question here. At that point when St. Joan shot a comb did he have good reason to believe his plan would work?

JEFFREY: Yes.

Q: OK.

JEFFREY: A, because it is the only plan that would work and he clearly had some kind of back channel probably with Milosevic. That is, look, you have got to give these guys something. I have pushed them enough, you have got to give them something. So, this was an absolutely dramatic event. Nobody has ever heard of it but it was almost the derailing of Dayton. I watched this guy do it. He didn't have Warren, Warren Christopher; he was out there. But it was extraordinary. But anyway, Holbrooke left; John Kornblum took over. He continued the political side of it.

Q: Now wait. One more question. So once the Republika Srpska accepts the NATO forces is that the condition necessary for the new multi ethnic republic now to work? In other words, there are a million other things to do.

JEFFERY: It was critical because obviously the other two states of the federation who were allied more or less, the Croats and the Bosniacs felt no, you have got to have the NATO troops in there. By screwing with them you are doing the same as with UNPROFOR. We have seen this movie before in 1992, 1993, 1994. So, once you got the NATO forces in there because let's face it, to the extent there was an aggressor, a wrong party in this thing it was the republic of Srpska backed by Milosevic. It was crucial for the whole thing that NATO could exercise its military sway over them, force them to disarm, all of that. I mean beyond the relatively minimal level of forces they were allowed to have etc. so once that was done we are now in the operational phase.

It was a lot of fun and we did all kinds of things to make the ceasefire hold. For example, build a road to Gorazde which was this enclave of Bosniacs surrounded by Republic of Serbska territory. All the roads were cut off and the Republic of Serbska people were not

very good about opening the roads. The solution that Holbrooke or somebody had promised it may have been Gallucci, I don't know who it was, was we will build you a road. State department cannot build roads. You have USAID and the Army Corps of Engineers and so you got moving on that project and Sherwood McGinnis, we moved him up to be the chief of staff. Montgomery moved up to be the representative and I moved up to be the deputy special representative and Sherwood McGinnis, a wonderful foreign service officer moved up to be the chief of staff. Then you had people, ambassador McKinney for example was doing the refugee part of it which was a big part of it. People were doing disarmament. People were doing human rights, People were doing all of this OSCE support. People were running all over the place. But the road was a big part of it and then some of these other projects to try and build reconciliation and build the federal structure again. There was a whole series of meetings that we had.

I went to the G-8 summit because Kornblum's guy was off in the Balkans so they needed someone who was doing that, Kornblum used to be the one who would backstop the quad political discussions but with Kornblum off so I went out on an air force 1 ½ the trail 747 to the city on the Rhone, Lyon. That was interesting because we landed in the middle of the night and the French wouldn't let our military or the secret service secure the 747s. So, they flew off which caused all kinds of consternation which was a typical French thing.

Anyway, so I was out there basically as the representative to the quad meetings which was interesting. Then we had, so we did that, and then we had a major meeting in Florence in June and I went out to help the Italians set that up. That would be in the political directors meeting to carry out the decision. Actually, it was to prepare for the Lyon summit. So Kornblum and my guy sent me out. So, I decided I have got to get there at least three days early because I will be working with the Italians. So anyway, we had our staffs come up with the American vision of every single sub group, every single outcome, every single position on everything, and our job was to work with the Italians to move them in this direction. So anyway, I went out the first morning, Monday morning we were going to start this thing with a bilateral and start Wednesday night in Florence. And the loveliest Italian diplomat who said, "Oh I am so happy to see you. Let's get to work. What are your ideas?" "Well I have this whole 27 tabs and all that." She said, "Can I take a look at that?" So, she looked at it for about five minutes and said, "This is really terrific. Let me get back to you in a couple of hours." So anyway, in a couple of hours she said, "We really like all of this and this is now going to be our position."

So, I had a 2 ½ day tour of Rome before getting back to Washington. Told them "It was a tough slog but I think I got the Italians where we want them". And so off to the Vatican. Off to the opera. OK we are getting close. So, Wednesday morning I decide to send all of this stuff back to Washington and then she was from Florence and so was inviting us to a late lunch someplace. So, I decided oh Tuscany in June. It is going to be beautiful, take the train. So, I took the train. Unfortunately, there was no air conditioning in the train so this was my introduction to Italian efficiency. So anyway, we got out there

and it was kind of, it was a nothing burger conference where everything had been supplied in advance and our positions were just carried out. It was just absolutely splendid. The meals were terrific. The guy who was in charge of the main program, the American AID program, knew Florence very well, there was the foreign ministry lady who knew Florence. People were taking us to dinner. It was absolutely terrific.

Every meeting was being met by this army of young Italians who descended upon the conference venue to run their copying machines and everything else, and after about three hours I looked around and said “You know, they must have emptied every modeling agency in Florence.” So anyway, that was Florence, and then we had a meeting in Geneva. So, this was the challenge. I never got to Bosnia. I used the trips to Bosnia to be rewards for all of my people so they would get to have a little front-line experience. But I got to go to Brussels, Rome twice, Florence, Lyon, and Geneva. So, I thought I had done well.

But anyway, by this time I was preparing to go off to Kuwait. In the midst of doing the Bosnia thing I realized I still didn’t have an ongoing assignment and by this point since I only had two more chances to get promoted I figured I had to get a DCM job to a good place. So about at the same time two jobs came open. One was NEA reached out because it had only been a few months since I had been with them, looking for a DCM and one thing about that is it is very hard to find a DCM for Ryan Crocker. Because Ryan was a very hands on ambassador and knew his business backwards and forwards. He also had never been a DCM so he didn’t necessarily have a lot of sympathy for DCMs and so they are trying to find someone who is willing to work with Ryan. Well I knew Ryan when he was an Arab language student at Tunis almost 20 years earlier and I had run into him. So, I figured I could work with this guy. So, I signed up and then the day afterwards John Kornblum called me and said, “We need a DCM in Bosnia. Do you want the job?” I said I have already taken a job In Kuwait. Kornblum shook his head and said, “But there are no trees in Kuwait.” So I had to forego places with trees. So off I went to Kuwait. We have time yet, let’s do Kuwait. Kuwait was three years,

Q: Look before you go on to Kuwait one last question about Bosnia. When you left it in 1996, what was the feeling at that time about its future?

JEFFREY: OK, that is a good point. This came up in these three meetings. Until the Syrian civil war, I have seen no issue in modern American diplomacy that was more frustrating and appeared to involve more impetus on the part of the West than Bosnia. But this is the kind of experience we had. But for years we had seen this and suddenly it all gelled.

This of course came back three years later when the same situation happened in Kosovo, or even worse because in a civil war you have basically the intent to ethnically cleanse an entire community, a majority of the entire population of Kosovo. And the way they responded to that and the way the Russians responded to that. That is another story.

So, my feeling was this had been one of the major American accomplishments of that post 1989 period. So, I admit I have been through the fall of the wall, played a supporting role in the first Gulf War, then got deeply involved in European security, and then got deeply involved in the middle east process and then back on Bosnia and then back to the middle east. So, I felt like I was like a ping pong ball going back and forth between major areas except for Colombia and bits and pieces of central America that were still the areas where in Michael Mandelbaum's book Mission Failure, we had devoted our foreign policy to. This is a whole other big issue. Our foreign policy became oriented on fixing broken down states, rogue states and failed states. Fixing them by if possible bribes, democracy, reconciliation, economic programs, fixing if necessary by regime change, fixing by necessary by defeating them when they got uppity and tried to usurp somebody else's territory, or protecting minorities. And advancing various negotiations with the North Koreans, on the peace process or whatever.

That was basically the mission of American diplomacy for the period after 1989 and yet basically slowly the air has gone out of that tire by 2017 but it was a slow process. Beginning I would say on 9/11 and accelerating with the return of Putin and the Chinese under particularly Xi as our real near peer competitors. But anyway, for many years that is what we were doing in foreign affairs and in terms of securing the global commons, in dealing with wannabe regional hegemonies, the North Koreans, Saddam, Milosevic, the Iranians, we were pretty successful. In terms of dealing with the underlying causes particularly in the middle east we were not successful. That bird has come back to roost on us.

In Kuwait 99% of our mission other than the usual commercial stuff and public diplomacy and that sort of thing was to protect Kuwait against Saddam's continued threat to retake the 19th province. We had two tools, basically we had three tools for that. The first was a no-fly zone in the south that mirrored the no-fly zone in the north. Except that Saddam could still operate in the South. He just couldn't operate with airplanes or helicopters because we wouldn't allow that to happen, but he could keep his troops in the south. Then in 1994 he threatened to invade Kuwait and that led to a UN resolution that established a no drive zone in the south. The no drive zone was only partially implemented. It meant that you couldn't keep what we call heavy forces, mechanized infantry and armor, large units in the south, so that while you could still exercise some kind of control over the Shia population he couldn't slaughter them from the air and he couldn't slaughter them with the Republican guard. More importantly he couldn't move the Republican guard right up to the border with Kuwait. So now we had some warning time on the ground and we had warning time in the air.

The Kuwaitis were still very nervous. Of course, the United States was dedicated to the defense of Kuwait. We had an entire brigade package of equipment at Camp Doha to the north of Kuwait City and we had significant U.S. and British air units up until the

summer of '96 when I got there, some left. The French were exercising the no-fly zone out of Kuwait, out of Saudi Arabia and out of Qatar. So, we had a pretty big military presence. Anyway, before I went out I decided OK, how can I help Ryan Crocker, and I said this while doing Bosnia stuff. So, one day I went over to J-5 at the Pentagon and said what is the war plan for defending Kuwait? They said we do not have a war plan to defend Kuwait. So, I said we are sending a whole brigade, of 5000 troops falling in on the equipment package. What are you going to do with them? The military said well we really can't defend Kuwait with a single brigade. So, I said oh this is interesting. So, what is the object? Nobody had a war plan.

Q: They are telling you the DCM all this that would typically discussed at a deputies meeting. I mean a war plan and the actual deployment...

JEFFREY: This kind of thing almost certainly hadn't bubbled up or NEA or the State Department would say wait a minute, this is crazy. We have got a whole brigade worth of equipment out there. So anyway, I went out there and Crocker was very obviously concerned about this. So, I went out to Camp Doha and talked to the colonel. The first thing we found when we went out to camp Doha was there were four Abrams tanks parked right in front of the headquarters. I said, gosh is this like a toy tank celebration so we got to the commander and he confirmed, he said my mission is, because he didn't have many troops but he had a lot of civilians contractors, whatever to maintain equipment. We have got enough people to drive all of the armor south to Saudi Arabia. If there is a crisis or a contingency and they come across the border we won't have time to fly the troops out so we will drive these things plus we really can't defend you know defend Kuwait so we can just drive these tanks south. He would smile and say but we have to buy some time. So, the tanks are out in front. I have got myself and 15 other volunteers. It happens there is one main road that comes down from Iraq to Kuwait City and goes right by Camp Doha. About two miles north of Camp Doha there is something called Mitla Ridge. It is the only topographic feature of any significance other than the wadi Batain out in the west of the country and he said, with fifteen guys in these four Abrams tanks we are going to go up on that ridge and we are going to make sure that everybody else gets to evacuate. I had just come face to face with the defense of Kuwait.

Q: Holy cow.

JEFFREY: All of this became very relevant about a week after I got there when a low intensity three-sided civil war in Kurdistan, we were also out of Turkey maintaining a no-fly zone, between Masud Bazani's KDP and Jalal Talibani's PUK and the PKK playing a role, latter the Turkish insurgent Marxist guerillas who were operating out of northern Qandar mountains in Northern Iraq. It got to the boiling point and Talibani's PUK got Bazani's KDP thrown out of the Bazanis' citadel of Erbil. Bazani turns around and calls Baghdad and says, "Saddam, come rescue me." So, a Republican Guard division without our intelligence spotting it, manages to mobilize 15,000 troops, 300, 400 armored vehicles, lots of trucks and by a brilliant staff action by rail, by HET. We were counting all of the HETs in Iraq. These are the heavy equipment transporters that you put tanks on because if you try to drive tanks hundreds of miles they break down. By actual

road march the units that were closest. They managed to converge 3 brigades, 15,000 troops and all the division's equipment on Erbil within a day and a half, shocking the hell out of us, throwing Talabani's PUK out, restoring Bazani to power and creating a crisis.

So anyway, the Clinton administration in reaction then raised by one degree of latitude the no-fly zone so now it extended all the way to the southern suburbs of Baghdad. But we did not tell the French we were doing this. So, the French pulled out of the operation. So that is the first thing we did. This is classic. We made two big mistakes in this crisis other than lousy intelligence as we didn't even catch the first assault. We did not tell the French. We forgot to say: "We are going to do this". You have deputies and principals and allies. It is easy to forget you have allies if you don't have somebody saying hey we have allies who need to be consulted. Well this ally wouldn't accept us doing this so it went away.

Then we decided because in response to this there was another threat against Kuwait, we will fly the brigade in to fall in on their equipment. So, the order was given and then I think it was a Fort Hood brigade. The Fort Hood brigade decided that hey the families need to know what their young men and young women are doing so let's put out a public announcement. Meanwhile this is all happening at the same time. You are doing this in the UN, you are raising the no-fly zone, you are in a pissing contest with the French.

Meanwhile you are going to the Kuwaitis and saying OK we want to fly in a brigade of troops to fall in on their equipment which of course is something of significance for host countries. Even though we think it is a good idea to save the host country, the host country can look at it in a different way. It might be provocative. Well the Kuwaitis are pretty cool. They know they have to get an answer back pretty quickly. But in this case before they could get back the Fort Hood Times or whatever it is, puts out 5000 troops being deployed to Kuwait flying out as they speak.

That of course gets picked up by the national media and then the Kuwaitis and they were furious. So, they waited a day before they gave us permission, not gumming up the whole thing but to make a point. The point is you have to coordinate better. This was a good learning experience for me just getting there because for most of the next 2 ½ years up to and including Desert Fox, this is what we were doing. It was repeated crises with Saddam over the UN inspector missions and them getting thrown out and various other crises and bombing campaigns and all of that. So, we are in a state of near mobilization for the entire period.

Crocker stays for about a year and a half. It was a wonderful relationship. He was just a superb ambassador. He was on top of everything. Also, he was very much focused on defending Kuwait where it is really awkward to keep flying these brigades in. It takes time and we didn't have the time. Thus, the mission in a war has been don't fly them into Kuwait City, fly them into Bahrain and that is where the equipment will have to drive south. Maybe that brigade and 20 other brigades once we get them all there could rescue Kuwait, but this isn't the scenario the Kuwaitis wanted to hear about.

We must be very careful about what we told the Kuwaitis. They were very happy to see Camp Doha and all these shiny tanks. They didn't know what the fate of the shiny tanks was. To Leave Kuwait at the first sign of a fight. So, then there are the fighter planes. Of course, they can get up and leave very quickly.

So, we were focused the entire time on both the lessons of 1990, 1991. For example how are we going to get our people out without being surrounded like they were in 1990. So, we finally took note from some highly sensitive U.S. military personnel at the time. I am not positive but they became part of JSOC that would be sent out to embassies in various guises. Don't want to get into this, they had various names. These were world class people going out and finding trails through the minefield on the Saudi border. And meeting literally Bedouins at the checkpoints. This is how we are going to get the embassy out because if you try to take the roads well we had that experience in 1990. The road to Saudi gets clogged up. You have had somebody who has driven it. And there was no way we could evacuate people that way. There was a constant, and this was a lot of fun particularly with an ambassador like Ryan Crocker and then Jim Larocco, there was constant preparation, training and working with the military. How do we deal with citizens and then folks at the embassy. Then again as the confrontation with Saddam grew worse in '97 we brought another brigade of troops, but we kept part of that brigade on, and we brought a second aircraft carrier into the Gulf.

So, this confrontation was all in support of the UN inspectors. It was part of this whole big UN strategy so much of what we were doing was letting the Kuwaitis know what we were doing on the political front in the UN, what we were doing with the inspectors, what we were doing to defend Kuwait. Because of the problems that basically Crocker had brought to people's attention, it wasn't even DOD didn't realize that until somebody had pushed the button to put a brigade package in Kuwait kind of like that brigade in Germany but only in Germany. I knew that because I had been a staff officer; we had war plans. You know what units would fall in on. You knew where those units would go, where they would get their fuel, where they would get their ammunition. What frequencies they would talk on and everything else. Which war plan they would execute. Anyway, there was none of this.

Q: Why is that?

JEFFREY: I don't know. Somebody decided that a brigade like this would be a good deterrent. But then they decided we can't actually defend the place with a brigade. This is a recurring problem with the United States and for many people who analyze this we overestimate enemy capabilities and underestimate our own. On the Korean peninsula, we rated each North Korean soldier as two of each South Korean soldier even though I argued it should be the reverse. We made this mistake as far as I could see in Europe...we were on the defensive--that it was their tanks versus our tank shells and we would pretty well.

Frankly, that army colonel at Camp Doha, that was his idea. We would go out there with the four tanks and they would deploy up on totally flat terrain hitting Iraqi columns when they were 3000-4000 meters away- there wasn't anything the Iraqis could do to an Abrams tank. They were just having a good old day until they ran out of ammunition. So, given that in an emergency it was ineffective to fly another brigade over, the military got a lot of push from us because now we were all the incompetents pointing all this out. You had your political commitment to Kuwait and to the American people and to the UN and everybody else and obviously you are not going to let Saddam do his aggression again, but you didn't have the military capability to do this.

So, the military decided what they had been doing is rotating a battalion of troops out to fall in along with a battalion's worth of equipment but only for a few weeks. It would leave and eventually another would arrive. Then the military decided OK we will make this permanent. There will always be a battalion of troops there. Then they decided they would bring some Patriots out. Everybody wants to see a Patriot battery plus the Kuwaitis had their own Patriot batteries. Now there are Patriots popping up everywhere in Kuwait. Then we decided to keep special forces out there to work with the better Kuwaiti units so that the special forces could kind of fight side by side with this battalion. So now you are getting together a force when before you had to rely on the colonel and his 15 volunteers. You would have this condensed, U.S. plus better Kuwaiti forces with special forces spread out among them that could go up and plus some of the equipment the Kuwaitis bought after 1990 was now coming on line.

So, a better Kuwaiti military of their own. They had about 150 of their own Abrams tanks. So, with the Kuwaiti tanks and our battalion and I mean you could buy enough time to call the troops and so we were beginning to think OK, this might work. Now we actually have a plan and so we were actually getting to get our political goals aligned with our military capability. We took a lot of time and this is a lot of what we were doing for three years in Kuwait was working out there, thinking Saddam could have punched in. It would have been really embarrassing for the second time but ...

Q: Right.

JEFFREY: At the drop of a hat. Now we have got another half brigade equivalent of US troops. So, we continued this.

A couple of Ryan Crocker stories. The Third Army which is the Army element appointed to CENTCOM in Camp Doha did a mini triathlon every Memorial Day. We had a great time running such a race in Kuwait-memorial day. Kuwait has the hottest humid climate in the world. It is the hottest but also the most humid. It is really a bad climate to do anything. So, these things were all supposed to start at 7:00 in the morning until 2:00 because a lot of people would sign up like all the military, but the organization was such that they often didn't kick off until 8:00 or 8:30 so Crocker of course is the star of these things and could beat anybody. He wanted his whole embassy to go out there. So he signed up P.T. Mikolashek the Embassy military component ODC commander, General

Mikolashek a great army officer, to do it and he was waiting for other volunteers, so it was clear to me that I had to volunteer. When I told my wife, she said, "You are going to do what?" She said, "Oh god this is going to be awful. Don't do it" So I decided OK, I will only do the running. It was only a 3 ½ mile run. I figured I could do that. So, Crocker is having a county team meeting. The things for Ryan were usually management issues or political themes that we should be doing. But also big policy like where is the deterrent against Saddam and all this. And how to prepare us for mission impossible. But it also is doing things like triathlons that are right up his alley, so he is going around saying I want more volunteers. I am trying to bring in all the junior officers. I am not happy. I got P.T. Mikolashek. He is going to be out there doing it with me, our DCM and he is going and I just sort of say I am only doing the run.

Crocker goes, "Oh what do you mean you are only doing the run? You are doing the whole thing." So, I had to tell my wife I am doing the whole thing. So anyway, I get out there. In a way, I am proud. Nobody spent more time under the desert sun than me on the bike ride and the run. Because I really had no business being out there, 50 years of age. I will never forget as I was going up one of those little hills, there were some little hills there. On my bike. I had already been through the run. Just wanting to see the end. Suddenly in the other direction. Both wheels off in the air but still the rider pedaling madly was Ryan with this crazed look on his face going on to once again win the triathlon.

This drove the Third Army crazy. This was their event and some civilian wins it. So, as I said Ryan left at the end of '97. Jim LaRocco came out and so a few months later this event is coming up again and LaRocco hears about this and says, let's do it. Well there are two ways to do it. You can do it as a team so one runs, another swims the third is the bicyclist. Or you can do it individually which is what Crocker did. What nobody knew is LaRocco is the world's best bicyclist. Speed competitive bicyclist. He said OK, I will do the bicycle. I need a runner. Pat was his name, one of our RSO's. I can do this. I am a good runner. OK, I said I will do the swim. I was a good swimmer.

OK. So the military is happy they finally got rid of Crocker. They had been embarrassed by the State Department. So, they go out and do their individual events. This is the summer of '98. But we win the team and the military is furious again. They got rid of Crocker and now they have LaRocco. Anyway, to finish this story, as I said, they are now deploying special forces companies on rotations. Well for the 1999 Memorial Day triathlon the special forces company was told, you will come up with a team. And you will beat the American embassy in Kuwait. For two years running we were up there on the stand as it were. So, the last thing about Kuwait was, and it would be dramatic Desert Fox and that will end this session. Finally, things were getting to a head with Saddam. And there is a whole deeper issue related to this that I will get to when we talk about ...

Q: Yeah because we are getting down to the legislation that says what regime change.

JEFFREY: Actually everything came together in the summer of 1998. Essentially there was a big belief partially correct, that containment of Saddam as part of our global strategy of dealing with the messy failed states, rogue states was not working. We had to be more aggressive. Thus, the politicized by the Iraq liberation Act was accelerating coordination with opposition groups.

In fact, we had a rule both in Kuwait and then I discovered in Turkey when I went there, that the ambassadors wouldn't speak with the Iraqi opposition because that would be too much of a problem for the host countries even though they obviously came to the host countries Turkey and Kuwait with the connivance of the host country but still that was our rule. So therefore, I was the liaison to the Supreme Council. This was Mohammed Hakim's organization and several others but mainly Hakim and I got to know all of these guys. Bayan Jabr and all sorts of people that I later ran into in Iraq and subsequently I did the same thing with Talabani and Bazani and their people up in Ankara.

So, I was well aware of what we were doing with the opposition at the end of the 1990's. That was a massive effort and we were looking into all kinds of ways how we can support the Iraqi army with the possibilities of a coup. We were really very much imbued in low level regime change in part to support these people in part to put pressure on Saddam. We basically wanted him gone because what he was doing was more and more defying the UN both by, as I said not cooperating with the inspectors and then throwing the inspectors out finally definitively in the fall of 1998, and meanwhile various other things.

He then cut a deal with Assad to open the pipeline across Syria. There were all kinds of indications he was cheating on the Food for Peace program - up and down the line he was being aggressive, he was defying the UN and people were thinking we have to do something about it. Obviously, it was his military threats that got us to continually send brigades out to Kuwait. You know the military didn't need this because it was a real drain on resources. So, we basically figured this would be really bad and again that is what we were preparing for as an embassy. We got authorization to give anthrax shots to our people. We had the Cipro pills you take. The pills are actually about 98% effective but we wanted shots too.

Q: Honestly.

JEFFREY: As an antibiotic, but we also decided to have people get the shots too. We were afraid he was going to drop anthrax on us. And with us as the target. Again, we worked very hard to try to evacuate everybody. We were constantly training. We had two great leaders Crocker and LaRocco who took this stuff all seriously. So anyway, the crisis came in the fall of '98 with Saddam's final defiance and new UN resolutions and the gathering of storm clouds. Then Clinton decided that it was time we would have to teach Saddam a lesson. That is the genesis of Desert Fox, the campaign. People say this

is a wag the dog thing. This is right in the middle of the Monica Lewinski thing and the impeachment trial etc. I don't believe that for a second. I mean Clinton had a real problem. You had a mounting crisis in Kosovo a few months later, and I think he wanted to get this one off his plate so he wouldn't have to deal with both of those two plus the whole North Korean thing that Wendy Sherman and Madeline Albright were working. So, we had three crises simultaneously and the Kuwait one was potentially the most dangerous. So anyway, we decided to once again give an ultimatum. Again, the problem was how do you defend Kuwait? By this time, we had gotten really good at looking at these capabilities; again the Kuwaitis had trained real hard with their Kuwaiti 150 Abrams and we had a lot of support by the Brits and Australians and New Zealanders. They deployed in early '98. And we could call on them to come back. We had a battalion of army troops, a heavy battalion with Abrams and Bradley fighting vehicles and also, we had some artillery and MLRS which could fire ATACM missiles. I will come to the ATACM story in a second. This is a good one. So, we had a fairly good force. Then by chance we had a marine MEU of about 2400 troops in the Gulf so we decided, everybody decided we will land the MEU, reinforce the army Battalion and the Kuwaiti army and we will now have a force of 20,000 troops. That should be enough to provide at least the initial ground trip wire for us to fly more troops in to fall in on the equipment package and by that time we had the equivalent of a brigade package in the south where there was a floater brigade equipment in or near Bahrain, I forget where. So, we had a pretty good war fighting capability so we could go to their defense but the problem was, what do you do with the embassy personnel?

So, we decided we were going to have to evacuate all of the non-essential personnel. So, we did an evacuation that got ugly for several reasons. First of all, nobody in Kuwait took this seriously. We offered to evacuate all of the many thousands of Americans and we got only a couple of dozen who wanted to come with us because everybody saw the troops there and figured hey Saddam isn't going to do anything which turned out to be correct. So, they didn't want to be evacuated because this was our evacuation and we had to evacuate all of the embassy women and children and a few non-essential personnel. So, we went through the whole thing. We had plans for this; we had the marines and such, but because there was a real crisis atmosphere, we wanted to evacuate everybody by normal passenger aircraft. My daughter and wife had flown out the day before on vacation to Germany just by buying a ticket, so we didn't have to evacuate them.

It became embarrassing soon because in the near disaster that befell embassy dependents my two dependents weren't part of it. And Charlene Lamb who later became famous in the Benghazi era as a deputy assistant secretary in DS was my security officer. But she kind of put this thing together. The first problem was we were going to move everybody to the airport and we would fly people out. The Kuwaitis wanted to help us and the marines provided, the marines had these teams that would come in and they train them as part of the MEU. Basically, take people from the headquarters company to provide processing of the people and organization and that sort of stuff. So we had a lot of good stuff but then the night before the evacuation, the night before we were going to move everybody out on commercial planes, I learned this in the army and everybody in a crisis or in an emergency is - you have got to get your sleep so you have got to have a system

where there will be 24 hours coverage but you can't be out there for 24 hours; well I had absorbed that in my experience in Vietnam but you might want to be up all 24 hours because you never know what somebody is going to do.

So, about 3:00 in the morning somebody in the State Department calls out to the guy on duty and says hey, we can get a DC-10 to fly everybody out. The State Department will contract. So that could take everybody, all of 400 people you have got 350 dependents and a few civilians. Will that work?

Our guy on duty rather than saying actually we have got everybody ticketed so why don't you just hold off on it, the guy said, because there was a little bit of pressure somebody in the U.S. was hot to trot to do this, so the guy said, OK we will do that. So anyway, by the time I wake up we are busy canceling all the tickets because we have got this flight coming in. Well State Department clearly contracted the lowest bid for the DC-10. First of all, they had forgotten to file overflight clearances over Saudi Arabia. So that took six hours. By this time, we had moved people out and they are all sitting in vehicles and they are watching the civilian passenger planes fly in and out. We are waiting for a DC-10 to arrive that is dicking around with the Saudis for overflight.. So finally, the DC-10 lands. Charlene Lamb was my guy in the whole thing. She is a private pilot and she is really cool and she comes out to me and says, "I was out there watching this thing very closely. Jim, we have got a problem." I said, "What is it?" "They don't have any funds to fuel the plane."

Q: No!

JEFFREY: No, so anyway we are all around and as I said, the Kuwaitis have provided an escort for us. It was under a guy named Major Ali. Now remember this is a country whose ethnic Kuwaiti population is about 800,000 and it pumps 25% of the oil of Saudi Arabia which has an ethnic population of about 20 million. So, each Kuwaiti is a lot richer than your average Saudi. So anyway, the good major is listening to this problem and says, "I think I can help." He whips out his credit card, and goes and buys enough fuel for this stupid DC-10.

The problems are not over, because everybody in DC knows and there is a little bit of back and forth with the ground troops and the guys in the cockpit and Charlene and she comes to me and says, "We have another problem." "What is this one?" "Well the rear engine won't turn over. But we have a solution." I said, "What is the solution Charlene?" She says, "Look you have got to look at this in simplistic terms. It is like spark plugs. Essentially, we don't have the right spark plugs for a rear engine. Well for a DC-10 it is a three-engine airplane the rear engine is really important. What we are going to do is take the spark plug from one of the two wing engines and put it there and that will give us the thrust down the runway, and once we have the thrust up we will jump start the third ie wing engine. This is with 150 of our dependents not counting my wife and daughter who were already out of there.

I said, "Are you sure this is going to work?" "I am a pilot; this is not all that hard." So, I said, "OK." So, by this time the people have been out there in the heat. Well it wasn't that hot, it was December but it still was unpleasant for about 14-15 hours. And we had to get them the hell out of there. So anyway, we all watch as the DC-10. The crew get the overflight clearances, the crew that forgot about the fuel is now going to try to do this maneuver. So down the runway the DC-10 goes on the two engines. It is picking up a lot of speed. Then they decide to try to jump start the wing engine. They actually succeeded. What Charlene failed to tell me was the sign of success being a hundred-meter-long flame shooting out from the back of the engine. So, we sat there and watched this thing not to speak of the horrified members of our community and then the thing went off and after a miserable flight because they didn't have enough food and the place wasn't clean, the toilets, all the awful things, they managed to get to London.

Anyway, that was our evacuation. Desert Fox went on for four days pounding the hell out of Saddam and actually had a strategic effect because it did enough damage to his infrastructure that he decided that he had better get serious about getting rid of weapons of mass destruction. But there is one little vignette. Chemical Ali, the guy who was Saddam's most senior war criminal officer who had been one of the people in charge of Kuwait and thus of the mass murder of Kuwaitis when they were occupying the country. He was located in Basra during the campaign and as I said we had reinforced the army with some MRLS artillery rockets and they could fire a long-range rocket called an ATACM which has got a very powerful hundreds of pounds warhead and they are very accurate.

So, Tommy Franks who was then the Third Army commander came up with the idea that we should shoot this thing into Chemical Ali's bunker in Basra to really send a message to Saddam. So, because of his reputation in Kuwait we decided to invite the Kuwaiti defense minister. We would all go out to the desert, have a nice picnic and then he would pull the lanyard and blow Chemical Ali to hell. This sounds like I am making it up. I am not.

But anyway, we were happily doing this. We forgot a lesson from the Balkans and this goes back to Snuffy Smith. We were pounding the hell out of the Republic of Srpska people in '95, doing this with air strikes. At one point Snuffy Smith the NATO South commander and our NATO commander for the operation decided that why don't we start firing some Tomahawks off our ships and so he started firing Tomahawks much to the chagrin of the Clinton administration because we are already in the micromanagement world of it is not just the targets you hit but it is the weapons you use to hit the targets with. For whatever stupid reason. So anyway, he got in trouble over that.

Well Tommy Franks got in trouble over the ATACM and at the last minute we had our picnic but we weren't able to blow up Chemical Ali. So that was Desert Fox and then we were a bit skeptical. As I say it came in the middle of the Monica mess in 1998. It was not named Operation Ripper. That is the kind of name an operation should have. When you name an operation Desert Fox you know you are in a little bit of trouble. We were

basically, well we had some information, you can imagine where, that if we had pounded Saddam long enough he was going to invade Kuwait.

So, we figured let's just keep it up, he invades Kuwait, we have got his force out there and of course I was happy to go out into the desert dragging junior officers with me to see the most forward deployed marines from the MEU dug in along the road leading from Iraq. So, we were out there kicking the tires and making sure everybody was ready for this final great war with Saddam. Just two or three more days and it would have happened. Anyway, the Clinton administration puts a foot down and decided maybe we don't want a cataclysmic war with Saddam invading Kuwait. So, they ended it after four days and Saddam rode it out but as I say he did get rid of whatever was left of his weapons of mass destruction programs in the months after that. Probably the pounding he took during Desert Fox for those four days did it. So, on that happy note I will end the story.

Q: Holy cow, what an amazing story. We will stop here.

Q: OK, today is April 11, and we are recommencing with ambassador Jim Jeffrey as he goes to his next tour to Kuwait to Ankara, Turkey.

JEFFREY: Thank you. It was the summer of 1999. I had been offered the DCMship almost as soon as I got to Kuwait by Mark Parris. I happily took it because at that time I thought I would probably be out of the foreign service before I got anything better, so it was nice to go out with a bang because Mark was highly respected. And so, I did a pox on you Department of State. You have just lost your upcoming DCM to Turkey which is a big post because you threw me out as an FS-1 plus being an FS-1 DCM in Turkey is a big thing. So, I got promoted of course as I mentioned, but then Mark had to get back and say the system won't allow you to fill this after two years in Kuwait so we are going to have to extend Frank Ricciardone for a year. Frank and I were friends and had been friends. And had been basically, well either he followed me or I followed him on many assignments involving Iraq and Turkey. So, Frank agreed to stay on and operate through the year 1998-1999 although he left to be essentially the emissary to the Iraqi opposition, the Iraqi national council. So, anyway, when I went out there. Turkey was at the end of the post Ataturk era.

Q: Interesting.

JEFFREY: The prime minister was the famous Bulent Ecevit. He who launched the Cyprus invasion almost 30 years earlier and he was back once again as prime minister after having served time in prison after the 1990 coup, but he wasn't the same dynamic leader he had been. This guy was an idol to the Turkish left. He helped change the Turkish language, cleansing it as he would say of Arabic terms for Turkic words. So, an intellectual, he looked all the part. He looked a little like Trotsky and what we didn't know was his health was very bad and he passed away soon after my tour there.

Anyway, Turkey was in the midst of an economic crisis while Ecevit knew nothing about economics. Was not able to help and the country was clearly trying to find a way forward. Fortunately, the situation in the region was relatively stable when I came in in 1999. There were two big things before us. One was the year 2000 trauma and then we also had a horrendous presidential visit. The Clinton visit to Turkey, and Mark Parris put me in charge of that. Then we had an extraordinary event which basically captured in a way anything about Turkey, you have to understand this event. That was the earthquake of late summer 1999 which devastated an area to the south of Istanbul. The tremors we got all the way to Ankara were very severe. Tens of thousands of people died and having gone down and looked at the area I could see that the reason they died was a failure of the state. You would see six buildings that had clearly been built to the same standard and then a seventh one built to the same standard with the same marble, the same architecture had collapsed. Why, because they used too much sand and not enough rebar. The inspectors had been paid off. And so, Mark put me in charge of this as well.

Again, you had one of these classic situations of how does the international community help? I mean Turkey at the time was not a middle-income country but was on the cusp of it. It was a relatively well-organized country but it was very slow to move because of not so much corruption but another factor of the old Turkish regime and that was the incompetence of a dug-in elite, what we called the Kemalist elite basically referring to Mustafa Kamal, Ataturk. Ataturk had created a revolution in the 1920's and that was extraordinary and not just for Turkey. Today Turkey is a powerhouse that wouldn't have been so without Ataturk.

But also, his model, the model of a military modernized secular dictatorship in the Islamic world was picked up from Pakistan to Afghanistan to obviously the Baathist regimes in Iraq and Syria and Egypt to Colonel Qadhafi to Algeria. This is the main alternative model to the royalist regimes and Islamic republics which are the other entities in the middle east, and it all traces back to Ataturk.

But the problem was in imposing modern western values, Ataturk, who was blond haired at least in the pictures but truly a blue eyed arrogant looking officer who spent much of his career growing up on diplomatic assignments in Western Europe. His mother was Europeanized and was born in Salonika and even after Salonika became part of Greece she insisted on staying there. So, this is the family of Ataturk. He created this modern state, but he had done it with violence against the Kurds and Islamic traditional societies which weren't really wiped out. Rather he created islands of modernity. Mainly in Izmir, Istanbul and Ankara. Very western oriented in views. Still in the 1990's people would comment on how all this was not necessarily representative of the entire state. Now the problem of such a mechanism is to run it your loyalty is to a certain ideology rather like the Soviet Union, which becomes more important than your competence and your proven abilities and you get this stratified class society. It is an elitist nomenklatura but particularly in ideological places. Once you got to understand Turkey and I of course was going back on my third tour in Turkey and I had had a tour in the office backstopping

Turkey in the European bureau as I mentioned earlier. So, I knew the place fairly well, and it was clear that this nomenklatura was really encrusted and wouldn't move.

We saw this with the Red Crescent, the equivalent of the Red Cross which was supposed to take the lead. Anyway, they had a group of old guys who were just sitting there that were not capable of taking decisions and they were eventually replaced because they were so embarrassing. They basically blamed it on the people because the earthquake occurred in one of the most advanced parts of the country, a Kemalist part of the country, still as you are dealing with normal people they were basically not all that important. What was important was keeping the meetings and not upsetting the media or the lawyer's union or the union of architects and all the other things which the governor who had been in charge of the inspectors should have seen in all of this. And it was a classic Turkish reaction plus nothing was getting done.

So anyway, the international community, the World Bank, the EU and others are all engaged, also the International Red Cross. I was the embassy rep and it was clear that there wasn't a whole lot of organization and there wasn't a whole lot of movement. The EU again proved its bureaucratic malaise by not moving quickly. So anyway, we went back and Mark decided we needed the marines. So, we had an amphibious ready group just like the one that we had a few months earlier in Kuwait. These guys show up everywhere. So anyway, we landed a couple of thousand marines and a lot of water, and a lot of food and some engineering equipment. But mainly they were there when nobody else was there. It made a huge impression on the Turks and increased our popularity which was never really high in Turkey.

To take a step back, I talked a bit about this before. The Turks see the world kind of like Putin does, as a slap in the face to what should have occurred which was the continuation of the Ottoman Empire, and America as the global leader basically plots constantly against Turkey. No matter how much we disabuse Turks of this notion it is hard wired under the surface with many of them. So we usually had an uphill battle but we made a huge leap forward with that.

Q: Pause for a moment on this topic because you are correct about the public opinion polling about some in Turkey about the U.S. it is always favorability very low. Nevertheless, Turkey continues to, at least the government however reluctantly and grudgingly continues to cooperate with the U.S. in a lot of different ways. How do you see that difference?

JEFFREY: It is ironic because I had had this same discussion with the CENTCOM commander only on Iraqi polls which were the same. And after much study and of course as the ambassador first for Turkey and then to Iraq I was constantly beaten up by the White House which would say, "The polls are low. Do a tweet. What you had for breakfast or something. Your job is to make America more popular." Finally, I went and looked to try to prove what was going on, I went and checked back to the polls done in Turkey. The international public institute is among the best. What I found out was that

Iran was right down there with us in both countries and even among the Shi'a of Iraq who you would think would be more pro-Iranian. Iran didn't fare much better with them than among the Sunnis and the Kurds. So, I tried to explain to Washington what was going on basically that these popularity polls should not be taken seriously because the people answer just like anybody who goes before the news, they answer the question that they want to answer not the question that is asked. When they are asked to rate the popularity usually at the top of the list you get some place you as a Muslim might like maybe Morocco or Bangladesh or that funny little place in Indonesia, Brunei. In fact, at one point Brunei rated for the Turks among countries that are kind of like us Turks but are not threats to us because they are pissant countries not too near to us. Whereas countries that can actually influence us are unpopular so we want to indicate the lack of popularity because we want through this poll to signal to our governments to be careful with these guys. They don't want to be ruled by Tehran or by Washington. That is what is in the polls. And the government is smart enough to realize this.

Thus they work with us because they know this (polling) doesn't show a real antipathy and they see how popular the USA is; American soft power from various companies, Pepsi Cola along with the usual suspects. Plus, the huge number of people who want to study in the United States, visit the United States, emigrate to the United States etc. So, it is a different kind of thing. But it is something that we do manage and so we have to observe it. With the earthquake we took a huge step forward.

We also got two other boosts. For the year 2000 issue, we worked well along with the Turks; then we were pretty well organized for the earthquake, and anyway the Clinton visit went smashingly well. Let me take a step back. At the end of this earthquake situation, it didn't end for years, but I was so struck by visiting the people, the tens of thousands, because they couldn't go back into their houses and look at the devastation and then having dealt with the Turkish bureaucracy. I did a cable back to Washington, one of the few I have done in my entire career where I actually try and analyze things a la George Kennan although in a much more modest way.

I called it the VIP Lounge Society. In Turkey, there are two kinds of VIP lounges in airports. One is just like in normal airports and it is really unique just like normal airports with booze and waitresses hovering over you. For that one you need a first class or business class ticket just like every place else. But then there is another VIP lounge that is bigger. They don't have all the amenities. They basically have Chai and coffee and some cookies and a couple of people hovering but not many banks of seats and a TV and a few newspapers. So not much different than the normal waiting areas. What makes it different? You have got to be special to get in there. It is not a question of the ticket you hold, it is who you are. If you are a senior government official, a member of parliament, a businessman with connections or a diplomat or somebody from the education sector, essentially what we call the whole Kemalist elite having your little flunkies to make sure you have the little cachet that allows you to get in this VIP lounge is an important part of your life because two things happen.

One is you get to mingle with all the people like you. Second, you don't get to mingle with all the other people. Those people in the normal waiting areas, some of those women are wearing head scarves. They are speaking almost incomprehensible dialects of rural Turkey and they are chewing on their food and doing all kinds of other normal things. So, you are with all these others what we used to call in the Arab world pinky finger people, that is the guys who are at the top, they would have a long pinky finger fingernail to show that they didn't do physical labor but rather sat at a desk with a tie writing. So that is the kind of place we had and my argument was in a society like this, they will close ranks and defend the prerogatives of the elite rather than the duties that one has with these jobs which are almost all in the public sector other than the senior business people and boy those guys would really go to the real VIP lounge with the liquor.

But this was simply a very marked contrast with how things are in America where you know even if you have a first-class ticket you can sit around and you can have free liquor. In the end, you still go to gate number 23 and sit around in a long line with everybody else who may not have had status and God knows what. But it doesn't happen in Turkey because there is a little bus which drives you to the airplane after everybody else is on board. So again, you never have to mix with those people. I actually didn't like them because I was nervous I would miss the little bus because of course they couldn't pay that much attention to us. And people were going in all directions.

I actually preferred to go to a gate that I knew how to use. There would be a big sign Istanbul Flight 2306 departure 10:21 on time. That made me feel more comfortable because Turkey, even though I spoke the language was always a bit confusing and Asiatic to me. So anyway, the thrust of the piece was there is a potential revolution coming in Turkey. I wrote this as I said on the influence of the earthquake at the time in 1999. And little did I know that three years later we would get Erdogan and I know why.

Q: A quick question. As you are discussing sort of the Kemalist era what was the role if any of teachers in trying to maintain this Kemalist ideology because after 50, 60, 70 years you assume that textbooks and the entire teaching system would be one that would be supportive of the whole way of looking at Turkey as a westernized, modernized and so on.

JEFFREY: The teachers were in Turkey like in Europe that is an elite profession. The teachers are inculcated in Kemalist philosophy. You are not allowed to wear scarves in school and such. Now indirectly the Gulenist movement which became a great threat even before the coup of July 2016 and I will talk a bit more about that during my time as ambassador in Turkey. The Gulenist movement which was pretty much undercover but there at that time ran a prep school, a private prep school system that almost everybody had to go to to pass the exams, the very rigid exams rather like the French system to get into university. So, the Schools were markedly Kemalist yet the private prep schools had this moderate Islamic patina to it.

This wasn't too unusual because General Evren when he led the coup in 1980 decided that the bigger danger was not the Islamic forces but the left wing, people to the left of center. And so, he saw Islam to some degree as his ally. So, the military relaxed a bit their very strong opposition to the religious part of society. Now in that era Ecevit had become prime minister after a brief Islamic government in 1997 had been quasi-overturned by the military, the head of the government, the prime minister was Erbakan, the guy who had led the Islamic party in Turkey for many decades and his disciple was Erdogan.

I am getting my three E's confused here. Erbakan and Erdogan. Anyway, Ecevit benefitted from the fact that the military had stepped in and forced some of the other coalition parties to pull out of the coalition which of course just fell constitutionally because the other parties pulled out of the coalition but they pulled out of the coalition because the Turkish military sent a tank column through a suburb of Ankara that was known for being supporters of Erbakan and the Islamic side of things. So Ecevit who was known as a classic secular leftist was in charge of the country but he didn't know how to deal with the forces under him.

He, more importantly, couldn't deal with the economy. So meanwhile we had the mother of all visits to Turkey, Clinton. Bill Clinton loved the relationship with Turkey. He basically was one of these people who saw it as a modernizing Islamic state and a good news story. At that time between 1998 and then Turkey had been very helpful in the Kosovo conflict. They let us fly planes out of there; so for a short period of time in 1999 when I got there we were operating aircraft along with the Turks into the Balkans out of bases in Turkey where we were also operating again with the Turks into northern Iraq against the PKK indirectly and in support of the other Kurds to fend off Saddam. So, this was an idea of how active the political military situation was - this Turkey as this huge piece of political real estate controlling the entrance to the Black Sea, much of the middle east and the Balkans and again we had very good military relations. The Turks were not totally happy with what happened after 1990-1991 because they had been a major beneficiary of the Iran-Iraq war because the only way to get things into Iraq, and Iraq was stuffed full of money from the rest of the Arab world, was through Turkey, and a lot of that died out after the sanctions were imposed after the 1991 war. So, the Turks constantly harangued us about the hundreds of billions of dollars of money that we owed them for the drop in trade because of our policies towards Saddam. On the other hand, they were facilitating that by allowing us to use their bases. And so

Q: One last thing in the sort of mix here, this is till when Turkey was in good relations with Israel.

JEFFREY: Yes. That was another major plus that encouraged Clinton to have a good relationship with Ecevit. They were both left of center people but moderately so particularly in Clinton's case. So, you had the Israel connection. You had the moderate Islamic connection. You had the bulwark of NATO in the middle east and you had projection of power throughout the region. So anyway, Clinton was inclined to visit Turkey because there would be an OSCE summit in Istanbul. But he decided to make a statement in particular and he decided to extend it given the earthquake. I was placed in

charge of that and we had the advance team oh as early as August.

This occupied much of my life because this really was the visit from hell. Between Clinton and Hillary who by the way were accompanied by Madeline Albright which was a further complicating factor when you have the secretary accompanying the president particularly in the OSCE part of it because the Turkish protocol recognized heads of state and government. It did not recognize secretaries of state or foreign ministers the same way. If you were a secretary of state or or foreign minister you didn't get your own entourage. You didn't get your own convoy and so there was constant friction there as well that Mark Parris had to deal with and it was not very easy. Anyway, I did mainly the logistics of the visit but it was to start in Ankara. Mrs. Clinton was trying to go to Anatolia while President Clinton was going to visit the earthquake victims. Then I think either she or both went to Izmir and went to the ruins at, it is escaping me now. Not Palmyra. That is in Syria.

Q: I know the ones you mean and it is escaping me too.

JEFFREY: Yeah, they are lovely (Ephesus). Anyway, then they both rendezvoused in Istanbul for the usual Istanbul things plus the OSCE summit. So, this required 20 aircraft and staffs of hundreds. It was absolutely mind boggling but Clinton made a huge hit. There was a wonderful picture that was flashed on the front pages of all the newspapers in Turkey of Clinton visiting people who had been driven from their homes. Picking up and kissing a little Turkish baby and it really made a huge impression. This is probably in all the years I have done with Turkey the high point of Turkish American relations. It starts with those marines whom we deployed and the fact that we acted when nobody else did and the fact that Bill Clinton is a real mensch.

So then there was an embarrassing incident. Because Clinton flew with C-130s to the site because there was a relatively small airport that we didn't take Air Force one aircraft. Then he flew on the C-130's because it was a puddle jump to Istanbul. That left Air Force One sitting in Ankara. They needed to dead haul Air Force One out there but the guys on the advance team said, "Gee you have got to move a lot of people out here so do you want to fly in Air Force One?" So we jumped at the chance. I had mentioned earlier when I had flown out to Lyon in 1996 on the backup 747 to Air Force One without the president so I had kind of been on it but I had never been on Air Force One itself.

So anyway about 40 of us descended on the airplane; the crew was great because it was relaxing for them. We were the only ones there. Nobody not from the embassy, no President or Mrs. Clinton or cabinet members or any of that. So, we had the run of the place and were eating all of their presidential chocolates. Swiping all kinds of souvenirs and then we demanded to see the President's bedroom. So, we got to see that too. It was a very difficult landing because we had to land in the fog. I remember that. So, it was all done very quickly. That was great fun.

And the visit was extraordinary because this was the last gasp of Turkey in the Kemalist era that I was experiencing which was also the last gasp of the, arguably since Reagan in Reykjavik, effort to integrate Russia into the modern world. Because the OSCE summit

was focused on mainly Russia, specifically outstanding commitments of the CFE on what were called flank troop positions as well as the Russian forces who had spilled into Moldova-Transnistria and in Abkhazia and in South Ossetia. This needed to be resolved and also the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh where the Russians were playing not a direct role but an indirect awful role supporting the Armenians and anyhow the OSCE one way or another had responsibility for all of these things very directly with peacekeeping civilian forces in Transnistria, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia; the UN had the mission there.

So anyway, Clinton made it his business to try to appeal to Yeltsin. This was just months before Yeltsin was going to be essentially overthrown and Putin was going to take over. So, it was his last chance, and Clinton appealed to him in this beautiful city. Mark, as you would know these speeches be they NATO or OSCE, anywhere you have 54 nations or 28 nations, essentially, they are all written by the organizational junkies in the foreign ministry or the State Department or equivalent who work night and day, and therefore they are told to give me a speech on the organization's accomplishments and all of that. I don't want to raise any hackles with anybody. I just want to get through this because the real discussion is going to be done offline. So therefore, the formal part of the meeting is essentially the same speech given by 50 different people and it is one of the most boring things in the world. And as I mentioned, in the 1992 speeches when Kozerev had given this crazy prediction of Putin and Eagleberger responded to that. That was the one big exception and suddenly we had the second one. Clinton gets up without notes and makes an appeal to Boris Yeltsin. It was extraordinary. "I remember you on that tank President Yeltsin. You were my hero. Where is that man today?" It was really dramatic. And it had no impact as we all know. So that leads to having done other things with the Clinton administration including that he was very aggressive in pushing NATO out. Made a difference? I don't think so but it is something we will have to look at. So, after that which was all on the first six months of the Turkish tour we went basically a year and a half without much happening dramatically

Q: Let me just ask you at this point since you did mention NATO and the whole transformation from the Yeltsin era to where the rest complained about NATO but they weren't doing anything like Putin. Was there another way to go for NATO because it has since, that is when Madeline Albright began saying we (NATO) either go out of Theater, we go out of area or we go out of business.

JEFFREY: Well I took that to mean NATO played a role in the middle east which of course it did and Afghanistan and in a much more limited way in Iraq and then in Libya a few years later and repeatedly in Turkey including now I think we still have NATO patriot batteries there and we have for a good number of years during the Syrian crisis. So that is how I took that.

The problem is you get to the underlying problem of the realist versus the idealist school under which umbrella we have all lived. Of course, now we are here on January 11, so on 11 April 2017 which is now four months after Donald Trump of all people, we have also discovered that he is an internationalist supporter of the American global order with

a strike in Syria. So, we were still there, but once you do that even though loud and clear with the various debates over why he took that decision and such, whether it is internal human rights and harm done to an individual which is an American value or whether it was Realpolitik and trying to deal with Russia in the region that was behind our movements.

That is one reason why this confusion today as we talk about the very pressing current affairs at issue but it was also a problem back then with NATO because a realpolitik thinker would have said there are two downsides to expanding NATO, at least beyond it is fair to say the Catholic states of eastern Europe because they were always part of the Holy Roman Empire or part of the Austrian empire and so they get to come back in because they were returning home. And that would include the Baltic states. But the Orthodox areas other than the Baltics, whether we would push for that, was questionable, but again even with the Baltics and even with partially because of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russia only bordered on these NATO expanded states in the Baltics and the Baltics push was very sensitive to us because we never acknowledged their absorption into the Soviet Union in 1939-1940. They are very western in their orientations since the Teutonic knights in the 12th and 13th centuries. So, the rest of these states, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania didn't border on Russia. They bordered Belarus or Ukraine and it is a long way particularly from one side of Ukraine to the other, so it seemed that Russia was far away.

So, there was that, but the more important one and this came up when I was in the White House with Georgia, the idea that to state that a country's right to join an international organization whose qualifications included full sovereignty, would have been to acknowledge that there were limited degrees of sovereignty, and if you were in the shadow of the zone of interest of a great power, you have only limited sovereignty. That is the path to the 19th century. That is the path away from the UN charter and that is the path away from Wilson's 14 points. And it is a very dramatic thing to do that.

Had we been able to go slower, acknowledge the theoretical right, but work more, although we worked really hard with the founding document with Russia and inviting Russia to have this permanent representation in NATO and all of that meaning I think the problem was and again I think I mentioned this before, we were afraid that the French having coopted the Germans in return for unification would push not only the Euro which turned out to be a disaster but also ESDP, the European Union's role as a security provider. This would undercut our concept of NATO which we felt had functioned not only as a military alliance but far more importantly as a political alliance where we and Europe would coordinate before we dealt with the outside world. The French concept was manifest- ESDP was very different and we saw that as a fear and we saw that the EU was pushing it to expand its membership into these very same areas while also expanding this idea of a security union and thus that all this was a threat to NATO; it was a threat to our interests and simply America was very proud of its role in the world and proud of NATO, but I think that pushed it. That is why we couldn't have used the OSCE more because the EU was running roughshod over the OSCE as well. And so, we went to partnership for

peace and all that. But anyway, the OSCE was like the last gasp for this whole effort. So, we then went for a year and a half. I had some personal medical problems in my family that worked out OK that preoccupied us. But the end was just running a large post but I basically don't have much to report from the period of January 1, 2000, to September 11, 2001. Then the last months were very turbulent.

Q: Just one more sort of grand strategy question You mentioned ESDP and I was around the OCE at the time with that sort of put forward right by the French on whenever it seemed to catch fire in the sense that every other country outside of the EU were sort of holding their breath to see was the U.S. really going to make NATO take a backseat. . It was not that which was what they wanted, not that they will take second best with whatever this ESDP is going to be because the French also tried to create the European strike force, which didn't seem to end up amounting to much. The impression that I had at the time was it was very nice for the French to put this idea forward, but they, the Germans and even if you bring in the Brits, they don't really have it. They don't have the capacity to create a real security zone on their own without the U.S.

JEFFREY: Oh absolutely. There were many reasons for this. First as you said the problem is there is no leader. I mean the EU fundamental flaw as a nation state or as a powerful force is they didn't follow the model of the United States, essentially the EU is the articles of confederation. They never realized as we did with our constitution that you had to have a strong center even if the system would be federal. They never got there, so therefore there was no leadership other than bureaucrats. And rotating presidencies, I think they have had two or three at this point. So, it was very confusing. Nobody could follow it other than the people we assigned to Brussels. So, there is no leadership.

Secondly their whole is the sum of less than the parts. When you add up all of their troops and all their equipment and all of their GDP and their populations they cannot generate power because their militaries try to do everything, and they are people and staff heavy and teeth light. So, you need the United States for the organizing power, for the specialties in the military that we have and the other thing is as you pointed out, nobody could really trust them either militarily or politically. So, the whole thing collapsed on its own. The classic example of this was of course 2003 with Chirac's famous comments to all of the Eastern European EU states who were also in NATO and were signing up for George Bush's adventure in Iraq and pressing the EU to do something, but of course France and Germany were trying to build a counter pressure. Chirac in a very angry moment said "it is better for you to shut up."

That of course blew it because no country is going to take that from any other country. I mean people complain about George Bush and how rotten he was. He never said anything like that to anybody. That just goes to show the French attitude. Well that is the kind of thing Putin would say but Putin has the power to back it up to some degree and Chirac did not. So back to Turkey. So, for a year and a half I can't think of much that happened. Bob Pearson replaced Mark Parris at the end of 2000. Of course, we had a new administration. We would just move forward on that. The Ecevit government just hung on to power. The economic situation was growing worse. As I said we really didn't see

it but there was a revolution building under our feet. Turkey had benefited to an extraordinary degree by a customs union with the EU. Firms from all over the EU and from America were building in this broad zone around Istanbul and you were also getting something called Anatolian Tigers places like Anatolia, Kayseri and Gaziantep were benefiting from Turkish value added, Turkish geographic benefits. They had very good scientific cooperation with the Israelis. They had benefited tremendously from military industrial cooperation with us. They built the second largest fleet of F-16s in the world. So, Turkey seemed to be doing pretty well, but we didn't see what was coming. Then 9/11 hit.

Q: Just one last thing about the economy. At this time in Turkey in the economy as I recall there was _____ inflation.

JEFFREY: Well Inflation was the curse of the Turkish system. Until Erdogan. I had seen it in the 1980's and later with Ecevit. It was also declining but then it got very bad in 2002. But I will get to that in a second. So, when 9/11 came Bob Pearson was back in the states and I was the chargé. I was in my office when people told me to turn on the TV and I was watching the first, the north tower burning, and then suddenly and I realized this wasn't a replay of the tower because you could see that burning, I saw the plane strike the south tower. I knew we were at war, so I decided OK this is what I have been preparing my whole life for and so we started mobilizing the embassy in every respect. Finding out what our military resources were and making sure the military was alerted. Working with our security people to get everybody informed and essentially button up, armor ourselves and do everything we could because we were also vulnerable. We were in the middle east and we had two other posts in Adana and Istanbul to worry about.

Then Bob Pearson had a hard time getting back because of course there were no flights out of the U.S. So, he told me to press on and then we received this remarkable telegram from Mark Grossman who was the acting Secretary of State because he was the most senior official present. This was at the end of that tumultuous day when we received a report that the State Department was also being bombed, so they had an evacuation at the State Department. Grossman signed out an extraordinary telegram that basically said our country is under attack. We are evacuating the Department of State. Do what you think right. I thought that was exactly the right instructions to send. So, I contacted the foreign ministry and directly the foreign minister. He expressed his condolences and Ecevit did and such and they said come in tomorrow morning. So, I went in to see the under secretary who is the functional operator of the foreign ministry and they sat me down and said, "OK, what can we do?"

I will never forget this because this is where you really need an alliance and you really need long term relations both personal relations and nation to nation relations. Now I had no instructions but I have been doing this business for a long time and I had a pretty good idea of what we would need. We would need diplomatic support in NATO and in the UN. We would need overflight clearances up the wazoo. We would need total access to

Incirlik and other bases. We would need Turkish diplomatic and military support for our operations in Afghanistan and I ticked down the list. As I said I had no instructions but I was sure this was the right thing. They said that all sounds reasonable. We are with you. They lived up to their word. They were absolutely magnificent. Within a few months Turkey had taken command of what was actually the NATO force of 4000 troops there. They did all kinds of things to support us, and of course having a major regional power in all of this was particularly important in the Islamic world. Anyway, Bob got back and we put most of our efforts into that. That was just an extraordinary period. Senator McCain and Lieberman and others came out and were extremely happy with the Turks. It just ended with a funny incident. It was snowing when McCain was there.

Q: People forget that it snows.

JEFFREY: Oh yeah, vicious winters. So, they couldn't go where they wanted to go, so we are having a dinner with McCain and his large delegation, Fred Thompson. It was really a great group of people. So, McCain. Lindsey Graham, Lieberman, Fred Thompson and these guys are like a private club. They were just having the time of their lives, and the Turks were happy because there was so much bonhomie. Then McCain says let's go to Cyprus. They got beaches there. It is warm, bikinis and all of that stuff. So anyway, the rest of the gang says, Right John, high five. Let's go to Cyprus.

Well the problem with that is you can't fly from Ankara to Cyprus, Southern Cyprus. There is an air defense identification zone, and active defense. We had to get that turned off, so we worked for hours and hours to get it turned off. Then we went out to the plane and we were repeatedly not allowed to take off because of weather and finally we had a pilot rest issue. So instead of going to Cyprus they had to spend another 48 hours in Ankara, so I had to unleash the entire staff to take them. This was a huge delegation, taking them all around to the usual markets and mosques and churches. Then other things to see, the local officials, but they were a big group to work with and they were totally supportive of what we were doing with Turkey as our guests. As I said in a way, a high point.

Then we started after that very quickly shifting attention to Iraq. It was clear to me right from the get go, and there has been a lot of media reporting on this, that people close to President Bush or possibly President Bush saw either the necessity or the opportunity to use 9/11 to strike Iraq and essentially change the middle east. My assessment is change the Middle East with the exhortation that it could be changed like eastern Europe was changed in 1989. Well we will get to that in a bit.

We were trying to deal with that. Turkey was very skeptical. It is not like the first Gulf War all that much. It participated in it but only after General Torumtay, the CHOD , usually a friend of the United States whom I had known earlier, was fired by Turgut Özal because Özal had insisted that he support the United States. But they had seen the millions of Kurds that were driven out of the country in 1991. And then we had gone back in and such so that was the beginning of operation Northern Watch. So, the Turks were participating in all of this but they didn't want even more trouble with Iraq. The

problem was and we could see this out of Ankara because of course we were operating. We had Operation Northern Watch out of Incirlik with American and British aircraft and we also had a presence on the ground, a liaison team and then I had one of my officers Jonathan Cohen, recently DCM in Baghdad, Jonathan was a liaison to our operation on Northern Watch at Incirlik but he was also our liaison to Kurds on northern Iraq.

By that time Masoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani, the leaders of the Kurdish Democratic party and the PUK party were ready to support us. But the Turks frequently because they had a pretty good relationship with the Kurds as they supported them against the PKK and against Saddam and at one point for Bazani and against Talabani. It is all very confused and very middle eastern. Anyway, the Turks saw things growing worse. We had two crises. The first, and this was part of the whole erosion of the containment of Saddam which was real, it was not simply an excuse of the Bush administration. We had to deal with it in two areas. First of all, Saddam had a deal which he made with Bazani to export very large quantities of mazut or other oil or oil products out of areas Saddam controlled, mainly Kirkuk and other oil fields through Kurdish territory into Turkey. This was majorly illegal if you went by UN sanctions, and a source of money for Saddam, and I guess money was his interest. The problem was he had to share it with his bitter enemy Masud Barzani. So, there is just a thin slice of Iraqi territory along the Tigris across from Turkey that wasn't controlled by Barzani. It was controlled by the Iraqi government.

They started preparations to build a bridge over it. Barzani moved up some of his artillery. So, they had that crisis to try and deal with. We kind of got that under control, but it was not by trying to work with the Turks as well. Because they would have been the beneficiary of it. At the same time Saddam cut a deal with Assad about the pipeline from Kirkuk--it was reopened and oil started flowing again in violation of the Sanctions.

Then we had a fascinating thing where Saddam sends a division of troops forward into Kurdish territory and so Cohen came in. Cohen had picked this up from the Kurds because they were on the phone with him every day. He was often in Northern Iraq on a very dangerous assignment. In fact, Ryan Crocker had come out once and the two of them had gone down and they were in their billet and a major gun battle broke out. Crocker was much more experienced in these things and immediately jumped under a bed or something. Cohen went running out to the balcony to see what was going on so I followed up and chewed him out and said do whatever Ryan Crocker does in a gun battle.

They the Kurds put their lives in his hands, a classy example of a foreign service officer in a very uncertain situation forming personal relationships with leaders under highly stressful conditions of great import to our foreign policy. To me that is diplomacy, not digging wells and that sort of thing. So anyway, the Kurdish liaison people called Jonathan, we have these Iraqi forces that pushed forward across the line. So anyway, he consulted with me. Bob Pearson was not there at the time and we tried to figure out what to do. So, Jonathan came up with the idea let's send some recon planes to fly over these guys. We did this, A so we could find out the situation on the ground rather than rely on the Kurds who were not 100% accurate, but also, B we knew typically the Iraqi army would fire on these planes. Never successfully but still they were fired at. That would

lead to the next day a 70 aircraft package that would look for them and bomb the hell out of the anti-aircraft. Everybody knew this as it had been done many times.

Anyway, up with the planes. They over flew the Iraqi forces. The Kurds were pulling back because with geography the further you pull back to the north the more you get into rugged terrain with the best positions for your light weapons and with their terrain familiarity worked better, but yielding important territory, villages and agricultural areas, and they didn't want to do that. So, the planes flew over. We were a bit uncomfortable because the mission was given to British reconnaissance aircraft so our little scheme was being carried out not by American aircraft but by British aircraft. In harm's way. So the Iraqis fired at them and then the Iraqs knew what would happen the next day and the Peshmerga knew what would happen the next day so the Peshmerga stopped retreating and reinforced and the Iraqis stopped, having watched what had happened in the sky and what had happened on the ground with the Peshmerga stopped retreating and started reinforcing. And they then decided that OK they had made their point and it was time to withdraw. So we got Cohen a medal for stopping a region of the Kurdistan area falling to Saddam.

Q: OK, here just one second to take a moment to describe what the Kurdish situation was because there are so many players in it.

JEFFREY: Basically the Kurds are an Indo-European population with a language quite similar to Farsi that have existed from time immortal. The Greeks reported their presence. The famous 10,000 had to fight their way back from Persia and encountered the Kurds in what is now Eastern Anatolia. They live in Eastern Anatolia and northern Syria almost all the way to the Mediterranean, Northern Iraq, and Northwestern Iran as well as small groups in other places. And they are scattered in other areas but that is their primary region. They are about 17% of the Iraqi population so let's say four or five million. About the same in Syria. Larger in Turkey, they could be up to 20% of the Turkish population. That is a good 16 million. And in Iran also probably a little bit more than Iraq.

In Turkey, they are split into three groups. There are assimilated Kurds who basically have gone through the Turkish educational system and in many cases married Turks because they are also Sunni Muslims except for some people from the Alevi group. Both and there are some Turks who are Alevi too. There are some unorthodox Bektashi and those people by and large live in Western Turkey and they are assimilated completely.

That is unlike the Syrian Kurds or the Iraqi Kurds. Well you had Iraqi Kurds who spoke beautiful Arabic and still do, and who in some cases lived in Baghdad. Basically, their home was in the North where that is a totally different situation than there is in Turkey and we want to remember that with the Turks. But the bulk of the Kurds in Turkey were in Eastern Turkey and they fell into two categories. One was the typically more tribal conservative more Islamic, factions who identify with the Turkish state and in fact were the main fighting force against the other element which were those groups that supported

the PKK. The PKK was a Marxist movement formed by Abdullah Ocalan in the 1970's with a good bit of support from Moscow. It is a very secular Marxist operation as we can see with its sister organization the PYD in northern Syria today. With women in very prominent positions and a very ideological approach. That had some support because it was for Kurdish nationalism thus it had some appeal to younger Kurds in those areas rather like the Taliban with the Pashtun. But not all the Kurds supported it and thus the Turks did most of the fighting in the 1980's and 1990's using a village guard force of 100,000 troops to support the Turkish military. That was the situation in Turkey.

Now in northern Iraq you had an eclectic mix. The PKK had its headquarters in the Qandil Mountains in Northeastern Iraq. Inside "Kurdish" territory that the Kurds were basically operating as an autonomous region. had been in rebellion against Saddam Hussein up until 2003. But the leadership of that autonomous rebellious province was Masud Bazani and his KDP and Jalal Talabani and his PUK in a kind of coalition of convenience. Both of them are also working with Turkey, Turkey looking askance at them because Kurds are Kurds and didn't want them to become independent. Turkey also had a close relationship with them and saw them as allies. Turkey also is aware that the PKK was headquartered in the Qandil mountains, and had a relationship with Bazani's Peshmerga and the Peshmerga translated as being those who loved to die or something like that. Barzani had a bad relationship with the PKK, and the PKK had a somewhat better relationship with the PUK so anyway that is the makeup of the Kurds in the region we were trying to deal with. This was a major issue with the Turks because the Turks were fighting an insurgency against the PKK and the U.S. had agreed with the Turks that the PKK was a terrorist organization, but we also weren't happy with the way Turkey treated its Kurdish minority. When I went out there in the 1980's as I mentioned earlier many of the Turkish officials referred to them as Mountain Turks which they were not, or considered them a separate ethnic group because that didn't fit into the nationalist ideology of Mustafa Kemal so you had this nationalist ideology of we are all Turks. "How happy is he who says I am a Turk" – That is the motto of Turkey and it is in the constitution and everything else, yet 20% of the population can't feel this way. It wasn't as bad as African Americans with pre-1960 segregation. As I said, the Kurds were far better integrated. Through marriage and other things. But the groups out in the East did feel discriminated against in a form of apartheid against them so that was the major issue along with the Armenian resolutions and Cyprus of course in our relationship with Turkey and our relations in the Aegean.

So, you had all of these things that were part of our daily fare but after 9/11 the focus was very quickly on Afghanistan and then very quickly on Iraq. By early 2002 we could sense that the United States was losing interest in Afghanistan, that was a mission accomplished so now it was focused on the next one which was Iraq because Turkey would have to play a very big role because this was seen as a major undertaking. Bigger than the 1991 Gulf War where we committed 500,000 troops and 500,000 allies. Because we were going to take the whole country, we needed a northern road in as well as one in from Kuwait. As a result, the President sent Vice President Cheney through the region basically to drum up support for this. He started off in the Arab Countries but his last stop was Turkey. Oh, Prime Minister Ecevit thought this was a terribly bad idea. And

Ecevit sent all kinds of signals. It didn't matter Cheney not only wanted to come to Turkey but he wanted a separate meeting with the Turkish general staff. This had never been done before and was beyond all protocol. It sent a symbol of we talk the talk on democracy in Turkey but as far as we are concerned, the walk that we walk it is Turkish generals who call the shots on national security issues. Now ironically that is not what happened in the 1990-1991. It was the prime minister, Özal, who supported the U.S. position and wanted Turkey to play a role. As a basing area for at least air strikes and special forces. General Torumtay the joint chiefs chairman opposed that so Özal fired Torumtay.

Most of us who knew Turkey well knew that this was the case. It was a mistake to think that the Turkish military was necessarily pro-American or pro-British. They were very Kemalist; they were very nationalistic; they were very suspicious of the United States and they were very anti-Kurdish. They feared the Kurds. Their whole military was oriented on two things, fighting the Kurds and fighting the Greeks. They had two divisions in Cyprus. Of course, their greatest military accomplishment had been an air, land and sea invasion of Cyprus in 1974 and the Aegean which is also an area of tension where considerable forces are present. So that was their total focus, neither of which we liked very much. So, our relations with the Turkish military below the surface were quite strained. Cheney and his advisors didn't get this. We had advised this way back when, but he insisted. Ecevit was a clever guy. He said OK, in the end I am fine with it (Cheney seeing the generals). So, and we get the word. Ecevit lived in a modest little house across from the presidential palace. So, he said, OK, Cheney can visit with the Turkish general staff. They will come to my house and they will wait upstairs. Cheney can be with me and then he can go upstairs and meet with the generals.

At this point Cheney couldn't insist no I want to meet in their fortress-like headquarters. So Ecevit at first had done a very clever repartee by pushing that it would be at his house. Among other things it wouldn't be obvious to the Turkish public. Not that it immediately wouldn't be discovered but it wouldn't be formally in protocol that obviously Cheney was going to have a separate meeting with the Turkish general staff on their turf. Rather Cheney would be on Ecevit's turf and if it would be one meeting or two well who knows, it was all in one building. Cheney comes in and we are all in the meeting with him and his advisers and Ecevit and his advisers and Ecevit gives him a very hard line. We are not going to participate in any operation against Iraq. That is a sovereign state and requires a UN resolution and if you don't have a UN resolution it is illegal and if it is illegal I don't think we are going to participate. So anyway, Cheney then goes upstairs and makes the pitch to the military and word for word because this is where they had coordinated in advance the military was not happy with this either. They liked to play their role as the final arbiters of power; they don't want that to be acknowledged in any kind of formal way because they not only have to pay lip service, they actually believe in democracy unlike Sisi they returned power to you know the democratic process in 1983 after the big 1980 coup. So, this was awkward for them as well. That is where they repeated word for word what Ecevit said, so Cheney got a very strong message. An interesting thing, I am jumping forward to before my time in Turkey. The only reason we came back to that is the new government of Erdogan was

more willing to countenance an American operation. Because it went to a vote in parliament. It won a majority, a qualified majority. It needed an absolute majority. And thus, we weren't able to conduct the operation out of Turkey which caused all kinds of consternation in the relationship that continues to reverberate today. So anyway, that basically was the end of my tour in Turkey. If we have a few more minutes I can do Albania.

Q: OK.

JEFFREY: I'm about halfway through my tour in Turkey, it was actually the spring of 2001 I asked well what would I be doing when I left Turkey in 2002. The good news was I had been a DCM twice including very important posts.

Q: At this point you are an OC.

JEFFREY: I am an MC. I had just made MC. I got very good efficiency reports from Crocker and LaRocco in Kuwait and in Turkey we had the presidential visit and all kinds of drama. The earthquake and so it was I was an MC and it was obvious that I didn't want to be a DCM for the third time. So, I should try to get an embassy. The politics of getting an embassy in the foreign service are very complicated. Which you only learn when you try to do it because you realize that if you are not someone's favorite son, many people have been groomed for decades and I had been groomed the same way. The only one who actually kind of groomed me was Mark Parris who had brought me into NEA and brought me to Ankara, but Mark was out of the service, which was unfortunate. So, I had no real senior person who could reach down. I had never been anybody's special assistant and I had never been in a seventh-floor job. I had never had any of the conventional ways that you bubble up very quickly. So, I would have to compete, and I realized that but I wanted a European bureau post. I went back to the personnel system and spoke to them. They asked me if I spoke French and I said yes. They said, "We have got several African posts open." I said, "Look, I don't know Africa; I know Europe. What is open in Europe?" Anyway, it wasn't the pick of the litter because Europe is a tough place to get an ambassadorship. You have got a few big posts that foreign service officers typically would get. That was Turkey, Moscow, Poland, possibly USNATO sometimes it went to a non-career person. All those posts were basically for people who had already been an ambassador. So someplace else, someone who was really the apple of someone's eye, Bob Pearson is an example and Mark Parris both their first ambassadorial assignments in Turkey but that was in some cases unusual. That wasn't the case with me later. It wasn't the case with let me see, well going back, Eric Edelman or Ross Wilson. Maybe it was the case with Edelman. Anyway of course he worked for Dick Cheney. So, unless you were in a very well positioned job you are going to have to compete for those few posts typically in the Balkans and the Baltics and a couple of Eastern Europe. So that is what I put my name in for. And rather like when I had this bid in all the posts in Eastern Europe in 1979 I got the least desirable Bulgaria which turned out fine. Of the posts I put in, including as a Bulgarian speaker I could have handled a half a dozen posts in the Balkans because Slavic languages are pretty close. I got Albania.

Then I decided this is fine because it should be a really fun assignment. But there was a lot of back and forth, my godfather is deputy assistant secretary Tom Weston who had been the guy backstopping us on Turkey and Weston was extremely helpful. Without him I wouldn't have gotten the job which shows you can be a successful DCM twice in a mega-post and there is no guarantee you are going to get an embassy. Now it varies from bureau to bureau. That is the problem with having bureau identification; it has its pluses and minuses in the U.S. foreign service but having spent much of my career in the Near Eastern Bureau and much of it in the European Bureau it is much easier to have an ambassador career in the Near Eastern Bureau than it is in the European Bureau. In the European bureau with a few exceptions you get a very large percent of the people who had been political counselors and DCMs don't get embassies. The ones who do get a small embassy and then it is out or there are a number of funny jobs like envoy for recovery of stolen war goods from WWII. There were little things related to CSCE and such that you could get an ambassador spot for which were kind of pleasant because they involved being in nice places. But you want to have an ambassadorship in an actual country because that is what you have been trained for. It is how you practiced the profession largely. Anyway, I was happy with Albania because the Balkans were hot. We had gone through two wars there in 1995 and 1999. I had been very much involved as I reported on the Bosnia conflict and was quite closely involved having been in Turkey with the Kosovo escapade. So I was going into Albania and this required me to focus on an area that I knew well from Bulgaria and the Greek desk as well as the Turkish assignments and Bosnia.

The Albanian problem if you will is central to the situation in the Balkans. A little bit of this is coming back with Putin's new actionism in the region in Montenegro and in Serbia. Because in the western Balkans the primary Muslim population is the Albanian population which also suffers from not being a Slavic population. While Albania is 30% Christian the Albanian population in Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia and the Presevo Valley in Serbia are all Muslim, so there is the Muslim orthodox traditional problem; this had been a major issue in the last gasp of the Ottoman empire and the Turks were truly disappointed that Albania bolted from the empire because Albanians had been the backbone of the Janissary military forces and the navy and everything else. The Khedives of Egypt Mohammed Ali and his son were descendants of an Albanian dynasty. Albanian women have a great reputation in Istanbul and in Ankara so it was one of the jewels of the crown that Woodrow Wilson had plucked from it because Wilson had championed Albanian independence during the Versailles talks just as he had championed Kurdish independence. While the Albanians got it the Kurds didn't, the Turks never forgave us for pushing both and keep remembering that we had pushed for Kurdish independence.

The reason that Wilson got his way was that Albania had a coast and I think that is a major factor so while the Bosnian war which by far was the bigger war of the two because it went on for years because nobody intervened, was more prominent. That basically focused on a less significant, from the standpoint of geopolitics, group of

Muslims actually because they were just in a small part of Bosnia which itself is a small part of the former Yugoslavia. And you add up the Serbs and you add up the Croats, well I shouldn't say. You add up the Catholic Bosniacs and the Orthodox Bosniacs and they can kind of if they wanted to balance the Muslims who were the largest, as there is a strong Croatian Catholic Bosnian community and obviously a large Serbian community. It isn't very big compared to the rest of the Balkans, but there are considerably more Albanians and they are considered aliens. They also don't speak a Slavic language. They are not Turkic. They are natives of the region but they are Albanians not Slavs or Turks. So, it was an interesting geopolitical situation that I came into. Albania of course had been perhaps next to North Korea the most vicious communist dictatorship in the world under Hoxha and it was also victimized terribly by a Ponzi scheme; they had one of these pyramid schemes in 1997 that destroyed whatever little wealth the population had developed. So, there was a lot to do that because our overall goal was to integrate the Balkans into the same European institutions we had been successful in the prior decade integrating the Eastern European countries into essentially from Hungary north to the Baltics and then the eastern Balkans as well, Bulgaria and Romania were right behind eastern Europe.

It was essentially the Western Balkans if you will, Albanian and the former Yugoslavia which had now split into five and counting Kosovo six countries or quasi-countries along with Albania. So, you had the seven dwarfs if you will and they were trouble. Starting at the south you had Macedonia which couldn't even call itself Macedonia because of the Greeks so you had the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia officially. Then Albania with its totally corrupt government and meltdown in 1997. Then Kosovo which was obviously along with Bosnia both battlegrounds. Then Slovenia was relatively normal and of course had been for 1000 years part of Austria. That is the only part that melted back into Western Europe relatively easily. Croatia had a lot of problems because of the legacy of its ethnic cleansing of the Serbian population of Croatia; and Serbia itself which had seen itself as the leading force, the leading nationality in Yugoslavia suddenly found itself one of seven. So, it was a real mess. What we were trying to do again was to integrate all of these countries individually into European institutions so that collectively they wouldn't go back to 1993 or worse, 1924. It was interesting because I really liked the Balkans. It is interesting. The people are fascinating, there is a lot of good diplomatic work you could do that was critically important at the time, so I went.

Now Albania is one of those few countries where if you poll the population 90% of them will be supportive of the United States. That started with Wilson, champion of their independence and of course they were all in love with Bill Clinton because he had launched the jets in the Kosovo war so I was basking still in that. Nonetheless the country was deeply split. Politically it was split to some degree in not ethnic but linguistic terms between the north and the south. Interestingly it wasn't split on a religious basis. Probably the best example of religions living together. The breakup is 10% Catholic, 20% Orthodox and some of those are actually Greeks. That is the only real minority down in the south. Then about 40% Sunni Muslims, and 30% Bektashi. The Bektashi are another one of these groups like the Alawites, the Alevis that are splinter groups of a mix of Shi'a

Islam and Sufism. It had been one of the Tarakats or communities if you will of the Ottoman empire along with the Whirling Dervishes and the Nachcibendis, who are actually still in Iraq and were a problem for us there. These movements or societies were very active in the bureaucracy and the military of the Ottoman Empire. Ataturk decided they were part of the past and banished the Bektashis so they took up their world headquarters in Albania because there was a large Bektashi community, As I said, about 30% of the population. They are fascinating because I remember they serve wine whenever you come and visit them and the women don't wear headscarves but they have Korans in front of you and green everywhere, but they are very moderate.

But the Sunni Albanians follow the Turkish model which is traditionally far less radical than other brands in the middle east, which is why you have a population of some several million (Turks) in Germany without suicide bombers coming out of there. But the same thing in Albania. There was a small extremist movement in Albania again funded by Saudi foundations and other things, not the government but various foundations and religious communities. That was a problem but not a serious problem. Although we had to watch it because there had been some terrorist acts including the Grand Mufti of Albania was assassinated at one point while was there. So, you had a terrorist problem. And the country was still very wild west. There were still two areas when I got there that were still not under the control of the government. Finally, the government mounted military operations to take them back. We had just gotten off of danger pay. It was, as I said, a wild country. You would hear every night lots of celebratory gunfire all around you and then a police car was blown up right in front of the embassy, but it wasn't aimed at us. It was one gang attacking another. There was an awful lot of gang and criminal violence. There was a lot of trafficking in people and trafficking in drugs through Albania to Italy. The Albanians had very close connections to people in Italy from times past, many of the Christians under Iskender Bey the great leader of the resistance against the Ottomans in the medieval period. He had taken his population to Southern Italy and in the heel of the boot of Italy much of the population is actually Albanian.

That is where the priests all come from who minister to the Catholic minority. They all spoke Albanian which I had learned to some degree at FSI in the period before I went out. But with a very strong Italian accent. You could recognize them immediately by their accent when you ran into them. So, it was a very interesting place, but again the main goal was to keep the country from yielding to the centrifugal forces that were still very strong in that country. So, we had in the United States a very strong almost paternalistic role there. So, the first thing was to keep them together. The second, keep them from not exacerbating the problems with the Macedonians. My friend Larry Butler was the ambassador in Macedonia. He had gone in earlier than I as the chargé while he was awaiting confirmation, putting down essentially a rebellion of the Albanians in the west of the country. Of course, you had factions in Kosovo who want to push against the ethnic Serbian enclave in the north and all of that was complicated in that what you didn't want is the one Albanian state pushing a expansionist agenda which was so common in the region and practiced by such sophisticated forces as the Greeks who brought us the "You can't call Macedonia, Macedonia" position, so that was the background. It was a

very good assignment because you were with a population that was very positively disposed to the United States.

So, I spent time learning Albanian. I actually learned it fairly well, it is an odd language in the sense that it is obviously Indo-European but it is not in any other family. If you count to ten in Albanian you will notice similarities to the romance languages but it is not a romance language. But it is relatively easy to learn and the one on one instruction did me well. So, I got a fair amount of Albanian.

The country had just been taken off the danger post list but then we found a major stock of chemical weapons 20 miles from where we were, guarded by Snuffy and Crackerjack when they would show up. So, we had a lot of excitement with that. But basically, what we were trying to do were several things out of our overall Balkan strategy. Which was to get these countries to engage with all of the institutions and try to develop the country politically and economically as a security partner; as the quid Albania not did not want to upset the apple cart that we had spent a decade after many false starts putting together. In some respects, the core conflict in the Balkans was not Bosnia, it was Albania. Because Albania kind of like the Kurds is an entity that spreads out from Albania into all but the north of Kosovo, into the Presevo Valley in Serbia. Much of western Macedonia and parts of Montenegro and northern Greece. There is also a minority of Albanians in Greece with lots of tensions between Greece and Albania.

You had a lot of attention because we were trying to get Albania into NATO. We were trying to help Albania get into the EU. And after we went into Iraq we were trying to get Albanian support for the Iraq War and I was very involved in that, and we were providing all kinds of military support to the Albanian military forces. But in return we wanted them to send a sizable force. So, they decided finally to send a company. They picked a regular unit. So, it was in contact through the European Command with the Central Command and the Command in Iraq on where to send these guys. The word came back to Mosul. So anyway, I told the Iraqis don't worry about this and the Albanian president was a former general and he knew the military side of things. He was a bit worried and the prime minister was a socialist named Nano who sort of yielded to the president on some of these military things. The president being a former general knew better. So, I went to the president and told him not to worry because we have this guy, this great general named Dave Petraeus and 15,000 troops from the 101st Airborne. So anyway, by the time the Albanian troops got there the 101st had left. Mosul was disintegrating into violence as I was to discover soon later, afterwards when I went there. We had one Stryker armored vehicle brigade there with two of its four battalions at any given time someplace else under General Carter Ham who later became the AFRICOM Commander and was an extraordinarily good soldier. In fact, I just recently saw him and we reminisced on how good the Albanian forces were. We used them to secure the airport, which was the only way we could get in and out of the place, and they did a great job. So, I was very proud of that.

The rest of the time was keeping the two forces, the right under Sali Berisha who had been president of Albania but was now leader of the opposition the conservatives, and the

prime minister, Prime Minister Fatos Nano from physically attacking each other. We at one point had a breakdown and so Berisha called on his forces to march on the government quarter and overthrow the government, Classic Balkan diplomacy as practiced in Albania. So, as the American ambassador I did the work and got to Berisha and everybody and told them to stop. Again, that is the power of the United States if you are in a country that is well disposed to it, you can and you are willing to use your authority effectively, but this is the kind of thing why Washington has you there.

Then there was another funny incident that illustrates the rare occurrence of an American presence in a country where it has a tremendous amount of influence and the population likes it. So therefore, the government has to be a bit cautious about what it does so that it doesn't irritate the United States. So, one night I go home and I get a call. It is Prime Minister Nano. He said, "Jim," and I knew the foreign minister had recently stepped down because of a scandal and there were many scandals in Albania. "Jim, the guys in the politburo of the socialist party, that is still basically the offshoot of the communist party and while they were more corrupt than communists they still had many of the trappings including the politburo. "They were sitting here and we decided that our friend Islami should be the foreign minister but nobody wants to vote for him unless we get Washington's green light." So, can you get a green light from Washington? So, I said hold on. And you do the immediate mental thing. Nobody in Washington is going to understand this. Islami is a good guy. I have got no problem with him. Nobody in Washington will know this. If I go back there they will go crazy, smoke will pour out of their ears and they will start doing debates. Someone will do the research because there are many Albanian Americans and many people that have one or another connection with Albania. Somebody will come up with something against him. It will tie the whole thing up, so obviously this is stupid. So that took about two seconds of a pause. So I then told Fatos. "I will check with Washington and I will be back in a couple of hours." So anyway, I had a whiskey or two. Of course, I didn't call Washington. I called him back and said, "Fine." Fatos you got a green light. My regards to foreign Minister Islami." That is another classic example of U.S. diplomacy at work.

But then there was one other thing. As I said we were trying to get Albania into NATO and into the EU as part of the strategy that once they are anchored in these institutions they won't go back to their bad old ways. Now the example of Cyprus and Greece as Balkans states that did make it into the EU and the case of Greece obviously for me in NATO did not necessarily portend a happy outcome to all of this but it was all we had, and it was pretty powerful. The Albanians like everyone else wanted to be part of NATO and they certainly wanted to be part of the EU. The EU had all of these formal programs and such but it had a total inability and this is just a point again at the EU it is one of my themes. It is important because that is the only other serious leader of the Western liberal enlightenment world and you add up all of Europe and you get a population 50-100% larger than ours and a GDP a bit larger but it punches way below its weight, and I saw an example of that in Albania. As I said they had formal programs and they had telephone book level picayune. Little do you know the temperature of which a fire burning oven can cook whatever you do with pizza dough and that kind of thing. One and on and everybody had to adhere to these EU acquis. Les acquis. And it was just disgusting and

discouraging but my job was to help them do it. So finally, I got so frustrated because the Albanians would keep going to, and they had to keep dealing with, the EU mission, the Commission who were actually in charge of monitoring them. I had experiences in Turkey as well. So, while they had lots of people pointing fingers at them and setting standards and coming in and poking them they had no champion. They had no coach.

So finally, I went out and with one or another, I didn't have a lot of money but I had many different sources of money. I had the USAID mission there. I had military funds of various kinds and very creative people in using them. So, I went out and hired a retired British diplomat who had been the DCM in Belgrade and who had worked repeatedly in Brussels for the EU. To be the American liaison to the Albanian EU ministry because incredibly the EU hadn't sent anybody to be the EU liaison to the EU ministry to help the EU ministry lead the way towards entering the EU. I just got tired of the whole goddamn thing and decided I could do this myself. So, maybe I could set an example. Of course, you can't set an example with the EU because it is a headless monster. But the guy was wonderful. It was fun to have him on our staff at all of our meetings and so anyway we put an awful lot of effort into that. We put an awful lot of effort into corruption and the legal system. I had what are called ICITAP for justice reform and police training missions out there so much of the mission was involved in kind of ground up building Albania towards, if you will, European standards.

And it was a very happy assignment. I met a young lady who was the daughter of a contact who was one of the biggest businessmen, most successful, a guy named Ruka who ran the biggest Mercedes Benz dealership in the Balkans. Mercedes Benz was particularly popular in Albania because Hoxha was afraid of a military intervention given that we almost pulled it off in 1948 or 1949 except the British spy, the famous one. I forgot his name. They guy whose father was the great middle eastern Arabist. Anyway, he had alerted Moscow and Moscow alerted the Albanians, so after that Hoxha was really paranoid. So, he kept the roads in disrepair and wouldn't let them run straight so you couldn't land gliders or C-130's on the roads. So, the roads were in terrible shape and the only car that would work would be a Mercedes Benz, so they were everywhere. I used to amuse myself driving around Albania which is beautiful by counting how many cars in a row coming down the road were Mercedes and I got up to ten once. But anyway, I knew this guy had several daughters, one named Dardana who I invited to a party and introduced to my son. She is now my daughter-in-law. So anyway, that is another plus out of Albania and then the whole thing landed with a bang when the Department of State decided it was time to pull me out of Albania and send me off to Iraq, but that is another story.

Q: OK, we will continue.

JEFFREY: We may actually finish this thing before I pass away.

Q: Today is July 14. We are resuming our interview with Ambassador Jim Jeffrey, and we are going to cover an _____ on personnel and administrative issues.

JEFFREY: Ok in looking back over my career with three tours as a DCM, three tours as an ambassador and a tour as a deputy consul general of a large consulate and certain other jobs, deputy in the near eastern bureau, deputy of the national security council, I managed large organizations. Before I came into the military I had gotten a master's degree in business administration and of course I had been in the army where I had a number of command positions. So, in fact I was actually put into the admin cone when I came in and eventually as I mentioned earlier transferred out of it. But I'd developed relatively unorthodox views of management in the Department of State that began when I was first trying to figure out whether I wanted to stay in the management cone, and then it developed over time the Department of State began to focus on its foreign service officer training and career development and ever more on management. I have major problems with that because I think we get it wrong in two ways. First of all, we impose on the foreign service a management model which while it is legitimate, common and assumed to be management, actually it doesn't fit our core business which is foreign policy. Secondly, we fail to recognize that there is a management model for foreign policy which we dismiss by basically splitting the difference between substance, that is what the political section chief does at the foreign ministry, and management, that is kind of running the post and everything else. Of course, actually there is significant management involved in what that political officer is doing, what he or she is doing or what the USAID team is doing and what the economic section is doing and the press officer. That is basically why we have all those people out there. So, let me start with the basic model.

Management science and management application particularly in the U.S. government is based on the Tayloresque model of rational management that was developed in the early 20th century by Frederick Taylor and then popularized by Ford Motor company and its mass production on assembly lines; the basic model of this sees bureaucratic institutions as the vehicle to produce whatever the goal is of that governmental economic, social or other institution. We could talk about schools; we could talk about the military which is a major user of this Tayloresque world view and certainly the U.S. government for reasons I have gone into. First of all, you have a place where the work is done, the sales floor, the assembly line, the consulate section windows, the cubicles in the admin section where dozens or in many embassies hundreds of people essentially move formal paper around. Secondly you have in the military you have in the front line the infantry positions, the gun pits and that kind of thing. Typically, most of that work is done by relatively junior, in essence first line personnel.

Q: Let me ask you one quick thing about the military management organization. Yes, the point end of the spear is what the military does. But for every one artillery person, infantry person, there is at least one back up at the base in Washington running the logistics and resources. Is that always at the back of the minds of the captains, majors, colonels and people in the field?

JEFFREY: Oh very much. And I am simplifying things in fact, for example I said the infantry trenches or fox holes, gun pits, but also the truck drivers that are moving everything forward. They are basically seen as a set of things. The army splits it down into combat, combat support, and combat service support as the military does everything rationally, but again this is the formation of the bureaucratization of the military which began only with Napoleon and the French system. That is where you got uniform divisions of a uniform number of brigades and uniform corps with uniform procedures and uniform equipment that they could cover.

This is all Napoleonic thinking. Military operational, that is at the operational level of the military, did not focus on that before the end of the 18th century. A lot of that flowed in as you got automated procedures and also standardization because about the same time the cotton gin and other things gave them the idea of parts that could be mass manufactured to a standard. All of this came together a century later with Taylor. So, the idea is you have got most of the stuff that produces the result of the organization. The purpose of the organization is done in these specific places, many of them in many cases very large numbers and in most cases lots of people. Largely entry level junior folks. Now some of them are highly expert. For example, if we are using the medical industry you are talking about nurses, physician's assistants and even physicians who are the first line deliverers of medical care which is the purpose of hospitals and medical institutions. They have had a lot of medical training. But still the model holds. In some cases, there is tremendous flexibility. For instance, on the sales floor selling a product is more than just going through a checklist. It involves a certain engagement of personality. So, there are certain deviations from this but for the most part the model holds.

The third thing is with these exceptions what the people do are laid out in protocols, regulations, procedures, and other more or less formal things. When the yellow wickiwidget comes down the assembly line, you are to take the green miniwidget and stick it on the left side. If a red wickiwidget comes down you are to take the orange one and do it on the other side. The same thing, in fact the best two examples in the foreign service that I learned early on because I took this very seriously. One is the checklist for determining if Almed Al Hajibi or Ali al Hajibi or Abu Achmed comes in and says my son is actually an American citizen. There is a checklist or at least there used to be in the consul's handbook, very complicated, that you go through, when the father was born, and how many years the father spent in the United States, where the kid was born and on and on. It leads you to a specific answer. Your job is to go through that formula accurately and verify the information and you get to the ending. In a way, you are functioning like a computer functions. Another example, after I went through both the GSO and the budget and fiscal course back in 1978. I decided I would combine the two and restructure the course and build it around one document, the purchase document. Because the 20 or 25 blocks in the purchase document and the four or five signatures required track the entire logistical, financial, operational actions of the Department of State under government regulations to buy something so you get all of these things and each of them required X prerequisites and checking this and that. That is what you basically do at all of these levels.

The fourth thing is above this core working level you had a superstructure of bureaucracies of management. It goes up as a pyramid and at each level you have fewer managers with different responsibilities. The first level is typically first line managers. They worry about pure efficiency. Is Joey at his or her desk? Are these procedures being carried out faithfully or is somebody cheating? Are they taking money under the counter to sell these and this kind of thing? At higher levels you start getting into efficiency. Is there any way to streamline our operations? How is our flow through in the waiting area? That is typically second or third level management. At higher levels there will be basic questions about is the whole thrust of what we are doing worthwhile--not so much about government but non-government things. Should we be doing this totally differently? At this level for example the U.S. military totally re-did how we looked at fighting an insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan and before that in Vietnam at very high levels and at the very top there is more in the private sector than in the government sector, the basic strategy where do you go, who are your main clients, who pays the money to keep the organization going and how do you keep that money flowing.

Q: Now here a quick question. Based on your experience, you count some military and some civilian, particularly foreign service experience, when a lower level of management comes up with a great idea that really ought to have come from the next higher level. Two things happen. One is that individuals should get that as a kudos on their evaluation because part of being evaluated and being promoted is demonstrating you can operate at the next higher level. On the other hand, there is a level of discomfort that the manager who was supposed to think of this didn't. To what extent does that play out or to what extent is there friction in your experience on that kind of situation.

JEFFREY: The weaker the manager at the higher level the more likely he or she will be nervous about any initiative from people below. That is a basic problem with all management and leadership models, the quality of the people. As you go up, interpersonal quality kicks in. I will talk about that more when I come to leadership, but it is a very important problem because of the way things are structured. Now the U.S. government takes a particularly Tayloresque approach to organization, and the reason is first of all it does not have an outside standard of performance which is profit or in the case of the military winning ground and holding ground. That kind of thing generating enemy casualties and preventing your own casualties. It's basically the process is what you do. Therefore, it is very focused on it. Secondly, the very fact that you are doing even the most mundane things but certainly deciding whether little Ahmed is an American citizen or not is an act by an official of the U.S. government that has an official impact on a potential U.S. Citizen. Therefore, it is serious stuff from a legal, moral, and political standpoint and thus it has to be done very carefully.

Secondly through the anti-deficiency act, the extraordinary structure of inspectors general and GAO and other auditing of federal government systems and most important the anti-deficiency act which means that any action taken by a government official which can be claimed to be costing money including that person's work because that person is salaried must be justified by some law that at one point or another obligated the money. I may be butchering the specifics of the anti-deficiency act but I think I have the theory. Ok

that is the basic model. That model works for 90% of the people in the Department of State. It is the model for the consular business; it is the model for the admin business; it is the model for much of public affairs, most but not all of DS and of course it is the model for the civil service except for a very few people who are in the policy business in the Department of State. Thus, the vast majority of the Department of State. So the Department of State is very much wedded to this. Now the problem is twofold here. One is that is not what we are doing. That is what the GSA does. Largely, and this gets a bit political, something like the Department of the Interior basically is managing congressional programs to standards established by Congress established by good management, established by the collection of inspections and lawsuits and legal actions and all of that. We are in the policy business which is very different.

The problem here is twofold. The first one is that nobody recognizes that there is also an alternative management model for policy management. For years the examples— I will use two examples and I had them confirmed recently. One is an international law firm management model. The other is and I started thinking about this in the 90's when she was really hot, Madonna's entourage. But I will come back to this in a second. The idea is the bottom line work of the institution, what does it exist for. What makes it survive, I am talking about an international law firm right now. Is the work of the top leadership? The top dogs not only are responsible for the whole organization like the CEO of GE but they are also the people who are the performers. They are the first line guys and girls. They are the people who come up with the policies, argue and persuade the U.S. government, well I am shifting now. They are the people who basically have to go into court. Or have to do the guiding of other people who go into court. They are the people sitting in the middle when you do mergers and acquisitions. They are the people deciding what the major thrust of the firm should be, whether you should go into a case; I actually encountered this with a major such firm supporting a billionaire Lebanese guy who was under U.S. Treasury sanctions. These are the kinds of things that you have to do, and they are done, trust me, by the very highest levels.

Now the rest of the organizations are supporting these guys. Law clerks, junior partners, researchers and of course the guy down in the mail room if you haven't contracted that out and the security guy at the door and the receptionist. They are all part of the team inc but the basic work is being done by the top-level people. They also do the management function as we understand it in the Taylor model but their main focus is on working with their clients, and they are the stars, very similar to Madonna.

OK, she is a big operation with costume people and transport people and security people and agents and press people and makeup artists, and voice guys and all of that. It could be hundreds of people in her extended world, but only one person does the bottom line work of Madonna Inc. and that is Madonna. The reason that this is interesting is I have had this analogy for a long time and applied it to the foreign service which I will get to, and I was in Berlin at a conference and I ran into a guy from an international law firm. I mentioned to him how foreign policy operations at an embassy or a bureau are very similar to that and very different from classic management. And he said you know, it is a funny thing because in my spare time I am a member of a rock band and we are very successful. It is

a very extensive operation and it is the same thing. I offered the similarity to a law firm where us at the top are also the people who are doing the bottom line work in the institution in the roles that we play in the band. We need all these other people. If the guitar is not prepared right you are not going to sound good. But in the end, we are in a competitive business and our ability to succeed is to be better than other people and that is what we who are playing do.

Q: Quick question here. One other last element of an international law firm is also to drum up new business. Is there an analog of that in the foreign service?

JEFFREY: Yes, in the policy business. That is where you get to because that is the creative side. Now that creative side exists in the Tayloresque world too. But I will get to the difference in a second because it is very important in realizing why we have gone so terribly astray in our focus on management as we see it in the foreign service. Now the embassy and this basically came to me when I was first in Albania, and I will get to that. At the end of the day there would be weekends where I had to work because my Albanian counterparts were working and all I had was my security detail and my cell phone. The security detail was full of smart guys who had been doing this for a long time. They went to school; they actually know a lot of the politicians because it is a small country. They had a lot of insight on what is going on in the country. They read the papers far better than our political section did because they were native speakers. And I found I could bounce ideas off of them as we were riding along say we were deploying a security force because it was still a pretty flaky place. They would say, Oh Sherry over there, he knows those guys in the north and so I could find on my weekends I was pretty much a one-man act with a little help from these guys. It wasn't a big embassy and most of the time they all were doing great work and they were helping me. But it was amazing what I was doing on my own. That is the way it is with an embassy and with a few exceptions in a bureau in the United States. It is the top people who have the key contacts within our own government and with the other governments in political parties and international institutions and all of that. It is the relationships they have developed, not unlike law firms with their clients, with their competitors to some degree with the people actually arguing and taking the side against them and such. It is all just played back and forth. So, the personal relationships of the top people and how you play it are crucially important. The other thing is and this gets into creativity.

You have a tremendous role as assistant secretary responsible for regions. Say you are an ambassador to some place, say some place I wasn't, Korea. Basically, beyond one or two essential core things that flow from American foreign policy, or experience and to the extent any administration enunciates it, much of what you do to manage that relationship is your own business. You know that you are not going to be able to deliver everything that Washington wants. Your job is to figure out what these things these guys can do and what are the things Washington really needs. Secondly you have got to figure out what your local guys want from Washington and what they need from Washington. You are constantly trading these things off. This is classic high-level management. Using resources which are personal relationships, quid pro quo in constant negotiations with a series of actors in the host country or the region and a very large number of actors,

Combatant commanders are a biggie. Various people back in Washington because the needs and wants are infinite and the resources, that is your time, your persuasive ability, the calls you can make on people to do things they don't want to do for you but they will do it because it is you, are limited, sometimes very limited and so that is management.

And your use of people. Because you have rather like an international law firm has, experts who advise you on the specifics of the issue, but not the overall approach. Same thing as the guy who does your guitar. He can probably play it as well as you. So, you have got expertise on your staff that you have to draw upon. The other thing where the analogy with a band falls apart, but it stays with a law firm and the foreign service. The other thing is part of what you are doing with those people who are supporting you is not just drawing on their knowledge and using their shoe leather to go out and track information down and such. You are training those people and you are testing those people to see if they are going to advance to be the next generation in your institution. So, they are all apprentices as well as support people. That is not the way it is in the Tayloresque world. People are brought in laterally at every level and while upward mobility exists to one or another degree it is not the expected outcome.

In our business, it is the expected outcome. That is the whole foreign service up or out. That is what it is all about. This model is inherent but it is totally ignored in the foreign service. Now this has two impacts on us. I will get to why I am actually a fan of caring a lot about management in a second. It sounds like I just want to tell ambassadors to ignore, never get the admin officer or your management counselor on your schedule. Quite the contrary. But in a different way. The first thing is we need to teach people that substance is a management issue. Many of the things are somewhat similar you just have to look at things in a different way and realize that they is far more creativity, far more initiative, but that it still requires management. How you pitch Washington. Charley Ries, I will name a guy I know very well. He was the first guy who told me and he was a really good manager. Everybody who has ever seen him in any of his jobs including in Baghdad where he was running Crocker's brain-trust to the PDAS in EUR. Now Rand is no dummy and that is why he is executive vice president.

He said that when Washington got up every morning, Treasury, USTR, and the State Department all looked at news and looked in their papers on what the Brits were doing and anything in the broad economic realm that we had, the Bank of England and all of that. But they also would find an email or a cable from the economic section of embassy London explaining what had happened in the last four or five hours, why it is important, what we should do and what we should say, every day. That is management. That is managing processes, that is as much management at a much higher level than going through the checklist to find out if little Ahmed is really an American citizen. It is much harder, it is much more creative and has more impact but it is also management.

We ignore this completely. So, when we talk to our foreign service generalists, the ones who we hire into cones and think they are going to be rising to the top, or people in the other cones also because they rise to the top too. Peter Bodde is on his third embassy.

Look, there is management involved in policy substance, but it is a different kind of management. Instead we try to push this kind of management work particularly as DCMs and ambassadors focusing on this substantive agenda into the square hole of classic management.

The first thought that comes up is let's take General Electric or even Uber. OK they have to be creative. They have to have a business model, they have to stick to it. They have to have a strategy; all that stuff is highly creative and all of that. But by god they have to manage their supply chain. They have to manage their personnel costs. They have to manage their overall operating costs. They have to find ways to motivate their people. If they don't they die vis a vis the competition even if they have a better strategic model, even if they have better technology, even if they are better at pitching at bringing top level clients because they won't be able to deliver as well, so the core intensive management of basic elements of management the processes, procedures, TTPs and protocols, because they take time and time is money when you have got thousands of people applying them as we all know when we go through the drudgery of, oh I have been waiting to say this, a travel voucher.

OK, business kind of banned travel vouchers the way we do because it takes too much time and it costs too much. So, they have to manage that intensely and that kind of gets worked into the idea of management, but it doesn't work in an embassy. Your budget has nothing to do, now I am speaking to you Mr. Ambassador, Mr. DCM, in your primary job as ambassador and probably your most important job of any job as DCM is ensuring that your management of the policy processes is going right. The budget has nothing to do with it buddy other than if you screw it up bad enough it will distract you from that meeting at the foreign ministry. I will get to where distractions come in.

Basically, it won't make you any better if you have got a really great budget. It can get you in trouble but it won't make you any better. Same thing with managing personnel. The people you most need for your policy process frankly you shouldn't, it is evil but you can treat most of them like dirt as they are so highly motivated. They are so ambitious and so want to be you, the sooner the better, they will suck it up and march on. That is sad but true. Now what this means is we are basically telling our people to focus on things that aren't really relevant to what Washington expects them to do, so that they go from being Ambassador in Albania to being Ambassador in Turkey. As opposed to Ambassador in Albania to Ambassador to gosh I can't think of a country, a consul general some place. That is what you are trying to avoid. You are on the upward track.

Now therefore and because we don't make this clear, ambassadors and DCMs try hard to figure out the mysteries of the budget which is very bureaucratic, all of the personnel and all of those various procedures and such and they have to care about that because it impacts on morale. Morale is not unimportant at a post. It is not as important as people think but it is not unimportant. We stress this so much that we confuse them. It is really like black and white, a totally different world. Again you are the head of Uber or GE. It is

listening to your supply chain guy droning on but you god damn better listen to him whether he or she is boring or not because that is vital to your success. The supply chain of getting furniture to your post is not really going to impact, I am sorry this is heresy here, but it is true. It is not really going to impact the quality of a relationship with an important ally.

Q: A very positive example here is the DCM I had. I was in a post. The post was told there will be no increase in funds this year whatsoever. This essentially means because of inflation there will be a slight decrease. What he said let's not look at this as a disaster and we are going to now not be able to do things. Let's take a second look at our mission and figure out what with the funds we have we really need to do. He managed to turn it around and I think that actually did help with ____.

JEFFREY: Now the first of my exceptions is there are some funds that embassies get, and there are a few embassies like Baghdad that are in the tens of millions, billions that are relevant to your policy work. Assistance funds, refugee funds, emergency funds, FMF. The FMF system. Boy there is another bureaucratic follow 89 steps. Managing that I watched my ambassador Mark Parris who thought so we could get things in three years instead of five. Delivered to the Turks. That kind of management that is bottom line policy relevant. That is an exception.

There are some more exceptions that are very important and you add all these exceptions up you are going to see that a DCM and an ambassador need to spend a lot of time on management. But it is still management by exception. The Tayloresque model, the Uber CEO and the GE CEO do not manage the bulk of their budgetary and operational things by exception. They can't, they still themselves have to stay on top and manage that stuff very closely.

First of all, as I said, any substantive programs. They are not in their details vital but they accomplish things you want to have accomplished in and of themselves. Election monitoring. You want it to be internationally recognized. That is an important thing that the president wants for country X because we put a lot into their return to democracy blah blah. So you want it to go well. The details are that you are not competing with three other entities that are doing election monitoring and the best one gets all the money and all the credit. So, it is not management under conditions of competition which is a far more difficult and much more creative form of management. This is managing processes where you can be sloppy. You can be sloppy in this stuff but you still have to make sure you get the bottom line results to the extent you can define bottom line results.

The second thing is trading capital among the resources you have. It is not as good as a dinner in the White House. It is not as good as a trip by the secretary of State, but it is still good to be able to deliver these widgets to these guys, you know re-equip the military's machine gun holdings and that kind of thing. This all makes an impact. And makes you the go-to guy or girl in your country if it is important. So that is the first exception.

The second exception is because we are a federal agency we are operating under these very stringent management and regulatory rules. You have to watch carefully the violation of regulations and funds problems of any sort.

There are two things I learned in the army. One is if it is a big enough error you can make it once and you are finished. Even if it is not your fault and you never even saw it. It is like this destroyer that was recently smashed into the sea off Japan. The captain was asleep in his berth. I flunked a patrol once in ranger school when I was asleep and the guy said: look, there was nothing you could have done to avoid this. You would have flunked the patrol if you didn't go to sleep because leaders have to sleep. But sometimes if your unit fails even though it is not your fault, you are the responsible one, that is why you flunked the patrol. It is the same thing. You are responsible if it is a big thing. You go back to square one.

The second thing is you have even more of a problem if you have a pattern of abuse, questions and other things and you do not respond to that pattern. Then very quickly if the pattern blows up into a very big thing then you are toast. Because then you should have done something. But even if the pattern continues on and somebody looks into it and investigates and finds out that you just didn't care, that is wrong because you are responsible, not your management counselor. I am the consular section chief. These procedures are being very sloppily applied and it may not result in an Egyptian terrorist getting into the United States, but it might result in something very embarrassing so you have to be on the alert. Secondly, personnel. While it is not essential the way it is in other organizations maintaining good morale is the gift that keeps giving.

First of all, people will be responsive ,even the most ambitious, I can take it. I will work 20 hours a day but guys and girls still will work better if they feel that they have a fair boss, if people do care about the houses they live in or at least the furniture will eventually arrive or at least somebody is monitoring the six-month ship transit of furnishings and cares about this. People, that will make them work better, and on the margins your bottom line substantive operations will be better. More importantly you owe it to these people because you can do this. It doesn't take that much time. It is very important and it is a morale issue.

Third are the very tricky personnel issues. Now this gets into the first or the second if you exclude the substantive aid and FMF one, so let's say this is a fourth one. Personnel issues where you have got abuse of power. Sexual harassment or sexual dalliances that violate procedure like boss and subordinate are poison to the post but just one step less are discrimination on the basis of race, creed, or color. While there is a huge superstructure of department policies, institutions, structures and other things that you have to turn to and they are monitoring you every second to make sure that you don't screw up on this. So that is very important. You get this wrong, you get a black mark against yourself in Washington and it is very hard to cleanse yourself of that, and the post will get a black mark. Secondly it has a tremendously deleterious effect on the morale of people because people hate unfairness, and most of this gets into unfairness.

Now another more amorphous problem is the essentially bad or abusive or prejudiced management of one's subordinates where you can't put your finger on it; not because he doesn't like her because she is a female or she doesn't like him because of his sexual orientation, but rather they just don't like that person and they just make life difficult. That is very hard to spot because it is in things like the assignments people are given, the nature of the write up on EERs and such. But that is something that to the extent you can intervene you have a responsibility because these are your people. While the Tayloresque model does not apply. We are not just machine-like creatures. I am out here to generate a better bilateral relationship. We have a moral obligation to people who have taken that oath along with us and are part of our profession to insure when we can make a difference that we are making a difference in how they are treated, how they live, how the chain of command is treating them.

So that is the next thing: Emergencies of any sort. That is something where top-level leadership is absolutely critical. I have worked everywhere in FSI and with the department on my emergency action cards, on my recommendation to change the EAC by having more organization and management of the EAC process because I don't think we have thought it out. I think we are making a huge mistake by turning it over to DS. When you get a real emergency that is not something you can turn over to DS,

Q: Everybody has to be involved.

JEFFREY: It is not just that everybody has to be involved because it is so big. It is not just everybody has to be involved because it is your post and you can sink with it. It is also that most of the work is not going to involve DS. What you have got is American business out there that will be impacted. American citizens that will be impacted, military teams out there who might be exposed or who might be arrested or might be cut off from the capital. They are impacted. If you have to do an evacuation of one of your constituent posts you don't go just to your DS guy, you turn to your admin counselor. Meanwhile you are doing all of this typically because your host government has some sort of problem, like one has just collapsed or it doesn't like you anymore. That means you have a hell of a problem with your host government in the midst of this problem. You wouldn't have a crisis in the first place and managing your relationship with that host government including what you can sell what you are doing to the host government like issuing a travel advisory saying, are you out of your mind, American citizens, for wanting to come to Bedonkey with what is going on. You have got to find a way to make that palatable to your host government. That is the political section so it involves everybody.

Thus, my one concern in pitching this "forget about the Tayloresque model, it doesn't apply" mantra. The one place it does apply is in a crisis. There you have to manage every single part of the operation. I don't know if when we were talking about Kuwait if I mentioned we were doing an evacuation and I went to sleep in the middle of the night because I had been trained that you can't just stay up overnight. The dingbat that I left in

charge because we were running 24 hours, opted to take a State Department aircraft to come in and fly us out rather than rely on the private commercial aircraft which were still flying. I would have never done that because I know what we were likely to get, and what we got was even worse. There has to be a total focus on that. That is another reason why you have got to put a bit more time into management functions, I am excluding DS we will get to that.

Management functions, post morale and other things even if it is really not all that germane to your bottom line job like an international law firm. I am an importer and don't have to worry that much about an emergency. Except the ones who were in the twin towers did and I think it was not Goldman Sachs but the other one, JP Morgan, because I knew the guy. Rick Rescorla was the security guy. A friend of a friend of mine from Vietnam who got everybody out because he didn't believe as a former combat soldier he didn't believe that it made sense to hold in place especially after the 1993 attack, and he went in there and got 2000 people out and then he went up to make sure he didn't leave anybody behind, and died. That is the kind of management you have to do in an emergency. Anyway, when you have a crisis everybody has to do intensive management of everything. So therefore it isn't a bad idea to maintain a good relationship with your management counselor and be supportive of high morale and be supportive of a disciplined, in the military you can feel it, a crisp operation where people are not constantly trying to figure out ways of trying to get around the regulations, where they are not spending half their time at the water fountain bitching about their totally clueless front office and all of that. You have just got to realize that the day in day out stuff of the consular section and the admin section and public diplomacy, getting the word out, running the libraries and whatever they do is not all that directly germane to what you are doing but don't forget crises.

Finally, security. Security is very important for two reasons. First it is the life and death of everybody, secondly if you are not careful, worrying too much about the life and death of everybody will turn your post over to your security people. And the most obvious example is well then nobody can go out to the ministry of finance because we have to have a six-man security detail and there are only two of them at the post and this kind of thing. Far beyond that, even basic things like locks on doors and procedures getting in and all of this. You have got to manage the security section to make sure it doesn't get carried away because it pays no price for increasing the security requirements but it does pay a price if something does go wrong and it hasn't prevented it. That is why you have to manage it. The other thing is once there is a procedure in place, whether you agreed to it or you didn't agree to it but they just went ahead and did it because the DCM agreed to it or you have given them authority and all of that, you have to adhere to it. One of the things that I did as an ambassador was I always wore my badge. I didn't have to wear my badge when I walked into post one. They had my picture up there and so they made sure to salute me but I always wore that badge because I figured when I was wearing that badge everybody in the post could say OK why is he wearing that badge. He is wearing that badge because the RSO wants us to wear the badge. He is saying he has to do it and so if he does it I should do it or he is going to expect me to do it. You can imagine what would happen any time I saw somebody who didn't have a badge. Whereas it is kind of

hard if you don't have a badge because you are too important. There is a whole issue of thinking you are too important. There is a whole issue of thinking you are too important to wear the badge. It is very hard to chew somebody out for not having a badge if you don't have a badge. So anyway, these are all basic leadership things but they are still very important.

You still have a lot of management things you have to worry about. But the key thing is you have to realize there is a whole other approach to management that it is essential you get right or you will fail the core reason to be out there which is policy promotion and advancement. Now leadership, the other thing is both the institution that we are housed in, FSI and the Department in general basically flop around on leadership and they are just so enthused about leadership.

Q: One second. Before you go on to leadership one last question about management, particularly substantive management. When everything is important, nothing is important. When you are getting cables from Washington where you are told we have another wonderful initiative and then in two weeks another wonderful initiative. And then that one, and you know that in Washington what is going on is somebody is letting some deputy assistant secretary, probably a political appointee have their little moment. How about an initiative signed by the secretary of state that goes out to every single post in that bureau? As an ambassador or as a substantive manager, take a second to address that. I am sure you have seen it.

JEFFREY: It is at all sorts of levels and in really big posts like Baghdad you have life and death things. I went to the President twice, once on, I will get into this later but it was how we would handle a terrorist, he went along with me but he was not happy about it. I had to convince him that it didn't hurt him in any way because he was very concerned about that. Another time we ruined his Christmas vacation in 2011. I wasn't very sympathetic because my Christmas vacation had always been ruined. I got a 36-hour vacation that year in Vienna, not Vienna but Salzburg. Over whether our military people at the embassy after the troops had left could be deployed at what had been our bases and were now FMS centers where we had thousands of people from Lockheed and other contractors working. We had basically military contingents to be responsible for the security that the DOD actually paid for. And would run the helicopter operations, I mean essentially, we were still running bases, and I needed the military to provide the military infrastructure to do that.

Washington DOD lawyers decided that the Vienna convention didn't cover them, so I went out and negotiated an agreement and sent that back. They still were stubborn, but fortunately I had the support of the Lieutenant General who was in charge of the military mission and we just rammed it down their throats. So, you have to pick the really important things in the relationship and I will get into that a bit with all three, Albania, Turkey and Iraq, because that is when you really get to do that as the ambassador. If you do the really important things right, Washington will still lash out at you when something bad happens. I have an example of that in Baghdad that made it into the news. But it

doesn't matter because everybody just says oh he is a bit ornery. OK it doesn't matter. The question is does the president want you to stay there or the secretary or doesn't he. Or does the secretary want you to extend or does she count the days until you are out of there; it is not going to be because you do everything right.

It is going to be because on those things that they really need to go right, you don't let them not go right. Now one thing that is a problem is the lack of discipline in Washington. And you will get this something like probably an example of something that did occur. When I got to Ankara in 2008 the Turks were in very important negotiations with Assad and at that time it was Netanyahu, on the Golan heights. Very important. It blew up soon thereafter when the Israelis went into Gaza. But it was very important and of course we would get demarches from Washington about what to tell the Turks about this thing. It is very important because believe me if it didn't work this would be let me see, we were in the last gasp of the Bush administration and then the first gasp of the Obama administration and whoever was in charge would have taken credit for it. So, there was a lot of interest and you would have these cables and as you said they would have 30 talking points because to get the damn cable out everybody would have to put in their little piece.

It would be a mix of the actual important thing that people like Dennis Ross in the Obama administration wanted or the secretary, Condi wanted in the Bush administration. Then whoever it was who was responsible for left handed people having their full rights in the third world kicking in because there is a report out from somewhere in Amnesty International that the Syrians are not treating left handed people as well as they should and this is an opportunity for Erdogan to intervene on behalf of us the next time he sees Assad to talk about war or peace on the Golan Heights. I mean who knows, I am only barely exaggerating here.

Then the other thing besides the irrelevant and totally off the wall things, there is also an awful lot of sucking of eggs in these instructions and it will start with something like, for us to say to the foreign leader: "We know that you understand. We know that you care," even worse. "We are sure that you know what the Turkish people expect," I mean you get things like that like you are going to tell the head of government particularly one who has been more or less elected like Erdogan, that we Americans are telling you what your people want? We do this all of the time. Then there will be little details, duck eggs, kinds of things that will be irrelevant and he or she could figure out in any case but they are just all jammed in there because everybody is just so nervous. Wait a second, maybe the Turks will forget that there are still 200 meters, what is the lake out there on the Golan Heights that I was involved in negotiations with? Tell Erdogan not to forget that we have got an initiative underway that we have actually deployed a paper on those 200 meters of that and Yeech.

So, what I would do once I gained some self-confidence as ambassador is I would call in the officer in the post who was working on whatever issue, let's say this one whoever is working Turkish Middle Eastern Relations, it would be someone in the political section. I would say, "OK, you are the notetaker and he or she would be happy that I am not going

to take the political section chief. OK, I am going to raise just four of these 27 points in the instruction cable. You pick the four. I am going to take you with me. Even if you screw up, I don't think you will, and I would give him or her an evil grin. And off they would go. I did this many times. I have never seen a foreign service officer not get it right. These are in many cases FS-3 or junior officers. They may have had some help from seniors but I think a lot of them decided I am not going to tell anybody I am just going to go do this. This is cool. I am going to do it. It is actually like me giving the demarche not the ambassador anyway.

And actually, I worked for an ambassador. As I mentioned Ambassador Strausz-Hupé who kind of let me do this to the foreign minister, so I wanted to give them their moment of glory. I wanted to teach them that what you get from Washington is far more than we can ever deliver and it is your job to figure out what is important and nobody will tell you. You have got to figure it out and then once you figure it out you have got to make it happen.

Again, this is management, but it is a different kind of management. It is managing Washington. It is managing the local host country. OK, leadership. I won't say much on leadership because there is not much to say about it. It is really important because to do high level substantive management requires a lot of what we call leadership. To respond to a real crisis and there can be diplomatic crises jihadis coming in over the wall. There is also that of course. So there are times when leadership is really important. The problem is we can train people in management, either the Tayloresque hand eye motion kind of management. Or it is a little bit more difficult, you can train people in both high level management and management principles that would apply to conducting foreign policy.

But you can't train leadership because leadership is basically inherent. It is basically a mix of personal character, high level success skills is what I would call it and interpersonal skills. They are amorphous and it isn't like you have to go down the list and have all of them. It isn't like the efficiency report where you evaluate this person in the 12 traits that make up a leader. You can be really lousy, for example I will give you what my list would be. Character, motivation, and empathy; under policy success skills, it would be high level strategic thinking, judgment, which is a lower level but very important; now that I know where I want to go. I want to go that way rather than those other ways. And thirdly, decisiveness. I am going to make a decision right now on which way I am going to go and I will hold to it. And on interpersonal skills, extroversion, and eloquence, basically the ability to explain and persuade to various audiences. Now the problem is you don't have to have all of them. Patton did not have much empathy. Some leaders are not very eloquent.

Motivation, integrity, decisiveness, high level, those are the most critical ones, some people are not extroverted. If you ever want to find a leader in the history of the foreign service it is George Kennan who is a leader to the Nth degree. He led and created our entire foreign policy for four decades.

He was not an extrovert. He was painfully shy. The worst thing in the world was he was the management counselor in Berlin when they were all interned in Bad Nauheim after Hitler declared war on us. He hated the whole experience. He goes into it in great detail in his biography. But he still was a great leader because you have to, basically of all those traits, work the ones that work for you. and essentially be seen as a winner by all the people around you. If you are perceived as a winner most of the people who are going to make a difference on Team Jeffrey or Team Talbot are going to be the ones who want to be winning and want to be seen with a winner and want to learn from that winner so they can become winners too.

I have seen it. He is a winner, it is going to work. That is why Patton succeeded as he was, slapper of soldiers as he was. He wasn't a soldier's general like Omar Bradley who was a leader in a different way. But as somebody said when Bastogne was surrounded, in the Battle of the Bulge, and a sergeant who had served in Patton's Third Army heard that Patton had suddenly reversed his army and was punching north from the south said, "It is OK, guys. We are going to make it." That is leadership.

So you can't train it. You can't even really develop it. You can hone it. You can figure out ways to make it more efficient. And combine the good skills right into the work you are doing, but it is basically there or it is not there, and this is true. Because it is not also related to the education your kids get at Phillips Exeter, and Harvard and all of that. Again, if they have those skills they will be better honed there than at the schools I went to, but at the end they are just going to be there or not. In the Department of State and the U.S. government because it has embedded in it a sense of personnel fairness. Leadership is something that is important to our highest level people, but everybody has to have an equal chance. So, we think we have to develop leadership like we develop 3-3 level language skills. And it doesn't work. You have got to go to whatever it takes to find the leaders, give them jobs, make them hone their leadership skills better and bubble to the top as there is no way people with no leadership skills are going to bubble to the top if you have a functional system because they shouldn't. They are taken out of the slot. We have more leaders in the Department of State than we have top level slots. In every tranche, in every A-100 class probably a third of the people in there have really good leadership skills..

Q: A question on leadership. If I use the word ruthless, to what extent do you think at least in the Foreign Service you need that in order to succeed. Now when I say ruthless I don't necessarily mean somebody who is a screamer and who chews somebody out. I am talking about somebody who makes very clear decisions and some of those decisions leave people out.

JEFFREY: Oh well you have to. It is absolutely, but ruthless implies because it is a negative word and you don't want that popping up in your ...

Q: NO, of course.

JEFFREY: Ambassador Jeffrey managed the post well but his ruthless personnel style raised eyebrows both within Washington and in the mission. Yeah that is a great line. Anyway, if ruthless is cruel and intentional it is something that is not a good thing.

I saved a guy's career once who was borderline ruthless. Once we had gotten into an argument when I was his superior. He simply would not back down on something that to me was just being ruthless and a bit cruel. But he had enough other good skills and I decided OK. He got in some trouble for his ruthlessness and I got him out of it. I said I am going to save this guy and I did and I am glad I did. He might have pissed off some people. He might have been ruthless. There might have been some tears on pillows. I don't care. This is a guy who we later repeatedly threw into some very tough places to do a very good job. So, but you have got to be careful if you are the manager because if the ruthless guy or girl gets too ruthless and there is a pattern of ruthlessness and you are aware of that pattern and just turned a blind eye to it because the person is so good in other areas. Then you are the one who will be blamed and rightly so. It is judgment.

Q: Now the other part of it is kind of ignoring elements or lesser initiatives that are the hobby horse of somebody and you are just not going to return calls on that.

JEFFREY: I mean there is this interpersonal relations sort of the way you deal with everybody, everybody is complex, and everybody has problems. My wife is as close to perfect as anybody I have ever seen, but I have to spend a fair amount of time ensuring that in those few small areas where there are minor frictions and differences with my worldview that those things don't become larger rather than smaller. Everybody knows that from their personal relationship with their significant other. It is the same thing.

You have got a significant other relationship with everybody you are dealing with. You are going to have things that are important to them, aren't important to you but you have to indulge them because otherwise you are going to be ruthless. You will be saying I don't want you spending a third of your time, political section chief, on labor unions. I don't give a crap about labor unions. They are dead in this country and have been dead for 20 years. But then this person cares about them. This person developed good contacts. My argument has always been a contact is a contact is a contact. The kind of people we tend to see they all have a lot to say about everything. At least you have got the contacts. I mean my worry is the person who has no contacts. So, if you want to spend time with your labor party that is OK. It is probably less valuable than spending time with the newest racist, nationalist party that is gaining in the polls but go to it as long as it doesn't overwhelm everything else. You have just started to be, well first of all you could be wrong. Maybe a labor union will be important. Certainly if I were telling my political section chief that in 1960 Warsaw I would have gotten the surprise of my life a few months later. So that is why they can be wrong. Just being ambassador or CEO doesn't mean you are right.

Secondly it is OK. This is another management problem, boy I have been on management for a long time, that people get wrong. Especially in substantive management. For some reason in regular management, Tayloresque management this is a bit understood. And I won't go into it much. There are things like diminishing return on investment and other things that to the extent you are formally trained you know you can never get it 99 and 44/100%. That is not the case with policy things.

With policy things, the tendency of Washington actors is to not take any risk. Not to try to do anything that would upset the apple cart. You can see this dramatically, and I think to some degree tragically with Obama's approach to the JCPOA I was a strong supporter. I have got a letter in the Washington Post trashing some of my best friends because they were taking a position that I thought was wrong on the JCPOA I supported. But you didn't have to have an extremely fine filter of anything we were doing against the Iranians or might do against the Iranians to insure that nothing would perturb the possibility of getting this because it was in their advantage and major diplomatic initiatives whether it is that or the fight against ISIS or the surge in Iraq these major muscle movements are kind of hard to stop when America is behind it and little tiny trivial things are not going to get in the way. But worrying about all these tiny trivial things screw up a lot of other important things and make you seem unreasonable.

Basically, it flows from this idea that you can control everything. You can't control everything. You can take some risks. It doesn't have to be perfect. A lot of that leads into the 30 talking point demarches and that kind of thing. What if we forget to tell that one thing and that is that nail for want of a shoe for want of a horse and so on. This kind of thinking just gums up all initiative, all decentralization, all crisp reaction and is insulting and stupid anyway. So that is enough for that talk on leadership. OK.

Iraq, and then when that happened I thought who knows, maybe they will come for me. Sure enough in the spring of 2004 I got a call from Frank Ricciardone, an old friend of mine. Frank and I had gone back and forth and continue to go back and forth in Turkey. Frank had been pulled out of the Philippines as ambassador to set up the transition from CPA under Jerry Bremer, Coalition Provisional Authority, to an embassy co-terminus with Iraq regaining its sovereignty.

A bit of background, after almost total international alienation of the United States for having gone in there, the UN Security Council gave America full power to run the place. Jerry Bremer's plan was actually to do it for five years, but the Iraqi governing council which was an advisory body, supposedly all of the basic anti-Saddam groups which we worked with before 2003 were essentially functioning as a quasi-government to the extent anything was being governed in Iraq-they basically were unhappy with that; Bremer told us that Sistani who is now one of the major figures in Iraq said, No we need elections we need a real government. We need a return to sovereignty. Washington saw the wisdom of that so helter-skelter we had to put in an embassy and go in. So, Ricciardone contacted me and asked if I would be willing to go on the list of possible DCMs? My obvious question was who is going to be the ambassador? He said "Well I don't know," and he gave me a list of names. Prominent among them because I still remember was John Bolton. A number of other people fairly similar to Bolton and then

one famous foreign service officer now retired, John Negroponte. I smiled and said, "OK I can have my cake and eat it too. I don't want to refuse a combat tour but I really don't want to go there. So, I will say yes of course but I will have to know who the ambassador is and he or she will have to be happy with me, and I--hint, hint-- with him/her."

About four days later I heard on the news that John Negroponte had been named the ambassador designate to Iraq. I immediately became extremely agitated. In fact, I took my blood pressure and it had gone up 20 points just on hearing John Negroponte. So, I knew what would happen because I knew Frank, and if anything, Frank is assiduous. So, I got a call later that day saying, "Hey you heard about Negroponte. OK, come to Washington and interview." So off I went. So I go in, and I meet John Negroponte whom I had never met before. It turned out he was our UN ambassador and we had a very good interview. We talked about Vietnam where John spent four years as Kissinger's Vietnam guy and one of the great authorities on the war. At the end there was one of these great pregnant pauses your listeners would understand. If they have ever done a job interview, as in what is the next step? So, I decided to ask what happens now? Negroponte looked at me and said, "What do you mean?" I said, "When are you going to decide?" He said, "Decide what?" I said, "Now from the list who are you going to pick?" Negroponte furrowed his brow and said, "What list? Frank Ricciardone told me there was only one person and it was you."

So anyway, I knew I had been had, and I knew it was really serious. I said, "Look, I have got a problem and the problem is my wife." It is not just her, she had some medical problems that had been dealt with but hey, she was still a bit shaky when she went to Albania and that was a huge sacrifice for her. I mean it is a difficult country to roam around in. This would be even worse because it is sudden. She can do almost anything. In fact, as I will get to later she eventually went to Iraq with me on a second tour. But she needed plenty of time to process it and we didn't have time. So, I told him, "Look, I don't know if this is going to work with my wife." So Negroponte smiled and said, "I have a plan." Come over to the Department of State this afternoon." So, I went over there and there is Negroponte and he brings me into Colin Powell's office. Powell, who had met me before and knew my background, immediately looked at me and said, "Ah Jeffrey, Airborne Ranger." Oh God this is going to be awful. "I understand we have got a problem with your wife right?" He had met Gudrun and they had gotten along very well when I was out in Ankara as chargé and he came out there. And he said, "OK her name is Gutrin, right?" I said, "It is Gudrun." He said, OK, and then he turned to one of his staff and said: Get the operator of the embassy in Tirana on the phone. I thought I know what is going to happen. So anyway, as my wife tells the story she is happily at our residence and the phone rings and there is somebody from the op center saying "Mrs. Jeffrey, "would you be willing to take a call from the Secretary of State?" Well as this is happening I am sitting there in so much trouble, this is really going to be bad. So anyway, she gets on the line and Powell is grinning from ear to ear. "Gudrun, it is Colin, so good to hear from you again." Then he makes his pitch, I will specifically never forget it when I was crawling in Baghdad doing other adventures. "Don't worry, we will take good care of Jim. He won't be in any danger in Iraq." I am rolling my eyes and he is

rolling his eyes too. But anyway, he was up front about it. He said, “Will you be OK with him going?”

Clear question but nobody not the least my wife says no to General Powell. So she said, “I am OK with it.” Now she says ever since that she was browbeaten into it and she should have known in advance about the call. She could have said no to him. I said, “You could have said no to him you should have known what was going on.” She knew I was back in America. So anyway, I was locked in. So, the next thing we had to do was to put together a whole embassy team. John and I worked on that. We got Bill Taylor to be the head of our reconstruction program, Ron Neumann who had been my DAS when I was in Kuwait to be our pol-mil counselor. The interesting thing is not only were all of us ambassadors, we were all veterans of Vietnam. In fact, who was the journalist, Robin Wright after we all got out of there actually did sort of a fluff piece on us called Saigon on the Tigris, about how in an act of desperation America had unleashed the old guys team from the last not particularly successful internal conflict we had been involved in to redeploy to Baghdad.

Q: But this does raise an interesting question which is as you are forming the team, you are all with Vietnam experience. You remember the win the hearts and minds and so on, were you all more or less of one mind about how you were going to go in and what your priorities were?

JEFFREY: Yes and no. As it turned out, doing it on the ground we did. The problem is you had two force majeure events. The first was we had almost no time to put this together. We are talking about days. So, we couldn’t have detailed discussions of a long-term plan. Secondly, while we weren’t sure what the situation was in Baghdad or Iraq, everything we could see was totally chaotic. Right as all this was happening we had the first big breakdown which was simultaneously we had the Blackwater contractors hung on the bridge in Fallujah. The first marine operation into Fallujah halfway through it, again the governing council rebelled and we had to pull back leaving a really bitter taste in the mouths of our marines. Then simultaneously for whatever reason the CPA shut down Moqtadah Al Sadr’s newspaper and al Sadr who was the son of a much-revered ayatollah who had been killed by Saddam in 1998 or 1999 with two of his three brothers, well the one surviving brother was Moqtadah who perhaps we would have wished had been on the list. And Moqtadah had a popular movement because his father had been by far the most popular Shia leader particularly among the lower class thus the huge Shia area of Baghdad was known as Sadr City.

So anyway, when that happened he declared jihad on us and Sadr City blew up and we sent troops in and we lost a lot of them so we were simultaneously fighting on two fronts and things were going down and the country was not recovering. To call Iraq in the spring of 2004 a third world country is unfair to third world countries. So, you really didn’t have much time.

There was a third force majeure which was not only did you have to create a new embassy but you had to create it out of this CPA monster which was vaguely a civilian offshoot of the U.S. military. I think it was really hard to get our arms around it. So, the idea was I would go out for six weeks and understudy Jerry Bremer and put together the team and start figuring out how to transition. Frank Ricciardone stayed back and he ran the transition team in Washington. Negroponte very wisely grabbed his deputy for management at the UN none other than the legendary Pat Kennedy and sent Pat out with me to help on the management side, and of course there is nobody better in the foreign service. So, Pat and I flew out at the same time and it was the typical adventure getting into Iraq, corkscrewing down in a C-130 into Baghdad airport because the bad guys not only had surface to air missiles SAMs but they were firing them at us. Not at that plane but certainly others. I had been in a couple of war zones since Vietnam, Eastern Iraq and the PKK insurgency and Kuwait during Desert Fox but this was really reminiscent of Vietnam.

I mean Baghdad airport looked like Saigon airport. But I knew we were in trouble when we got out. We were really thrown into the back of armored Humvees run by a DS special action unit and I watched as the guy charged the machine gun on top. The leader of the little group said, "Look, we can't go in on the airport road. It is closed due to fighting so we are going to have to go way down south into a really bad area but we think it is going to be OK and we will go over the 14th Street bridge."

But an hour and a half of adventures later we made it over the 14th street bridge into the famed Green Zone and I joined up with Jerry Bremer. So for the next six weeks I would shadow Bremer. First of all, with Bremer I couldn't have had a better mentor on what we were doing in Iraq or someone who was more cooperative in preparing the way for John Negroponte. He was absolutely splendid. But it became clear to me that we really didn't have a way forward because the whole logic was we were going to turn the country over to the Iraqis. But A there was already an insurgency and B, you didn't really have a functioning government. You had no communications, you had no monetary system. I mean they were printing money but to get it out to the banks we had to fly it out in American helicopters. There was really no structure and the Iraqis of course, would have to form a government at the same time as we were with a lot of nudging from us, then later Negroponte and his team. With Bremer Megan O'Sullivan and others spent most of their time working on the Iraqis. I focused aside from just shadowing Jerry on reconstruction sites and in particular critical infrastructure. We had an Australian major general who was running that for CPA and it was largely a military operation. This was electricity, this was bridges. This was obviously the oil which was the thing that was going the best, communications, water and all of these crucial things.

Not only were they all but nonexistent but they were particular targets of the insurgents particularly the Al Qaeda people. So this was a very hectic period. As Jerry and I got to know each other better, Bremer started using me. I think it was possibly to train me on some of the more exciting things. Ambassador Jones, Ambassador to Kuwait and Israel, Dick Jones, was functioning as Jerry's part time DCM but it was a very loose

organization. So, I just spent part of my time figuring out how we would turn CPA into the embassy with guidance from John Negroponte and Ricciardone. They were coming up with the resources and all of that.

But CPA was not an embassy. There were a lot of State Department people there in DS and in the management and the lower levels of the political section but the place was awash with CPA folks who had been hired from everywhere and essentially assigned to every Iraqi institution. Every ministry had a ministry team, and there were USAID people there but there were also other people with special one off assistance programs and it was a huge mess. Our plan was to incorporate all of that into our new embassy while we had to put together classic traditional sections, public affairs, admin, DS, economic, political, consular. That was a huge effort and as I say that was being done by Ricciardone back in Washington with Pat doing various things like allocating the various buildings and that sort of thing because we were talking about many thousands of people and housing them and finding places for them in the palace which we took over —Saddam's major palace in the middle of the green zone much to the irritation of the Iraqis.

In fact, they were so angry that we couldn't put our flag up so we had to find another chancery building; we found a small chancery building. It was very nice right on the banks of the Tigris so we put Negroponte's official office in there and put the flag up. That is before we inaugurated the embassy at the end of June. The problem was it was within easy RPG fire from the other side of the river which was Indian country. So, we didn't want Negroponte spending a lot of time there, but we did put the consular section on the first floor which was below the arc of RPG fire. So anyway.

Q: And it was always believed that a traditional embassy structure was the right way to go.

JEFFREY: Yeah, because again once George Bush had accepted that it would go back to the Iraqis then we had to do everything normal, and John Negroponte was absolutely and correctly adamant that we would run like an embassy. Bearing in mind that we had 150,000 American and coalition troops in the country. The relationship was kind of dicey. The military had set up and I have to take a step back. The U.S. military particularly the Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld did not want to stay on in Iraq. They really did not buy into the nation building plan of Bush, Condoleezza Rice, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz. Rumsfeld was not much of a believer in the democracy agenda. You wanted to get those troops out because you had other things to do with them eventually preparing for China and Russia. In that sense Rumsfeld was a visionary and looking back from now he was right.

But what this meant was he didn't want the troops engaging in counter-insurgency. And he wanted them to leave as soon as possible. To that end he sent the most junior three-star general in the U.S. Army Lt. General Sanchez, commander of the 5th corps in Germany to take over in Iraq. Sanchez really never got hold of his mission or what he was supposed to do. To some degree that was the fault of the Pentagon But he and Jerry did not get

along and it was clear that Jerry was the first among equals and it was never a good relationship. So, one of the first things I put back to Negroponte is the bad relationship between military and civilian. We needed to fix that. Then there was the huge issue of putting together the embassy but again we had Pat Kennedy and all of the resources of the Department of State because Colin Powell made it clear not just to my wife but to everybody else that this is going to work. Whatever you need, get it.

He picked John Negroponte, who had been his deputy when Powell was national security advisor, as UN ambassador. A guy who he trusted, a guy who had seen a lot of this, Negroponte's career reads like wherever the Cold War was the hottest. Well the 60s and 70's in Vietnam, the 1980's in Central America, and now in Iraq. He knew what he was doing and he had an aura or presence that was extraordinary. Bremer started using me to take charge essentially of the infrastructure because that was so pressing and so troubling to Washington but also it was essentially a fire brigade.

He sent one of his top officials whom I won't name and myself for example to Fallujah because post -Fallujah battle we tried something called the Fallujah brigade which was former Baathist army officers and the head of Iraqi intelligence was a friend of theirs and he had arranged that we were all supposed to go out there. So, when we went out there it was a very dangerous trip to this sort of Fallujah farm right on the other side of Fallujah.

Anyway, the whole thing was the typical mess where the helicopter went to the wrong base and then we had various discussions on things like should the windows of the Humvee be open so we could shoot out and that sort of thing but we finally got there. We linked up with a Marine General who later went on to bigger and better things. General Mattis. It was the first time I had met Mattis. I was immediately impressed with him. So, I went three hours with the Fallujah brigade and with the head of intelligence who should have been on our side of the table but he actually sat on the other side with his buddies from Fallujah. At the end of it, it was obvious that this wasn't going to work. So, there were two outcomes out of this - this wasn't going to work and there would be a second battle of Fallujah. One is that I turned to Mattis and said, "What are we going to do?" He said, "Ambassador Jim we are going to have to kill the Fallujah brigade." Typical Mattis pithy comment. The other thing I found troubling but it was really illuminating was my report to Jerry and the report of his senior guy who was technically responsible for all of these political military things - they were totally diametrically opposed. It was like this guy had been at a totally different meeting. While I knew I was pretty realistic, and I knew what Mattis thought. My god people are feeding Jerry absolute garbage, everything was fine and all of that whereas the situation was crazy.

About that time, I reported the following back to Negroponte. Every day the military would do an incident report. It would have maps of the whole country and various areas including the greater Saigon area out to the airport. And as only the military could do it would have various areas of color spots for the various kinds of incidents, Rocket attack, assassination, ground assault, mortars. Anyway, you would look at the map of Baghdad and there would be about 120 incidents a day with every color all around the green zone and all the way out to the airport along the airport road. Just awful things. One day a

minibus full of stewardesses for Iraq Air was stopped, hauled off to the side of the road and all slaughtered. So, I basically went back to John and said, "John this is the situation. I don't know if I was able to send the map or if it was classified or if I had somebody get it to him through the classified system. I basically said we are Dien Bien Phu. We are being besieged here. Most of the time you can't get in through the airport. So Negroponte heard this from me, he heard this from Pat Kennedy, so he came out prepared to try to deal with this.

Meanwhile Al Qaeda knew we were going to turn over on 1 July and there was going to be a big ceremony and everything else. Washington got really worried because they thought there would be a general uprising. So, we decided to move the day up by three days. So, Bremer was going to leave and Negroponte was going to come in two hours later. So, I was going to be, I thought, the chargé. I thought it was legally questionable when he left were we an embassy or did we have to wait. We really didn't know. But we had to put things together because meanwhile we were helping create an Iraqi government. We had Allawi as the prime minister and Sheik Gazi from the Shammar tribe the biggest tribe, certainly Sunni Arab tribe in Iraq, and a relative of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia as the president. Sheik Gazi was a very large man and wore his traditional Arab robes and was a very impressive sight. He was just less impressive in terms of his role in the country because we were hoping for more as the leader of the Shammar, to quote him one day, "I raise my hand and 50,000 hands with rifles are raised in the air." Oh, but I never saw the 50,000 rifles. We never saw 500 rifles from the Shammar unless they were shooting at us.

But anyway, we were trying to put that all together and then we realized we have to do a ceremony where the ambassador has to present his credentials to a government that hadn't even existed yet. So, we hurried and did the government and this required another UN resolution, so this was the usual diplomatic back and forth. We got the UN resolution and Bush scrawls on a note to Condi because they were together when they got the news, something to the effect that Iraq is now free. Well it didn't seem free to me when I was out there. But meanwhile we were trying to avoid a general uprising by moving the day forward. Actually, it worked other than in Baqubah which is always a bad area to the north of Baghdad where there was just a major gun battle. That was about that time when the army captain died that was the son of a Pakistani-American who was attacked by Bush at the Democratic National Convention in 2016. It was a very bloody battle. Other than that, the country was pretty quiet.

Bremer went out there the first morning and they all went out from the Green Zone by Chinook. Landed, got into a C-130 and all of the cameras were rolling. For some reason he then got into another C-130. I never understood why; the whole thing was crazy. So, then I went out to get Negroponte and I remember because I had just torn my meniscus. And trying to run all the way across the tarmac with 40 pounds of armor as the bad guys were shelling us and watching the mortar rounds coming in around us and thinking John this is your welcome ceremony. This is a unique ambassadorial welcome.

But Negroponte, nothing could faze him. He was used to all of this. So, we got him in to see the Sheik, to present his credentials. This was the normal rather than a surreal situation. Then off we went to the embassy. Peter Jennings was there and he interviewed me. It was all very exciting. I was hoping that people would see me on TV. Then we had to get down to work. It was very hard to explain what we were trying to do because it was so much.

First of all, to survive. Despite the huge military force, we didn't have control of Baghdad let alone the country. That started to change because Sanchez was replaced simultaneously by the best soldier they could find who was George Casey, the deputy Chief of Staff of the army, a four-star experienced general whose father had been a division commander in Vietnam who died there. But obviously Casey had inculcated all of the Vietnam lessons. A Georgetown graduate, he was a think outside the box kind of guy, and along with him the new chief of the training program for all of the Iraqis, because that is what DOD wanted us to do was train the Iraqis, was none other than David Petraeus as the head of MNSTCI.

So, we had a very strong military team that actually wanted to do things. Negroponte's goal was first to stand up the embassy. Second to get the Iraqi government up on its feet this required again focusing on critical infrastructure, assistance programs, and we had taken over all of these operations in all of these ministries. I mean this was an embassy the likes of which it is hard to describe. We were basically a shadow government. Where all of these people come from I don't know. Where they lived, I guess we were housing them. Where they worked was confusing. And some of them were getting killed. We were at a terrible casualty level and not all of them had names up on the Department wall because we were very particular, too particular I think on whether you were a full time permanent employee while most of the people who were getting killed were contractors or on some kind of special deal but they were still our people. We were having basically memorial services every week in our little chapel.

It was very bloody for the military as well as for us. Because of that Negroponte realized that we were basically in an insurgency. He had brought out a large team of people from his special assistants to his press spokesmen to his congressional guy, his essentially strategic thinker equivalent to the military commander's action group, a guy named Bob Earle. These are all people who worked with John either in New York or in Central America. I was at first nervous because it was like a whole superstructure and they all wanted to go directly to John and I was the DCM. I knew that John had never been a DCM and you have to have been a DCM to understand the pains, vanity, and insecurities of a DCM. But I decided this will all be OK. I just have to make myself in one or another way invaluable.

There Pat Kennedy who stayed on for a bit was very helpful because he could see the role I was playing in the embassy and at the end of the time in part because of Negroponte the group that he brought with him worked very well with all of us including me. For example, Bob Earle who presumably would have been the guy I would have worried

about because he was the “Strategic thinker” actually we got along very well. He did great work. Negroponte and Casey agreed to form a study with Bob Earle and Casey’s usual coterie of colonels on what we were dealing with.

They very quickly came up with the idea that this is a counterinsurgency. That was not popular in Washington or in DOD so we had to be very careful. Rumsfeld did not want to hear this because the implication was we have an insurgency and thus the counter insurgency force is the U.S. army and the few coalition forces that fight because the Iraqi army was just beginning to be stood up. This would be a job of years and it was never really successful as we saw in 2014. The guy in charge of it was Petraeus who was doing everything that was humanly possible. One result of this was we got an Iraq assistance program of \$22 billion which is a huge amount of money to be spread around all of these ministry things through USAID, the corps of engineers, and a whole coterie of separate assistance providers of agencies and activities that we had in Baghdad. It was just mind boggling to think of them all. Fortunately, we had Bill Taylor running the whole thing. Very quickly on the basis of this study that Negroponte and Casey had done Negroponte decided we would take somewhere between three and five billion dollars of that and turn it over to the military for several reasons. A lot of it to Petraeus. A lot of it was basically commanders’ action funds. They were funds that every commander could have to do things on the go with money in hand to hire people to clean weeds out of canals and that kind of thing basically to give people jobs to start the economy.

Q: Let me ask you a question. I understand the use of the commander’s funds and I understand the theory behind them that there are urgent things that the military needs to get done and sometimes the commander in the field needs that money just to prevent a problem arising for his goals in that area. But at the same time sometimes what they were doing in the field duplicated or made more difficult the work of the actual development people. To what extent was that understood, because you talk to AID people and they say one of our biggest problems was this commander’s fund because we got into misunderstandings as to who is going to be doing what.

JEFFREY: Yeah, that all occurred. It was a constant struggle, a constant battle. But at the end of the day the military was the only American activity that could move in the country so we were doing things - that the only time I ever ignored a John Negroponte order was once when he said we have got to get back to normal, he’d just learned that the U.S. military is providing helicopters to move money to province central banks from the Iraqi central bank. We have got to stop that. They have got to learn how to move money themselves. I decided I am going to put that in the to do later file because if we tell the Iraqis to move money we are going to have the richest insurgency in the history of the world.

So, this was the kind of thing where you had no alternative to the military. The commander’s action fund was essentially it was glorified force protection. It didn’t do anything in the long run but it was good walking around money. We had assigned civilian people under CPA. They tried to have people in every province in a CPA

operation. We had big such operations in Basra, Hillah and Mosul, which we then basically took over and used as embassy branch offices. But we had a lot of other people out in the provinces. For example, Stu Jones who was later ambassador in Iraq was our guy in Ramadi, so we had little pockets of Americans.

Their job was to monitor the AID programs and work with the Iraqis and work with the military and they were really invaluable. Meanwhile back at the ranch in Baghdad we had great folks like in the political section Robert Ford and Henry Enscher, who were Arabists and really knew what was going on. We had Herro Mustafa who was actually both a Kurdish and Arab speaker and native Kurd up in Mosul and we had really good people all around the country. We were getting good information and were trying to process back to Washington what a huge problem this was. Washington got it. The President was personally involved. Also, we were backed in Congress and with Powell you are in a situation where you can get anything. Anything was barely enough.

We faced three crises in Negroponte's first six months. One we were trying to settle down and first of all try and figure out ways to get in and out of the airport because we had our Rhino which was a big armored bus. We had that hit with an IED one day and blown up although nobody was hurt. We had the baggage truck for another one of the runs that got hit with an RPG right in the driver's compartment. Scared the hell out of the driver and the shotgun guy but nobody badly hurt. At what point do we put an end to running the roads out to the airport. It was just too dangerous and so we demanded that the military fly us. The military got tired of that and we had lots of fights with General Chiarelli who was a wonderful division commander of the First Cavalry Division responsible for Baghdad. He provided the helicopters but didn't want to and then finally we worked a deal where they would close the roads at night and we would go out there. But they would never escort us because the military had this argument everybody self-escorts. We said, but we are civilians. They said everybody self-escorts but what they did do is shut the access roads. You know you might be shot at but you wouldn't be in a major firefight. That is what we were afraid of. So, we had this tremendous force protection over us. We were constantly getting rocketed, sometimes very heavily and as I said we were losing people all of the time. But the morale was surprisingly very good because people really felt they had a mission. Everybody out there, and Negroponte was again a very strong leader and he had been through this before.

Q: At this moment had the exile Iraqis basically everybody that was expected to play a role in the government basically melted away?

JEFFREY: No, no, they were basically foreign exiles but they were dominant among the Kurds and the Shi'a, but of course they weren't dominant among the Sunni Arabs. Because the only Sunni Arab element that had been part of the anti-Saddam coalition were the Muslim Brothers. The Islamic Party of Iraq was what they recreated themselves as and Tarik Hashemi was their leader and later vice president of Iraq and later on the run because Prime Minister Maliki accused him of being an Al Qaeda agent in 2011. I am not so sure that was totally wrong. In 2005 I had gone out to see him in his compound and we had been hit by an Al Qaeda suicide bomber as we left so my feeling

is I wouldn't rule it out but he was also not particularly strong and he couldn't bring the Sunni Arabs with him and neither could Sheik Gazi so we didn't really have Sunni Arabs. That of course was a problem because Al Qaeda and various other groups under Hareth Al Dhari who was head of the Islamic Scholars which is what the clergy called themselves. He was an Islamic cleric. His grandfather had led the revolution against the British in 1920 and his son was a leader of something called the July 20th brigades which was one of the insurgent groups out near Fallujah.

So, we had lots of bad actors on the Sunni side. Much of our political work was trying to find Sunni leaders and Sunni people and bringing them in. That is what Stu Jones was doing out in Ramadi. That was what we were doing up on Mosul, trying to find Sunnis who would play a role because they were at least 20% of the population. Then of course they were most of the insurgency.

Beyond that we had other problems in this July-January period. One is that Iraqis insisted on elections so we had to have democratic elections. Allawi the prime minister who we worked very well with. He was a very strong leader, A Shi'a Arab but very secular. More popular among the Sunnis because he had great connections in Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, Beirut and such than he actually was among the Shia because he was known for being a hard drinking very secular guy. And a very effective prime minister. Sheik Gazi was an effective president. We had Hoshiyar Zebari as foreign minister, he was very good, a Kurd, relative of Masoud Barzani, and several other really good people in key ministries. Finance in particular. Defense and interior alas were weak. That was always a problem as was the new Iraqi military that stood up. So, what we did was try to focus on the election but then we ran into upsurges in insurgency from both the Shi'a side and—

Q: Oh the Shi'a side you have Muqtata Al Sadr you could just read international media on him because every day he had something negative to say. Up to no good. Was Sistani in the background doing anything helpful?

JEFFREY: Yeah Sistani, I will get to that. Sistani actually ended the rebellion but it was a little bit of a complicated story. Muqtada was getting support from the Iranians. That was very troubling. The Iranians also had their claws into the Badr Corps which was another paramilitary organization that was allied with the supreme council which is one of the more important Shia groups from the Hakim family, one of the great religious families of Iraq. So, there were lots of Iranian connections but there was lots of pushback too, particularly from Sistani. Muqtada was not really in the Iranian camp permanently as we have seen since then. But in 2004 he was getting support from them. They encouraged him to launch another insurgency that summer and he seized the golden mosque in Najaf the most holy of sites analogous to the grand Mosque in Mecca where you remember in '79 radicals seized that. So Muqtada seized that and started a reign of terror in Najaf. Local Iraqi security forces melted away as usual and we had to send in the marines and then backed with the 1st Armored Division heavy armor. There was very heavy fighting. Negroponte had gone on a leave before the fighting had begun so I was stuck with trying to deal with this.

Finally, the U.S. troops had fought their way through much of Najaf and Muqtada's force was besieged in the Golden Mosque with about 500 people. He wasn't there, he was in another city. He avoids violence. He is not a particularly courageous fighter, but his people were very good fighters and we brought in every sniper team in the country that we could to take these guys down but there is still going to have to be an assault. So finally, the military was planning this and Casey called me and it was just Casey and me. Casey said, "Look this is the plan." And the plan was to have the 36th commando battalion which was a largely Kurdish unit but a very good Iraqi force go into the Golden Mosque with about 70 American advisors dressed up in commando uniforms in Marine amtracs. Well Marine amtracs are very large amphibious personnel carriers much larger than the normal personnel carrier. It would look like an American assault on the Golden Mosque. The other problem was with all the shooters you would still have only about 400 people so once they got in there they would be outnumbered; you couldn't use artillery or helicopter gunships or anything on the Golden Mosque because it was the Golden Mosque. So, I looked at the plan. Casey looked at the plan and said, "What do you think?" I said, "George, it is your call it is a military decision but this plan ain't going to work." He said, "I know, so what are we going to do.?" Then Sistani saved our bacon so to speak but it almost didn't work. Sistani knew that we would probably assault the Golden Mosque.

Alawi had sent down Mowafuk Al Rubai who Jerry had appointed the national security advisor with a five-year term. Nobody liked Mowafuk but the Americans because he could speak good English and he was a very high cultured guy but he was kind of a flake. So, Alawi gave him a list of 12 demands to negotiate with Muqtada. He went down there with the 12 demands. And came back with a 12-point plan that was basically Muqtada's. So, Alawi was actually beating him up physically in the backyard of his place where we met most evenings where we tried to figure out what would be the next day's plan.

So anyway, Sistani was off in Beirut for medical care and he decided he would fix the whole thing. So, he wanted to fly back. Well Alawi was in a fury at Muqtada and at Mowafak and he wanted to have the 36th Battalion go in and just kill everybody. Then he wanted to find Muqtada and personally kill him. We spent months and months beating down the persistent rumor that Alawi had walked into one of the prisons with his pistol and had gone from cell to cell shooting people. As I said this is an apocryphal story but it gives you an idea of his reputation.

I get a call. I won't say who because it was one of the many guys planted in Alawi's office from the U.S. side, saying we have got a problem. This was 3:00 in the morning. Sistani is flying back to end this thing. What he wants to do is to organize a million-man march, march from Basra to Najaf and persuade Muqtada to pull his people out. Alawi had just gone to the U.S. military and told them to close the air space. The military said yes. I was furious. It wasn't that George Casey had undercut us. This was done by some colonel. There were a bevy of colonels who were Alawi's advisors just like we have a

bevy of Arab Americans and Arab Brits who are his advisors on the other side. I mean they travel in his entourage protected by Navy Seals.

So, some colonel called another colonel in the ops center of the U.S. military and was listened to, yeah it was routine. I talked to the air force guys. So, I went into the military command center at the palace and confirmed the story, called Casey and got this thing reversed. So that was my one contribution to success if you can say it of Iraq if I had to put my finger on it.

So, Sistani lands, organizes his million-man march, goes up to Najaf, and you have to understand that Muqtada is from one of the great Islamic clerical families of Iraq, not just Iraq but of the whole middle east. The famous missing Imam of Lebanon is a member of the Sadr family who went to Qadhafi's Libya in I think 1979 and we think was killed on the order of the Iranians. So, this is a family with great status. There were many more senior clerics. Muqtada was not even a baby ayatollah; now you have Grand Ayatollah Sistani who has all of this credibility meeting with him, my son and all of that, and basically negotiating the withdrawal of everybody. So this whole crisis was ended. Muqtada stood down. We actually had an arms turn in program in Sadr City that Ron Neumann organized that was the biggest joke. Rusty arms probably from the 17th century. We were handing out money and anything to keep people quiet for the moment.

Our real problem was Fallujah. Al Qaeda had dug in deep there and was extending its roots all through the Sunni areas. It would be clear that we couldn't even attempt a vote. We didn't think we would get a lot of Sunni votes but we couldn't even attempt a vote in the Sunni third of the country as long as these guys were operating out of Fallujah. So, Alawi agreed we are going to have to put an end to Fallujah. Well he didn't have troops to do it. We actually ended up using about six Iraqi battalions and they all did fine but they were in supporting roles and we had to use the better part of our U.S. marine division with some U.S. 1st Cavalry reinforcements. I mean all in all we threw including in blocking mission about five brigades. So, we are talking about one third of the U.S. force. We brought a British battalion up into what was euphemistically known as the triangle of death to the south of Baghdad between the Euphrates and the Tigris to block the bridges. We pulled our troops out to put them closer to Fallujah. So, this was a huge operation much bigger than our job within it. We had to work with Washington, with the UN and with the international community to try to sell this thing. We had all kinds of problems in the Arab world, us going after Sunnis and fortunately that was the week Yasser Arafat died. So, every Sunni news media outlet, every Arab journalist was focused on this and we were able to go in and do it, but it required an awful lot of diplomatic work and all of that.

So, the operation was a total success but was very costly, almost 100 Americans killed in action and thousands of al Qaeda guys. Fallujah never really recovered. As we saw it was the first city to fall to ISIS in 2014. One of my jobs both in Najaf and then later in Fallujah was to coordinate all of the efforts to try and do humanitarian recovery. That is

unlike the rest of the country that was below third world standards these places were just rubble and people didn't have water.

So, you need to get primary assistance from the military but with a lot of help from us, basic essentials in medical care, water. As I said the Iraqi authorities, the Iraqi military had no ability to do that. So that was much of our focus during that time.

Finally, the election. The elections were quite controversial. Because quite quickly it was very clear that Alawi wouldn't win. Most likely the way things were shaping up one or another Shia party would win. We were nervous about the Iranians and who that would be, so we were trying to figure out ways to help Alawi win. We had a SVETS a video SVETS to brief the president in late October early November.

Q: And this was still 2004.

JEFFREY: It was still 2004, yeah. We were briefing on the elections which were to be held in January, 2005. Anyway, we had come up with all kinds of plans cooked up with our intelligence community partners to make sure that Alawi gets elected. We started briefing them to the president and the president said I can't believe what I am hearing. I don't want an American hand on this election other than election monitoring and support for Iraqi and international organizations that will help organize it. There actually was an organization, this was the famous purple finger election and it was organized brilliantly.

Aside from pumping oil, the one thing that was working in Iraq when I got there was the food distribution system which had been part of the Iraqi structure for many decades, taken over by the UN during the embargo period and then we took it over when we got there in 2003. Then the Iraqis executed it. It meant that every morning they baked enough bread for 30 million people and how that happened I didn't know. They said wait there is one thing that worked that gets down to every neighborhood and that is the food distribution system. So, let's use the food distribution system to do the elections. So, it worked like a charm. This is the kind of thing you get to do in total chaos.

But getting back to the larger issue, Bush made it clear there would be no American role in this. Of course, we weren't used to that even in Western Europe. You know we would pick our favorites in our own minor ways. And so, it was really a hands off election other than logistically and administratively helping make it happen. It was a very fair election as I said it got a lot of good media attention which was important.

What we had tried to do was to bring in the Sunnis. So, this led to me going out to see Hareth Al Dari the head of the Sunni clerics and essentially the religious leader of the Sunni insurgency. Zakawi was the leader of the Al Qaeda resistance and this guy was the religious leader if you will basically Sistani's counterpart. Sunni Islam doesn't work that way but basically speaking he was the most influential cleric and also totally in the insurgency.

He was camped out in the huge Sunni Mosque in the area known as the “Mother of all Battles Mosque.” So anyway, General Chiarelli didn’t want me to go out there. He claimed it was too dangerous and he didn’t want me dealing with Hareth Al Dari. He was a bad guy. So anyway, I kept pushing. I said, “Negroponte wants me to use this guy to get the Sunnis to vote to get him to come in from the cold. That is what we do as diplomats, da, da, da.”

So, he kept on coming up with more information on why Hareth Al Dari is a bad guy So I said, “Hey let me see this information. Let me see the raw copies”. I am looking at it and after reading a couple of minutes I said, “Wait. These are from the weekly reports from some colonel on your staff who is going out and seeing Hareth Al Dari.” He said, “Yeah, I got a liaison officer.” I said, “Look, that is my job.” I am a civilian. He is a civilian. If you can have your colonel see him I sure as hell can see him. Anyway, he yielded but he gave me a whole battalion to go in there with because they were really nervous about this because we had to announce in advance. It was under a lieutenant colonel who was under a brigade commander. The brigade commander who went out there and who insisted on going with me was a colonel by the name of Milley who is now the chief of staff of the U.S. Army. Milley is a New England guy like me. Very tough guy, hockey player at Princeton. He didn’t like this mission. He didn’t like Hareth Al Dari. So, he had a very large tank heavy force push through this Sunni area and was very nervous about the whole thing.

Anyway, we got out there and it did look like the Mother of All Battles mosque. It was the biggest mosque I have ever seen other than the ones in Istanbul. Anyway, we went in there and we argued with Hareth Al Dari for several hours. Milley had a solution to the Hareth Al Dari thing but to be fair to Milley I won’t discuss it. I thought it was amusing. But at the end we agreed to sort of disagree and his continuing on being an insurgent and we would continue on with the election.

I then tried to do the same thing with Muqtada Al Sadr’s deputy. So, we went to southern Baghdad which was less dramatic. It was not as dangerous an area, and it was being brokered by a Shia cleric who Robert Ford knew. So, Robert Ford came with a friend from Najaf. He was not part of Muqtada’s party. I think he was Dawa, but he was a really interesting guy and he was running in the elections.

Now the elections of course Zaqawi had to declare them to be a violation of Islamic principles and anybody who participated in it would be killed. They started killing election workers and filming them and running them in their propaganda. It was like so many other things, absolutely terrible. But we were happy if we couldn’t get Hareth Al Dari we could at least get Muqtada and his people to go out.

Unfortunately, we had a military escort although it was a small one. But then one of the Humvees cut a car in half outside as we had a little incident. So, Muqtada’s guy was hiding upstairs and wouldn’t come down. So, we were left with this cleric who spoke good English. I thought this would be interesting because although he was a Shi’a

Muslim, he studied Islam in great detail and he certainly is risking his life to run for office in these circumstances. Maybe he would answer my question.

So, I asked him and I will never forget this because it tells you so much about the Middle East. The single most brilliant observation anybody has ever made to me in all my time there. I said, "This Zaqawi guy says that holding elections is a violation of Islamic principles. You are a cleric and clearly believe in elections. What do you think about Zaqawi's position?" Remember Zaqawi by this time had already shifted from targeting us to targeting Shi'a as heretics. So, there was already this very bad blood, although Zaqawi had started it off a couple of years earlier in something called Ansar Al Islam which was a Kurdish Jihadi movement operating out of Iran. That is where Zaqawi came from even though he was a Palestinian Jordanian. It was a very murky arena in the Jihadi connection there. But anyway, certainly by this time Zaqawi was adamant that the role of the Al Qaeda movement in Iraq was to kill Shi'a.

Despite that, I will never forget this guy when I asked him the question. He took a draw on a cigarillo, took it out, looked around, and then looked at me and smiled and said, "You know Zaqawi has a point. " Anyway, that is the Middle East.

So, we wound up doing the election and the election was a logistical success. The Iraqi people voted. In the Sunni area we got between 10% and 15% of the vote but at least we held the vote. Then we had to work our magic. First John Negroponte and then me trying to put together a government because of course you had many parties in parliament and you had to coalesce. Now we had one negative development that shaped the entire political future of Iraq. Masud Bazani the leader of the Kurdish KDP party and his longtime comrade in arms but also rival and at times enemy in combat Jalal Talabani and the breakaway PUK party decided they would run on a joint list. So that all the Kurds would run as one party. This much irritated Ayatollah Sistani who dictated OK only because of that should the Shia parties form a coalition which they did. This we saw as really bad.

So anyway, at the end of the day the Shia won about 65 % of the votes. And we had no one party within this coalition of Shia who won so we had this huge battle over finding a prime minister, first finding a president and then a prime minister. Now the way the Iraqi system works is you are supposed to have a president first. Actually, you are supposed to choose a speaker of parliament. Then the Speaker of parliament organizes the parliament. Then they have to vote on a president. Then the president charges the party with the most votes to find a prime minister. OK that is the constitution but that isn't the reality. The reality is nobody would vote on who would be the speaker until they knew who the others would be. So, you would have to try to get some kind of a package. In all future elections this is what we basically had to do or they had to do with a lot of help from us.

But this time we tried to do it the right way. So, we got a speaker of parliament. Then we need a president. Sheik Gazi they decided would be the president. But that opened the way to a Shia prime minister like Lebanon. It took us months to get Sheik Gazi

confirmed but even then, and then just as John Negroponte left we got as prime minister Abraham Jafari who wasn't a cleric but who was a very mystic Islamic politician who had spent many years in London, who was a doctor, but did not speak good English and was a very head in the clouds kind of guy. Everybody liked him because he spoke brilliant Arabic and would finish number one in all of the polls. So, he wasn't particularly pro-Iranian and he wasn't too anti-American. He was the lowest common denominator. We were particularly worried about his effectiveness, and it turned out we had good reason to. Anyway, we got him appointed but then nobody could agree on his cabinet. Before you could really form the government, you had to have a cabinet.

So, John Negroponte had left and I spent my last three months negotiating with everybody position by position to get them all to settle on who this would be. Now that seems to be a weird job for a foreign diplomat but this is what we were trying to do and this was constantly under watch by Washington that was trying to make sure about every single thing that happened because Washington obviously had an interest in a stable government. This was why we were trying so hard to put together any government. Second, they were trying to put together a government that would be pro-American and effective and both were very hard to come by. Thirdly they wanted government services and the economy and everything to start kicking in so that would dry up the swamp of the insurgency. That was the theory. Nation building was the answer to insurgency. Government building to insure they were favorable to us. Both of these things I have some trouble with but I mean it was not my job to question; it was my job to execute as best I could.

Q: Where in the considerations if at all at this point was the concern that whatever government that gets formed would be amenable to a status of forces agreement? Because I imagine at some point we need some legal status to be there for a while longer.

JEFFREY: Well the whole idea of the theory was that if you are purist in the freedom agenda it was self-evident that if people could actually vote rather like the people of Eastern Europe in 1989 they would embrace the whole western package. They would embrace recognition of Israel. Equity, bookable barrels contracts for Exxon and Shell and Chevron and BP to come in and develop their oil fields. Free market economy, essentially a Milton Friedman view of the economy, a kind of democratic system and you know all of the groups would come together. Of course, we would sponsor all of these cutesy little things, little skits, choruses of Kurdish kids and Shia kids and Sunni kids. This started with CPA and we were still all in it. Although I was trying to stomp it out as best I could while I was chargé at the end. Washington really pressed us because Washington really loved this stuff. This was an experiment and they were going to apply it to Afghanistan, to Iran, to Syria, To Libya, to the West Bank and Gaza.

We had this very ambitious agenda summed up in the president's freedom speech in the second inaugural where he did say our most cherished values are now our most pressing security needs, tying 9/11 and the security situation in Iraq to the freedom agenda and we had to spread freedom everywhere and once it was spread like automatic machinery it

would produce the right kind of people, the right kind of policies, and the right kind of friends. None of this worked. There was no precedent for this working. This is all fantasy island foreign policy, but we were absolutely addicted to it as a country or as a government at least at that time. Our job was to try and carry it out. We could try to keep telling Washington at the concrete level this one thing isn't working so we should stop doing it. That specific thing we are not going to do because we don't have the resources. We have talked to the Iraqis and they don't want to do this. But you couldn't basically challenge the underlying assumption because if you challenge the underlying assumption you challenge gee did we really have to go in at least in the way we did? Because we wanted to go in big and total, not because we thought there were weapons of mass destruction there, we did, but you could have gone in different ways to get at that.

We wanted in big and total because we wanted basically to tear it down, Colin Powell's break the pottery barn pottery, then we own it and must put it back together our way. Well we were putting it back together the best we could but it wasn't our way or anybody's way. It wasn't even the Iraqis' way. It was this hybrid thing that actually looking back now from 12 years later has done better than at times I thought it was, but it didn't create a pro American West Berlin. That was our goal. So finally in June of 2005, I kept on being extended because they wouldn't let me out until they finally formed a government. So, I was doing these negotiations. Finally, we came up with a government and then waiting in the wings from Afghanistan was Zafar Khalizad and he was going to come in and be the ambassador. So, we set everything up with Khalizad and I left an hour before he arrived. So that was the end of my first Iraq adventure, leaving and thinking I would never come back, not knowing I would be back multiple times. OK I have got to go now.

Q: Today is October 20 and we are resuming our interview with Ambassador James Jeffrey.

JEFFREY: We stopped in the early summer of 2005 after 13 months in country and Iraq and various adventures, I was ready to leave. I spent the last three months as the chargé and essentially this was President Bush's most important foreign policy priority and because to his credit and also Obama after him they were very solicitous of ambassadors and there for every SVTS once a week you would be with the president on a screen and you would be basically leading the whole thing. It was heady stuff. Somebody, this is 2005, who had been facing his last review for the senior foreign service a mere seven plus years earlier.

Anyway, life is funny. So, my plan to leave was I managed to get nominated to this very great program but very expensive which the State Department has since terminated. An Aspen leadership seminar in Aspen, Colorado for a week where they would also pay for your wife to monitor it and all expenses paid. This was very expensive and I was looking

forward to it. It was one of the conditions of going to Iraq but they were going to kick it back for a year.

I was going to do that and then I thought I would go to the National Defense University. I basically wanted to transition to do some kind of think tank, something sort of what I have been doing since leaving the foreign service in 2012. When you have been an ambassador it is hard to find a more fun place than Albania and I had been however briefly a chief of mission in the most important post we had at the time. Then I decided what is next. Then I got a call from Steve Hadley saying I would like you to come back and lead the Iraq effort. I really had enjoyed working with Steve which I had done ever since I had been in Munich and so I immediately said yes.

Q: And Steve Hadley is...

JEFFREY: The national security advisor.

Q: In the W. Bush administration.

JEFFREY: Then a few weeks later we had a very traumatic visit by Condoleezza Rice. She had tried to come out to Iraq but news of it had leaked out. This was very secret so nobody supposedly knew about it. So anyway, I got the notice and started to do my preparations but I couldn't tell anybody. I said this is fine because this means no advance team no anything. I just get to run this all by myself. OK and I had a really good security guy who was in his other life a special forces officer.

So, I put him in charge of everything and included him in. And then about 36 hours before the visit we got the word the Secretary was sending out a security advance to take charge of security. Well we already had security set up. This guy was one of the JSOC guys and they are the world's best security. Anyway, this guy knew how to talk to those guys, there wasn't a very good chance that a DS guy coming out did. So, I said how are we going to do this? So, I called my guy in and said, "I want you to meet him out at the airport. I want you to take an M-4 and a bandoleer. I want you to give it to him. Put him in the left gunner's seat of the helicopter and tell him he has got from 6:00 to 9:00 but don't open fire without checking with the crew commander." And then bring him in to me.

Sure enough by the time the guy came in he was totally rattled. He hadn't slept for two days and he realized he was totally out of his depth. I said, "OK, this is my security guy. He set everything up. I want you to work with him and if you have any suggestions let him know. Of course, my door is always open." So that was the last we saw of that guy. So, Rice landed a little bit oddly first to see the Kurds in the north, so she landed in Kirkuk. This did not please the Joferi government very much but that is life. The deal was she couldn't land in the usual plane because it didn't have the defense package so she came in a C-17. So it landed. Well we had amassed about eight Blackhawks to move her and my contingent. She had a large contingent because everybody wanted to come out to Iraq. Of course, then we had four Blackhawks to carry a JSOC contingent. And then just

for icing on the cake we had four Apaches. So anyway, they disembarked and they saw this huge mass of helicopters. It looked like Vietnam, 1968. So that immediately impressed everybody and we knew where to put everybody so off we went immediately to see Masoud Barzani.

That worked out well. The one incident that occurred there that we did have to track down years later was as she was leaving from Bazani I was moving her to her helicopter, and of course it was still the same 16 or 18 helicopters and suddenly we started hearing yelling. We looked over and it was some of the JSOC guys “Condi, Condi, Condi.” They were waving their weapons and jumping up and down and grinning and snapping pictures. She immediately made a beeline to them and got some really great pictures which she demanded that we send back. OK later I found them on her desk and we had to make them go away. These guys cannot be photographed supposedly. Anyway, she loved these guys and they loved her. It was a really good trip, but at the end of it she turned to me and said, I want you to be my Iraq coordinator. The Iraq coordinator job essentially didn’t exist under Negroponte because the Iraq coordinator was Powell. Negroponte would talk directly with Powell and with Dick Armitage.

Dick Armitage was the deputy secretary and was essentially the desk officer for Iraq. We didn’t deal with anybody else. But obviously with Condi coming over to the State Department she had Zoellick as her deputy. Zoellick was interested in Iraq but he didn’t want to do it full time. So she asked me. Well this required two things. First of all, to assert my bureaucratic position so having the star of all of these SVTS with the president of the United States I said, “OK but I will be your plus one. I will basically function as the sub cabinet official in charge of Iraq”. Condi immediately said, “Sure.” You can imagine that was not the last word. Then I had the delicate task of calling Steve Hadley because I have already told Steve yes to the same job and I can’t turn him down. She said, “I will take care of Steve.” So anyway, she had taken care of Steve and anyway he went along with it. We have obviously stayed very close.

So, I get to the Department of State and what I would like to do now is talk about how we did Iraq in the very critical year of 2005 to 2006. I will sketch out the situation, where we went forward and when it all came crashing down leading to the Iraq study group, the midterm elections and the surge and total re-doing of our Iraq policy and quite frankly our rejiggering of Bush’s entire foreign policy team with specifically Rumsfeld out, Cheney down and Petraeus in.

First the bureaucraties. I came back and discovered that I would have to fight for my position first of all because we had Phil Zelikow as the counselor. Phil was very interested in Iraq, first of all he is a security guy. So Phil as a sub-cabinet official counselor of the department wanted that role. He and I did a lot of back and forth. Basically, we came up with a good administrative relationship which was I would clear things through him and we would often go in and brief Condi together. But officially to the world and including at all the White House meetings I would be the plus one. Sometimes when we did the deputies meeting he and we would both go over and we would both vie for the chair and that kind of thing, but this worked very well.

I also had to figure out how to work this with the Near Eastern Bureau because I had the Iraq office of some 50 people and a Bearing Point group of contractors who did things like charts and track statistics and monitor the entire inter-agency civilian effort. That was another 40-50 people. All working for NEA and for me, and yet I wasn't part of NEA. I was a 7th floor staffer. And I knew Assistant Secretary David Welsh for many years. David had come in with me and David and I worked together when he was a PDAS. He was the guy who rescued me from Tony Verstandig when I jumped from NEA to go and work for Kornblum on Bosnia. So I basically with David said I am going to function bureaucratically as another DAS and I attended all of his morning meetings. I think that was helpful because it made it clear that I considered myself part of the NEA team which was useful because I found myself running the bureau or at least part of the bureau a year later. I didn't know that but it just seemed the right thing to do.

It worked very well in terms of the bureau. This seemed to be something not to waste time about except it is very important in terms of running the State Department. Then I had another challenge and this was a classic Rumsfeld. This starts getting into the policies. About the time I landed and started working, Condi says, "Jim, I have got some help for you." Well first rule the military was never volunteer for anything. First rule of the State Department is when somebody particularly is a senior official like Condi has some help for you, you know what she is saying is Jim I have just screwed you and I know it and I want to sugar coat it so I am telling you I have got some help. Well the help was of course a Don Rumsfeld idea. He decided we needed an interagency coordination cell. That is what I thought I was kind of doing at least on the civilian side. And more importantly Megan O'Sullivan who had the Iraq portfolio in the NSC thought it is what she was doing because she had managed to work her way up to deputy national security advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan and had a large team over there.

Rumsfeld's concept had nothing to do with managing the military. That is what his four-star Casey and his four-star superior Abizaid the CENTCOM commander and Rumsfeld were doing. It was to manage the rest of it. The diplomatic and civilian operations that one would think would be the job for me and to some degree Megan. They picked Mick Kicklighter, a retired army general with a distinguished career in Vietnam but Vietnam was 40 years ago and he had never been to Iraq. He had never served in Iraq and he knew nothing about the civilian side of operations and diplomacy and such. The idea was and this was Condi's pitch: Mick and I would be the co-chairs of this. So, my real job was, and here I had a very willing ally in Megan O'Sullivan, was to kill this thing.

Q: Oh yeah this was a mess.

JEFFREY: Yeah but this is exactly what and I went into it with a little bit of detail, what happened with Bosnia. The problem with any U.S. government is there is no discipline. There is no ability, I think I talked about how Holbrooke shipped John Shattuck out of Rome during the Bosnia negotiations because he wouldn't allow multiple sources of

decision making. But Holbrooke was a rarity. Generally, our top leadership constantly falls for this and they think the more competing bureaucracies they have, the better. Now this violates the first law of war and as far as I am concerned was unity of command. The military got it which is why Kicklighter had nothing to do with the military side of the operation. And so, we had to spend a great deal of time. Now when the military does something and Rumsfeld puts a lot of juice behind this they get a lot of money, they get offices over in Rosslyn, they get a staff. They reach out to Justice and reach out to AID and get liaison officers assigned to them and all of that. Then we are supposed to deal with them.

Looking back, I don't know how Meghan and I dealt with it but we succeeded. The thing was just a total waste of time. But here is where this was important bureaucratically because the U.S. government keeps on making this mistake but ironically, it did not make this mistake with ISIS. I am getting way ahead of myself here beyond my career, picking John Allen and then Bret McGurk to run that whole operation and tying them at the hip with CENTCOM was brilliant. Now it has had a bad follow up because these guys are still hanging on to ISIS as I speak because it is now 2017 when the big threat is Iran which they don't seem very interested in, but that is another problem. But certainly that is an example of how to do things right.

The Gulf War was an example of how to do things right. And Holbrooke in the Balkans, but most of the time we do a variant of this and thus if you have the most important job the President is trying to do then you will be spending more of your time dealing with bureaucratic absurdities than the normal person does and that is a lot for the normal person. So that is severe turbulence. The other thing is and this gets into something I have worked on through my whole career and have put a lot of effort into since I have left, and I am in a more academic or analytical way now — which is the military's misconception of how to deal with population in internal conflicts.

The problem is while the military once knew this, the Philippines, the Confederacy after the Civil war, the Indian Wars, the military once was used to internal conflicts and dealing with populations. It basically had become a big constabulary, the military. There was some occupation duty after WWI and a hell of a lot after WWII led by the military in both cases. But in all of our conflicts in the Cold War and such while the Cuban Missile Crisis was nestled inside an internal conflict over Cuba which the Bay of Pigs was supposed to solve, and the conventional war in Korea was nestled within a civil war between the North and South almost everything we did was a civil war, including Berlin, a split between East and West Germany; northern Greece and the whole thing are an internal conflict or an insurgency or something else. It involves inside a country, inside a population as either the accelerant of the violence the military had to deal with, kinetics...

Or else the excuse for the Soviets or some other elements of the Communist world to intervene. Therefore, the military over time came to think that they couldn't win these things on their own, Vietnam being the best example and a very searing example. But their conclusion wasn't maybe we shouldn't get into these things or get into them with a

big army on the ground or big Marine Corps on the ground, but rather we got to find a civilian secret sauce that can change these societies. Michael Mandelbaum came out with a book two years ago called "Mission Failure" which analyzes this after the Cold War from 1989 on when this really kicked into higher gear. Not just with the military thinking of it in Somalia and the Balkans and the Middle East. But frankly the civilian side. The responsibility that you have to go in and violate the sovereignty of people who are butchering their own population. Nation building, state building all of this. There were left wing variants of this with the kind of USAID tree huggers and there were right wing versions of it, the Neocons were all about this with the freedom agenda and working through this to influence Bush. So it was a very common theory.

The problem is it didn't have any real legs. When you ask people, cite where it works you would get Germany, Japan, the Marshall Plan. My response would be 1945, 1945, 1948. We are now in 2004 or 2005. Gee that is 50 years later. What am I missing here? That is 60 years later. What am I missing here? Who says that this stuff is going to work? In fact, looking back now the only really good example is Colombia where A, we didn't have boots on the ground, B, we had three decades to do it. C, we had really good local leaders and a lot of luck, and D, there was no other power in the neighborhood who was trying to mess up plan Colombia.

None of these things attained in any of our various internal conflicts or in very few of them which is why they didn't turn out very well. The military did not analyze very well. One of the major problems of the Department of State and here I will fault the sainted Colin Powell is that we embraced this. We were all in on what we could do because we wanted to help Bush. We were so shocked at this absurd misuse of our military capability to take down an entire country. What were we thinking about with the Powell pottery barn phenomenon and such? And we knew we were the people who were going to have to own it because that is the reality of things,

Don Rumsfeld did not want to own it. He mainly wanted to get out. But the main thrust of the U.S. government is we owned it and we have got to clean it up. We were cleaning up all the pottery but more importantly we have got to have a vision for the pottery barn store. We have to have a new dawn which is one of our military phrases, the New Dawn operation or something. And we have got to make this all right. We never said there is no record of us doing this. This is again since the 1940's where it was mainly the locals doing it particularly the Marshall Plan. All we did was hand out money. In the case of Japan and Germany since the locals didn't do it gee it was the U.S. military which first of all had bashed them so hard they knew they had no choice and secondly it was on the ground working with them through Clay and Macarthur. That is not what we got. We don't do this. The government people and USAID is sort of long term development assistance. What are you talking about here? PRT's? That isn't part of our core mission. Well the military was adamant. In fact, they worked with Zal to set up the PRT concept. I can say because I was getting a lot of pressure before I left Iraq that we would have to do

something like that. As I said we did have three outposts of the embassy in Hillah, Basra, and well actually we had four, Hillah, Basra, Kirkuk, and Erbil. We had some people out sort of as Polads, so we started turning them all into quasi-PRTs and when Zal came out they actually became PRTs the only difference being that unlike Afghanistan they were under the embassy. But they were under the security of the military and they cut the deal that way. That was one of my jobs when I was back in Washington. So, the whole Kicklighter thing was a pain and cry of angst from the military that Rumsfeld magnified for his own reasons to get those damn civilians to do their job. If they won't do it I will set up a guy who will. So, we had to deal with Mick Kicklighter but fortunately he didn't know enough about the subject and he was a good guy.

Q: But what led Rumsfeld to think the civilians weren't doing their job?

JEFFERY: Well that is a good question and I should have started with this. Here is the strategic situation in Iraq in the summer of 2005. We had been on a roll since the summer of 2004 after an awful year of everything going wrong in 2003 to December of 2004, the first Fallujah battle and things I have described. Then we started winning. Najaf, the destruction or at least the dismantlement of the Mahdi Army at least as an active threat. Fallujah pushing Al Qaeda back on its heels, the purple finger election and we were able to actually stand up a democratically elected government. Just what George Bush had promised and we could assure hey everybody would see that and the Sunnis we could eventually work in. We were making slow progress actually getting the country to function as I said trying to reach the almost unattainable heights of your normal run down third world country. We weren't there yet but we were making some progress. There were some things the Iraqis could actually start doing on their own. As I said the exception being they had a wonderful food distribution system that worked perfectly, and while we provided money they were largely in charge of their own oil field development and that they were good at too. So, we had a few things going for us.

But by the summer of 2005 the blinders had come off as we realized we are still in a long-term insurgency and it ain't getting any better. The underlying fissures in the society between the three major groups were there. Within the groups they were divided. The Kurds you would say were the least divided. The Sunnis you can't even say were divided, there were not groups large enough to identify as on either side of the divide and the Shi'a were divided into five major factions. And we didn't have any Abraham Lincoln because that was one thing that Ibrahim Jaferi would never do. He was kind of OK but he was ineffectual. You could meet with him and he would sign the right things. So, we knew we were in for a long-term problem. We had 100,000 troops there. Rumsfeld wanted them to do other things. Because he knew and he was right, that we would have long term threats yet we were pouring money into this thing. The best example and this was after Rumsfeld Bob Gates did the right thing. This isn't a criticism of Gates but Gates canceled the F-22 program at 187 fighters. One of the reasons he did that was to put more money into deploying equipment on the ground most notably the deployment of the MRAPS. To deal with both mines and particularly the Iranian EFP shaped charge IEDs. This was the right thing for him to do to save lives but the long term

strategic consequences of not having a large number of fifth generation fighters as we face North Korea, face China in the South China Sea, face Russia in Syria and in the Baltic is very dramatic. That is just the tip of the iceberg of the U.S. military. The U.S. Army is still equipped with the heavy equipment it had in the 1980's. It is good equipment but it is very old. Because all the money went into operations and equipment designed for Iraq.

Q: Just a quick strategic question about Rumsfeld. At this point in 2005-2006 you are saying he did see the need for a long term commitment even though he had been the big voice for get in get out.

JEFFERY: He hated this whole thing. The problem is he worked for a president who truly believed in it. Again, his January 2005 Freedom Rings speech. Rumsfeld knew he couldn't take the president on in that. All he could do is fight a guerilla war against the State Department and the civilian side to make them take on more, to make the Iraqis take on more and let him get his troops the hell out of there. That is what he wanted. That is the tension that we faced. There was a huge impact on the civilian side of the system. He was constantly nudging the system. Kicklighter was one example, there were numerous other ones. Dissing Condi at NSC meetings and other meetings about the failure of the State Department to do this and to do that and she could give as good as she could take and she would snap back on the military because we were following them closely and I will get into that.

So, by the summer of 2005 it was Houston we have a problem. Not an emergency problem like a year before or eight months before but still we don't know how to get out of this. This is beginning to look like Vietnam. So, what do we do? We have four lines of effort as we used to say in those days. One was the military effort which I will come back to. The second was the diplomatic. Aside from a lot of State Department officers assigned there was a lot of system maintenance and hygiene of Iraq and the UN, Iraq and its debts, Iraq and Kuwait. Border disputes all of these things which took up a lot of my time as the guy who has to pull it all together.

The main thing was to get the Arab Middle East to embrace Iraq even though it was a Shi'a Arab led country. This was seen as critical because they were doing nothing other than to some degree funding and arming and letting their Jihadis support the Sunni Arab insurgency. That was a big thing and I will come back to that too. The third thing was the internal politics. There Zal had the lead. He was trusted by Bush and obviously he knew the people, he knew the region. Zal had this portfolio for years as our emissary to the opposition before 2003 and then afterwards he had done that on the ground. He came from the region; he understood Arabic. He was a Muslim. He understood the culture. He had been ambassador in a similar situation in Afghanistan. He was perfect for this. That was his focus and he did it very well. But he didn't care about the rest of it. We had a great deputy out there named David Satterfield who did manage the rest of the embassy but it was a big job and Zal's main priority was to get a constitution. That took an awful lot of work because of course aside from the disunited Iraqis everybody in Washington wanted to put in their version, people like Newt Gingrich and many congressmen and

senators and great thinkers and Bernard Lewis and all these people were pinging on us on how to make Iraq a true democracy.

Zal had to field all of that. He did it very well. He and the Iraqis did actually come up with a constitution that by the fall of 2005 was sealed and delivered and it is still functioning today in 2017 and it is basically being used on how to work out the latest crisis in Kirkuk, essentially those things that were in the constitution. The Kurds took those things that weren't in the constitution and the Iraqi army is in the process of taking them back. And that shows you the value of the constitution. Also, they have had a whole series of elections and have gotten rid of two prime ministers. Where else do you see that in the Middle East. So that part of the whole operation was working.

Q: Just one quick question about the constitution. As it was approaching the completion there was lots of noise back here in the media and somewhat in Congress about when the constitution would have the expression Islamic republic or Islamic nation. How did that play out in the background?

JEFFERY: Oh, that was the single biggest thing because of course this didn't fit into the freedom agenda. We were all about weaning these people away from political Islam. Except that it was the Iraqis' constitution. So Iraq is an Islamic state but it used language that was not reminiscent of Iran as an Islamic Republic. The thing we did the most fighting over was the judicial system because the Iraqi judicial system of course was a little bit of Ottoman law which was very watered-down Sharia law. A lot of British law and a lot of law since the 1920's by a very secularist Baathist Iraq that had nothing to do with Sharia law. But you had one of the major Sunni factions, the Islamic party, the Muslim brothers and of course all of the Shi'a groups were more or less Islamic so there was a major push to put in there, and we had good language that it would draw upon Sharia law but it would be separate from it. That was deemed OK, but boy it was a lot of fighting back and forth about this because our boys are dying for Sharia law.

This is the kind of idiocy we get into when we get into these things. You are so close to it working every day and the manifestation of that was the letter Condi has to write to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on why we are betraying our values and on and on. It is a lesson in not getting involved in these things. But anyway, so that was the political side.

Then the fourth thing was the whole civilian effort, ministry to ministry, province to province to make this place look like Denmark. That was the thing that obviously wasn't working well and again the military in general had the attitude of "we are doing our job. We are out there shooting the terrorists and shooting the insurgents but people are complaining. I mean I spent all day talking with sheiks and talking with mayors and talking with people and they had all these laundry lists and America isn't doing all of these things."

Well I am sorry I have dealt with the same things visiting mayors and political leaders in Eastern Turkey in the 1980's. We had no troops other than at Incirlik and a few other places in Turkey. We weren't responsible for building that country now and they still wanted me to fix their sewage problems and such. I am used to that because I am a foreign service officer. These guys weren't because they were military. They thought there was some plan B that we people in the foreign service had on the shelf but for some crazy bureaucratic reason we weren't reaching up and pulling it down and deploying the right people and deploying the right things. So what did we do? We created a whole bureaucracy in the state department. I think it was the reconstruction bureau. It actually became a bureau at one point but Carlos Pascal started it and who picked it up? As I said it became basically civil affairs and community-building and all that, and of course the military had their whole bureaucracy to do this stuff too, but we still weren't getting a lot of traction with the Iraqis because this stuff was really hard and we were foreign. We didn't understand the people. We brought in Iraqi Americans or Palestinian Americans they didn't really know. Even the Iraqi Americans tended to be from the cities and we were mainly working out in the big muddy. So, this was a huge effort and again Rumsfeld saw this as a way A to put the blame on somebody else, and B to suggest that let's get the military out of there.

The only way the two came together was building up the Iraqi military. We had Petraeus for a year who did great work. He had left and we still had good people in there. Who is it, Dempsey replaced him. We were putting a lot of money and a lot of effort into that with mixed results because of the nature of the Iraqi military as we saw against ISIS in 2014. Essentially the underlying divisions and the ineffectuality of the country was mirrored in its military forces and still is. So that effort consumed much of our time, but two others were very important.

In the diplomatic effort I led a delegation, an inter-agency delegation around the region to pitch support for Iraq. We went to the Egyptian government and saw Mubarak, we saw the Arab League chief, went and saw King Abdullah of Jordan, saw King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and that was a key meeting because we needed him to bless Iraq as Arabs and forget about that they were Shi'a so they would open their coffers, they would provide political support they would stop supporting Harith Al Dari and the bad Sunnis which they were doing, etc.

It was an awful meeting. First of all, it was during Ramadan, and the king gracefully gave up the fast, well he didn't give up the fast but he came in anyway. We spent two hours going over this with him. His message was very clear. Look what you have are not Shi'a Arabs. There are no Shia Arabs. These are Persians. There are five million Persians who have come into Iraq. They need to go. This was an extremely tough line. It was clear he saw them as interlopers into the Arab world. There is a little bit going back into the history. I understand some of this. He would really know it because it was his family involved. When the Ikhwan which was a Salafist movement that swept out of the Arabian Peninsula and at times were at odds with the Saud family and at times was allied with them around the turn of the 19th to the 20th century They devastated southern Iraq and the cities of Najaf and Karbala two major Shi'a centers, and the cities of the south were

Shi'a. So in defense, they reached out to the tribes in the region, some of which were local tribes and some of which like the Shammar and others were tribes that stretched all over Iraq into Syria and Saudi Arabia. Those tribes basically formed an alliance but as part of the process they converted because there isn't all that much difference between Shia and Sunni Islam if you separate out the role of Ayatollahs and such.

At that time, you didn't have, you didn't have an aggressive Iranian variant of it. You had a quiet version. Everybody was fine with it but this of course was anathema to the Sunni Arab world so we got very little traction with the king and we saw no follow up action. I went back out with Bob Kimmitt at the time he was Deputy Secretary of Treasury to do the same thing, to do some financial aspects and King Abdullah was absolutely as adamant. This time he was really angry at Malaki who had become the prime minister and claimed that Malaki had lied to him so it went from bad to worse.

So much for the diplomatic pillar. We got no support from the Arab world for an Arab country. So, the argument, the opinion, that we went in and got rid of Saddam and let the Iranians take over there is some truth to that but the point is the Arab world did nothing. Turkey at least while it often did the wrong thing knew that it was a neighbor that it had to figure out how to deal with all three factions and it came up with solutions concluding particularly with the Kurds but also with the Sunnis and even to some degree with the Shi'a. With a few exceptions Jordan and in some respects Kuwait and in some respects not, nobody really put any effort into Iraq. They basically declared it a lost cause and we have had that basically burdening us since then.

So, we now come to the military. This is where it starts getting interesting. Casey was under a lot of pressure from Rumsfeld because Casey instinctively knew he faced an insurgency. That was the whole purpose of our joint study. What was MNF-I multilateral force in Iraq and of course the embassy in summer of 2004, we concluded we were in an insurgency and we concluded that we should deal with it like Abrams did in Vietnam. But Rumsfeld blocked him from doing that. The most Casey could do was to set up a counterinsurgency academy for all new battalion commanders when they came in so they would get some idea of reaching out to the people. And of course, we did the PRT thing so we were trying to but we were really much restrained by Rumsfeld. Casey of course was under a lot of pressure to paint the picture as rosy as possible.

The problem with insurgencies as William Westmoreland could tell you is that it is very hard to tell whether you are winning, losing, or in a stalemate. Because there are all kinds of statistics that tell you that you are winning but they may be the wrong statistics and while the numbers look good, they may be generated by people are writing them on a piece of paper or on an I-Pad in the middle of the night by flashlight based on you have got to get this in by 7:00 tomorrow morning and you are just doing SWAGS. So, it was a very questionable effort. But Casey would do every 90 days a situation report, a very detailed one as the military does these things. Well the introduction was all sweetness and light and then the initial strategic chapters talked about very hopeful, moving forward. We have a vision for this and a plan for that. Then I got into the bowels of it and

somewhere around page 60 there was the damning comment, "In none of the major military lines of effort are we making significant discernable progress that will allow us to predict when we can significantly reduce our military effort." I am quoting this from memory and I may have gotten parts of it wrong, but that is essentially what it was saying, and then it illustrated what we were doing building up the Iraqi army. We were reducing the number of violent incidents, attacks, mortar fire, that kind of thing, seizing basic leaders and kind of bringing in some of the groups from the cold.

Casey knew what we had to do. He called it the wedge strategy. You had to wedge the good Sunni insurgents, was it the June 20 or the September 20 group, the Nachshibandis, the Baathists from the bad ones, the al Qaeda guys and kill the Al Qaeda guys. That is essentially the strategy we followed under Petraeus with the JSOC guys doing most of the killing and all of us working together to bring the other guys in from the cold. And it worked, so Casey knew how to go forward but he didn't have the capabilities, the assets, or the support to do this, and we weren't making progress on all of those things.

So, I went to the Secretary, the first problem I had was Ray Odierno - he was the liaison from the chairman to the Secretary of State, and he would go with her, that always is the case. So, whenever the Secretary of State shows up she has a three-star general with her. Christopher did it. Powell did it? I am not so sure given his military background. It is all nice and all that but I often used to say why doesn't a State Department senior guy travel with the secretary of defense. That would be a good idea, a quid pro quo. But it was never that way and it was basically Ray's job to watch over the Secretary of State and make sure they are doing their job. That was not a lick on Ray, that was simply to some degree the mindset. So anyway, I was going in and briefing her with the problems of the military campaign. Odierno felt that wasn't my job and so we had several arguments. In the end it all worked out; when Ray was preparing to go out as a corps commander he brought me down to Texas so Ray and I worked things out. So, this was another thing I had to do. I had Kicklighter to deal with. I had Ray to deal with; I had Zelikow to deal with, and most of the time Meghan O'Sullivan the NSC person who fortunately was my ally in all of these things because she knew how to deal with me. We worked together in Iraq. We worked together when I was out in Iraq and she was back. And you needed the NSC. That was the one element you couldn't do without but you know the military advisor to the Secretary the whole Kicklighter operation you really didn't need that.

Condi with a lot of work from Zelikow and I came up with essentially the Abrams plan. She called it Clear Hold Build. She briefed it to the president and he loved it. We sent it out to Casey and didn't get much comment at the time. She then went public with it. I was with her when she briefed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. It was an interesting exchange with her and a young senator named Barack Obama. Obama was pressing her on this and she of course, was cool as a cucumber, knows how to brief. And then she gave a speech on it. The president really liked it and he followed up with a speech at Annapolis that basically used her themes. Rumsfeld went crazy. Casey went crazy. Casey called her. It is hard to explain to people who haven't been at that level how informal and personality driven the cabinet and sub cabinet and various other four-star generals and emissaries and such as they all deal in a different world all the way up to the

president, far more informal, far more personal. It is far more cut to the chase. It isn't much bureaucracy and the wounds are often open. So, Casey was really hurt, but the problem was Casey really wanted to clear, hold, build. And essentially what she was doing was exposing the fact that he wasn't able to do that. He of course was getting pressure and he basically felt that by making it a high visibility thing she was undercutting his ability to get Rumsfeld to change. But Rumsfeld wouldn't change.

Here is an example and I will never forget this. This involved being duplicitous to the president of the United States. Bush brings us all in and he is furious at our inability to protect the Iraqi infrastructure. Particularly the electrical system and the pipelines. And in particular the pipeline from Kirkuk to Ceyhan, Turkey which had been pumping 400,000 barrels a day. That was about 20% of Iraqi exports at the time. That had been blown up by the Jihadis and we couldn't keep it protected. Nobody could keep it protected. It runs for about 400 Km through northern Iraq. A lot of that is in Kurdish or close to Kurdish territory. So, the question was gee it is open territory, it is not jungle, why can't we protect it. For once the president is really pushing Rumsfeld. This is like a kinetic thing. This is a military mission, do this. And Rumsfeld said: We have all these plans to build up an Iraqi infrastructure protection force and of course there is the local police. And the president wasn't having it because Condi was present beating on him. They have had two years to figure this out and they haven't figured it out. Now I want us to do this blah, blah. A funny thing happened. . Rumsfeld looks at the president and says, "I understand but you don't want MNFI to do this, right Mr. President. I have got to be clear on that point." Well the President thinks Rumsfeld is trying to set him up as a trap to have American boys and girls dying so Iraqis can have air conditioning. That didn't go over too well. Bush saw the political trap there. He said because he heard MNFI from Rumsfeld and thought American boys and girls. The American and British boys and girls. He said, "No, I want the Iraqis to do it." Rumsfeld says "Right the Iraqis should do it," but I know what was going on here. I was in the peanut gallery away from this and I couldn't get to Condi.

That is, under the rules we were operating under MNFI had control and command not only of the coalition forces but of the entire Iraqi army. Which by this time was 50-60 battalions at least? Having some of these battalions that is what Bush was thinking, why can't the Iraqi army do it rather than the police because Rumsfeld felt all this counterinsurgency, and it wasn't just Rumsfeld, it is one of the fatal problems of the U.S. military, they think counter insurgency and all this stuff is mainly the job of police. Well I don't know where they got this doctrine but let me tell you from a lot of years in the Middle East. Nobody pays any attention to the police. In fact, in the entire third world. In Vietnam they were known as White Mice for their white uniforms. I saw this same disdain in Turkey and in the Arab world.

Soldiers are different. Soldiers are taken seriously. So, the idea of the police doing anything was always going down a rat hole. But the military had accepted this as doctrine. We are training the Iraqi army to guard the borders. Well nobody is going to do a conventional invasion and the whole U.S. army can't protect these borders from people infiltrating across. So why are we even standing up the Iraqi army? Maybe to protect

their goddamn infrastructure? Isn't that what we did in Vietnam protect people and infrastructure and cities. So this was an example of how Rumsfeld was able to stay away from a nation building mission while putting all the blame on State Department because State had a joint mission with the military of standing up police forces including the installation protective services which was another Iraqi thing. But none of it was able to protect against the jihadist attacks.

So, we never got that pipeline up until 2010 or 2011. Anyway, so there was this huge back and forth where Rice was pushing for the military to do classic counter insurgency. Rumsfeld is pushing for the counterinsurgency mission to be taken over by a mix of State Department and civilian agencies and the Iraqis and he would get out of there. And Bush, on who did what, sided with Rumsfeld but in terms of whether the military gets out or stays sided with Condi.

So, we basically were in a do loop for months. What blew that up was the blowing up of the Golden Mosque in Samara. This is a major Shia shrine in the middle of a largely Sunni Arab area and the Al Qaeda guys decided it was high time to send that into the dust. When they did so everybody immediately froze in Iraq and back in America because they knew this was a really big thing. This had never happened. The Sunni Jihadists had never gotten to Najah or Karbala but this is really big what had happened. There was an eerie quiet for some weeks and we thought we had escaped the worst. Zal was pushing Jaferi to say the right thing. Go out and meet with Sunnis and meet with Shi'a and reconciliation. That was another one of our words that just floated around without having any idea of how possible it was. I kept thinking of my conversation with King Abdullah and thinking yeah reconciliation is not what this region was good at, but I had seen this between the Kurds and the Turks in Turkey decades before and I knew this would be really hard, but we kept saying let's reconcile. It will work. Have little girls and boys in the same room at school, some Shi'a, some Kurds, some Sunni. We did all these things, Potemkin villagization the entire operation.

Then the dam broke and you got a massive response mainly by people in the police. Many of them were Badr corps members a pro-Iranian group, Muqtada's people, and some of the recent Iranian backed militias, Asah Al Haq I think started getting involved. Basically, Shi'a everywhere just started cleansing neighborhoods. Neighborhood after neighborhood in the fault lines which ran through what we called the triangle of death to the south of Baghdad through the whole Baghdad area and up into Diyala in the north. All that area is mixed street by street, neighborhood, by neighborhood, city and countryside. You really needed very large-scale maps to know who was whom.

And people were dying by the tens of thousands. The famous electric drill torture/death which was a Shi'a specialty but the Al Qaeda guys were just as creative. Once they hit a wedding party and killed all hundred people and threw their bodies into the Tigris River. I mean you would read this stuff every day. Our military was, not to speak of the Iraqi military, incapable of stopping it and it went on and on. Until it kind of started dying out by the summer of 2006 because in most of the mixed areas people had separated. Rather like we had seen in the Balkans. I mean this is a reoccurring tragedy in human affairs,

but what this had done is this really was an ice-cold shower for the United States because now we are in 2006. It had been three years after we went into Iraq, Tick, Tick, Tick. We went into Vietnam with ground forces in early 1965. By 1968 what do we have? Tet. This was sort of our Tet. Several things happened. First of all, Condi knew there had to be a change. She therefore persuaded the president to support the Iraq Study Group which was set up by the USIP and I think one other institution, I think Brookings. It had all of the gray beards from the Senate, the military, Chuck Robb, all kinds of people came to it. I think who it was, the former Democratic chairman of the Senate foreign relations committee. And many other people.

Q: Biden?

JEFFERY: No. Of course, Biden was involved in it and many other people but Biden at the time had come out with his let's partition Iraq sort of thing and all of the think tanks were buzzing and we were all doing media including testimony to the study group on where we had to go in the end.

They came out with an essentially gradual disengagement plan with some more aggressive military in the short term. Meanwhile events had moved on and the main event was the election of 2006 where Bush saw both houses of congress go to the Democrats. But let me take a step back. By the summer of 2006 there was a question of what would happen with me and the office because the assumption was I would stay on in this job. But for reasons I have never understood, Zal decided he didn't want David Satterfield to stay on as DCM. This was a huge blow to the 7th floor because they trusted Satterfield for very good reason, and the other problem was that what do you do with someone as senior as David Satterfield? The obvious thing was bringing him back to be the P-DAS in the near eastern bureau because Liz Cheney who had that job for the last year was leaving. But for whatever reason Liz didn't want David coming back and replacing her. So, there wasn't a place for David. So what Condi decided was how about David taking my job and then I could become the P-DAS in NEA. I thought that was really a good idea.

So, I went over in the summer of 2006 to be the P-DAS in NEA. David came back to the Iraq job and he and I coordinated together. Because there was one theme let me stay with Iraq. Also, I was very involved with Iraq decisions in the summer of 2006 from my perch as PDAS. And my constant interaction with David. The president was absolutely shocked by what was happening in Iraq and the electoral results. Bush to his credit is a democratic figure, the people have the right to make decisions and look at what the people have decided. This was a loser. So, he knew it was time to change. Meanwhile in and out of the military there was a real sense things have to change. You had Jack Keane who was on the Defense Policy Board, a former four star general and Petraeus' mentor. You had Kim Kagan and which other Kagan, Her husband, not Robert Kagan. Let's see there are three Kagans. Kim, Robert who is married to Tonia Nuland, and there was a third. At the Institute for the Study of War. They were pushing for essentially Abrams counter insurgency. You have Petraeus. He and Jim Mattis had worked out a counterinsurgency manual the year before out in Fort Leavenworth that had been signed

off on and was all about protecting the population, engaging with them and focusing on drying up the insurgency from the inside rather than trying to go after it, again applying the lessons of Vietnam and many other insurgencies. So, the doctrine was all in place but it hadn't jelled.

Meanwhile Steve Hadley had a group of people in the National Security Council studying this very quietly and a group of colonels over at the Pentagon had been studying this, so we had about five different groups looking at this. You already had the doctrine in place. What was blocking it? The joint chiefs and Rumsfeld. I don't know to what degree the joint chiefs under Peter Pace on their own did not want to embrace this. I think there may have been good reasons for them not to because they really saw that Vietnam was impacting our ability to have a modern military. Because it was costing us many billions of dollars.

Q: Iraq, you said Vietnam, It is interesting

JEFFREY: Well it was the same. That is why Westmoreland didn't get his 206,000 more troops in 1968. It was the same thing, the joint chiefs, well the joint chiefs wanted an exit strategy and this didn't look like an exit strategy. This looked like a counterinsurgency strategy. I am trying to give them the best. Rumsfeld was totally against this but then the president realized after the election Rumsfeld had to go. So, Rumsfeld went and the presidential relationship with Dick Cheney was never the same because Cheney had not been quite the mentor because Rumsfeld had mentored Cheney at one point in the Nixon administration. But they were very close and had served together in the Nixon and Ford administrations and Cheney took it personally. Rumsfeld was fired in a somewhat abrupt way.

Then Bob Gates was brought in. Bob Gates is a guy who wants to end wars, not find new ones. So you had a very different guy in there with a very different approach to Iraq. In fact, I went out with Gates on his first trip as the State Department liaison on the trip. So, I guess it argues you needed somebody from the State Department so we went to Iraq. Crocker had just gotten out there. Crocker was thinking about this. They had sent Petraeus out. So, all the stars were aligning to accept a counterinsurgency and the surge. It was basically three people with a counterinsurgency strategy that Petraeus and Ray Odierno who was also out there and Ryan Crocker on the civilian side. Crocker went out in the early spring of 2006.

The second thing was the surge essentially the better part of six brigades which would be sent out there and they were to be used along with the rest of the U.S. Army and to the extent we could the coalition forced to protect the population. That is no longer that we operate in these big what we called them FOBs. Bases with tens of thousands of people and fifty flavors of ice cream and McDonalds and all of that. And the troops would roll out every morning and they would roll back minus the people that hit mines and IEDs that evening and feel that they were doing a counterinsurgency. This idea was to get them out in company and sometimes platoon sized elements inside neighborhoods on the fault lines such as between Shi'a and Sunni or the areas within Ramadi, the fault lines between

different groups were simply really bad news. So the troops were going out. They had very high casualties initially. They had to fight their way into neighborhoods. Then suddenly it started within months all going quiet.

Now I would like to say I was a full supporter of this, but actually I had changed my mind as had all of us in the State Department from the year before. We were big fans of doing exactly this in the fall of 2005. But by 2006 after the elections we basically felt that the United States would not be able to sustain this and the Iraqis weren't good enough. We were wrong and I remember we had I think a fire drill so Phil Zelikow, David Satterfield and I gathered at the Einstein statue on 22nd Street because we had to see Condi and give her our advice. We decided she shouldn't be too enthusiastic about the surge. We didn't know if the military was on board. We didn't know if the Iraqis were on board. We didn't know about this. It turns out we were wrong. She only partially accepted our advice so therefore very quickly when we saw that the surge was working we changed our minds again.

OK so that is Iraq. Now let me get to the Near Eastern Bureau because there were some lessons in that. The first thing is, and it is very relevant today. The first thing I was hit with when I became the P-DAS again working for David Welsh was the Lebanon crisis in the summer of 2006. This had been initiated by Hezbollah. And it hit us like a ton of bricks. Because the whole focus of the Middle East, Islam, the Bush Administration since 9/11, had been terrorists, Afghanistan and Iraq. Afghanistan was basically seen as a subset of terrorism. Iraq of course as we discovered was a totally different thing, and that is about all we could do. Iran had been ignored. We were following it rather closely because of the nuclear program and also because there was a kind of residual neocon theory on the list of evil empire states that we are going to have to take down after we finish our successful operation in Iraq. So, we had to give that some lip service and I will get into that in a second.

But the first crisis was engendered by an ally and surrogate of Iran's, Hezbollah although I don't think Iran was responsible for it. They attacked an Israeli patrol on Israeli territory and killed a number of Israelis. More importantly they made off with several Israelis. In Israel at the time we had the Omert government. This was an interesting government because Israel is a country right now with Bibi Netanyahu and going back to Rabin and Moshe Dayan and others that tended to have the most highly decorated delta force level military oh also Ari Sharon, become its political leaders. So, you look at a cabinet and they would have more medals than half of the IAF. Not the Omert cabinet. Nobody knew anything about the military so they stumbled into a really badly executed war where they didn't realize how much improved Hezbollah had gotten with long range anti-tank weapons, with missile strikes into Israel, attacking and badly damaging an Israeli destroyer off of Beirut and basically playing hide and seek in caves all over southern Lebanon.

So, the Israelis were having a very hard time. This really infuriated the Bush

administration because it was another diversion. Suddenly you had, when we are doing the whole Iraq study group and Iraq is going critical on us, we suddenly have this diversion. We blamed it more on Omert rather than the Iranians. As I said the Iranian fingerprints weren't on it; the Hezbollah fingerprints obviously were. But we just wanted this thing to end because it was a diversion. It didn't fit into our vision because you see it was one of the revolutions, I forget which one, the Cedar Revolution had taken place in Lebanon a couple of years earlier. What happened was as we now know, Hezbollah decided it was time to blow up the prime minister of Lebanon Hariri the elder because he was getting too independent and wasn't supporting their political objectives which were essentially Iranian objectives. So they took him down in downtown Beirut. There was such an outpouring of anger after having gone through 20 years of civil war and then this very peaceful, very prosperous period where the bulk of the Lebanese sold their soul. They would take peace, prosperity, and have a political system that at least pretended to be democratic and free as long as they didn't challenge Hezbollah's role as a surrogate for Iran to threaten Israel in the south. Even though that could have repercussions for the entire country, because nothing had happened so far. The Israelis of course had withdrawn nearly a decade earlier and while Hezbollah claimed there were still at the Shabbat farms and there was the bit of the Golan Heights they still claimed nobody took that seriously. And didn't think anything would happen.

But Hezbollah wasn't about seizing sacred Lebanese territory. They were all about being Iran's surrogate to keep Israel under pressure and people in Lebanon didn't get it. Hariri got it. That is why he got blown up. But then everybody in horror rose up and you had the Cedar revolution and the result was unfortunately, they had two ways of going after the Iranian influence forces. One was Hezbollah and one was the Syrian army. They opted for the Syrian army so the Syrian army had to leave. We all thought OK this means a shiny future for Lebanon. Put that on the side of counter revolutions that are working like Saakashvili and Ukraine and on and on. Only it wasn't working because you still have Hezbollah.

I don't know the details well enough. I suspect this is some part of the Hezbollah plan which by 2008 had succeeded in re-Hezbollahizing and re-Iranizing Lebanon to recoup what they had lost with the Cedar Revolution. Anyway, they provoked this. The Israelis went in and they didn't do well. All we wanted to do was to stop it. We didn't see the strategic problems in stopping it in a way that would make Hezbollah and Iran look like they were victorious. Because a funny thing happened, for the first time in any of the wars between Israel and the Arabs, most Arab states started openly or secretly started applauding Israel because Hezbollah was associated with Iran, a big problem to quote both King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia but also King Abdullah of Jordan on the same trip when I saw him in 2005, he talked about the Shi'a arc which he talked about publicly many times too and was obsessed with that. This was a threat to the region. So, everybody saw this as Israel teaching those Hezbollah guys and Iran a lesson and they started cheering.

Assad comes out and starts talking about them being half men. They won't stand up for the rights of Arabs when they are being killed by these Zionist entities. And something

interesting happened: the Arab streets in all of these countries started coming out in support of Hezbollah. So suddenly there was radio silence from the Arab countries. That we should have picked up on better, but we didn't. We just wanted this thing to end. So, David Welsh was out trying to negotiate with the Lebanese, with the Israelis and others. I was back, David spent most of the year I was PDAS in the field and I was back managing the office basically but also with a special emphasis on Iran which I will get into. But the first crisis was in Beirut. We had a wonderful ambassador in Beirut. Jeff Feltman who went on to be the assistant secretary for NEA in the great tradition of NEA Arabists. Feltman was in a difficult situation. The country was melting down. The Israelis were coming in but more importantly we had 18,000 American people including thousands of students who had gone to Lebanon because it was kind of like Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon, Oman the only safe places in the Middle East that are nice and you can get a drink at the bar and prance around in your Bikini on the beach. Now Lebanon is turning into hell on earth because the Israelis are lashing out all up and down including the suburbs of Beirut. So, we had thousands of people trying to get out. We had students calling into Fox news. I was on with either Shawn Hannity or I think Tucker Carlson and he just tore me apart as a State Department rep. What are you doing?

Well here is the problem, Henrietta Fore was our undersecretary for management and she immediately saw the repercussions of this. We needed to evacuate these people.

Well when the State Department wants to do a sea evacuation, to get ships it turns to the Military Transportation Command. . The Military Transportation Command was not very quick. The Mediterranean is a closed sea. There are only so many ships capable of hauling people. All of the other European countries were seeking them because everybody liked to go to Lebanon. There were probably 100,000 people who wanted to leave Lebanon. They already picked up all the ships so the MTC couldn't provide any ships. We had no answer. As I said we were getting eaten alive.

Well we had a MEU and an ARG. I am using technical terms. A MEU is a Marine Expeditionary Unit of about 2500 marines and the ARG is the three ships which are very large ships equipped with helicopters and landing craft. These are much bigger than normal ships. They are a little bit smaller than aircraft carriers. That is the team that goes together. They are the ambassador's best friends. We had used them in 1999 in the earthquake in Turkey and we used them in Kuwait when they showed up in Operation Desert Fox. They show up whenever you have got an emergency and thank goodness they do. Well they were in Aqaba in the Red Sea doing an exercise. They were the obvious ships. We had a couple of destroyers in the Mediterranean but you couldn't move many people with that. So, the obvious thing was to have them trundle down the Sinai Peninsula up through the Suez Canal. We have got priority and they could be there quickly. Well the military who managed to have the left hand not talking to the right hand, those managing MTC were saying we can't help you and the rest of the military was saying they are doing an exercise; it is really important. Go talk to MTC, or shouldn't your State Department have ships.

So anyway, we had a video conference on the seventh floor in the video conference part of the Op Center with Henrietta Fore and I in there representing NEA, and we have got Steve Hadley and Condoleezza Rice coming back from Moscow. I was really agitated because we had a very senior Defense Department person on and I forgot his name but I will think of it in a second. Anyway, he was kind of pushing DOD but he wasn't pushing too hard. And everybody was briefing the situation we don't know and all that. Then the NSC guy pressed DOD and DOD typically and I have seen this so many times with Rumsfeld and I am sure this guy was one of the Rumsfeld guys, he was still Secretary of Defense "We don't want to get involved. That is State Department let them figure it out how to get civilians and students out and such. Well we have given them a warning order." So, everybody kind of breathes easy. He is a military guy. But any military unit has 50 warning orders at any given time with 50 contingencies. It doesn't ever mean very much so I nudged Henrietta. "Let me do this". Because she didn't know Condi and Steve the way I did. "Steve, Condi, it's gonna be Katrina in the sand. That is what you are looking at here. I have just been on Fox News. We are getting killed. We have a total disaster. You need to give an order to those ships to move now".

That is exactly what they did and those ships moved and Feltman meanwhile was holding everything together and of course the ships come. The marines land the helicopters. Pick up ten of these students and a couple of babies and everybody is ecstatic as they are filming it. Feltman is out there shaking hands with heavily armed marines. Everybody is happy. We have evacuated about 20 of the 18,000 people. We still have 17,980 people. It didn't matter. We have beaten the opposition in the media. The U.S. government is acting, the marines are on the scene. The stars and stripes. It was beautiful. And then the students who were being fed by CNN figuring I had better bitch more Jeff Feltman will personally fly down here and get me. They kind of calmed down because they could see what was happening.

So, now we could focus on solving the conflict. Again, David Welch was out there with Jeff and our embassy. I think that was Dick Jones in Tel Aviv and finally we got something like a cease fire. Condi pushed the Israelis very hard. First of all, we were very disappointed in their military operations. And we could see a sense that what they wanted to do was keep trying until they got it right. But that meant further tearing up the Middle East and these were all our supposed allies, the Arab states in the fight in Afghanistan and the fight in Iraq, and the fight for democracy. Now they were kind of being after having been skewered by Assad they were basically looking like they were turning so we figured we had better end this. That was a mistake. We focused only on Arabs and how they would perceive us through that fulcrum, that prism on our Afghanistan, Jihadi and Iraq adventures rather than the Iranian threat because it was totally off the map. So, we worked a deal. I went to New York with her along with Zelikow and we did UNSCR 1701 right on the spot. The Israeli foreign minister came in and we managed to cut a deal, the problem was we couldn't get a strong UN resolution. We kept on checking with Fouad Siniora, the prime minister, and everybody liked him. He is considered a lightweight but he was our lightweight. The problem was he wasn't giving us anything we needed. The Israelis wanted, OK if you have got to put a peace keeping force in the south to prevent us from coming in what are you going to do about

arms transfers to Hezbollah from Iran via Syria? Are you going to put people on the Syrian border? We kept going to Siniora and all that stuff fell out.

We couldn't get a Chapter Seven resolution. We got a statement about arms transfers being prohibited but we couldn't get it under Chapter Seven because Siniora said that was a stretch too far. We couldn't get real language putting the peace keeping force which is quite large, mainly Europeans all in the south. We couldn't get it along the Syrian border.

It is a good example of Iran gaming the system, to optimize what people perceive as a quasi-Hezbollah victory, and it produced a different Lebanon as we saw two years later. Then ironically two weeks later I find myself in Stockholm. That was an interesting event with the then Deputy Secretary of State, I forget his name, he had a huge scandal a few weeks later but he was also the head of USAID, a relative novice on foreign affairs. He had just started at the job. We were negotiating with the Europeans for a joint package to rebuild Lebanon. Anyway, there was an interesting sidelight. It is so typical of the Europeans and it was a lot of fun.

They decided well we can't just do a conference on Lebanon. What else? Let's do a conference on the Palestinians. So, it was going to be a donor's conference for both the Lebanese and the Palestinians. So obviously the Swedes were going to invite a delegation from the Lebanese government and invite a delegation from the Palestinians. Now these are people we have worked with all of the time and we worked with them well. Abu Mazen and Siniora, but their government bureaucracies are locked into this Arab League world view which stops and ends with it is all Israel's fault whatever the problem. And with propaganda that will illustrate that in crude and to some degree anti-Semitic ways. So, these guys show up and they have an open door with the Swedes who were all sweetness and light and they say we want to present some documentaries on our struggles and some of the problems we have had.

The Swedes went along with it. Of course, they were awful anti-Israel anti-Semitic diatribes. So, we get wind of it. I checked with the head of the delegation who was ok with it because I guess he thought it was just routine stuff, but actually it was my own scheme which I didn't clear with anybody because I was afraid somebody might block it. We threatened to walk out of the whole conference. But I knew from my many years of experience dealing in the NEA that if you are going to do this on something to protect the honor of Israel you will be forgiven. So, I went to the Swedish political director and said, "OK, those guys have to go away." He said, "Absolutely unacceptable." So I said, "Fine, we are leaving the conference." "You can't mean it." "Oh we mean it. We are leaving the conference." Because we were there to contribute at least several billion dollars to Lebanon. He was really furious because he realized they had really screwed up. They had gone off and done this without checking with us. Duh! Obviously, you have to check with the Americans when you are going to invite any of the Arab victims of Israel. The Egyptians and the Jordanians are OK, but you do the Palestinians and the Lebanese you are going to get exactly this kind of crap.

So, in the end we were able to ram it down their throats. In the end I was really happy. It was one of my favorite events with the Europeans. But the more significant thing and it is really relevant right now with the situation in Syria in 2017 and that is what people including Siniora and the Iranians were saying: 'OK Europe, America, you provide a diplomatic solution that would protect the guys who started it while holding in check the people who are trying to defend themselves. The Israelis.' 'Then you Americans and Europeans pay for the rebuilding of the country,' whose damage in the first place Hezbollah generated. That is exactly what we went out and did.

That had some real implications for what the Syrians and the Iranians and the Russians are asking us to do right now in Syria. One more thing about the PDAS job. Or two more things. One of my jobs was to chair an Iran working group with Elliott Abrams from the NSC. This was basically a weird combination of track two diplomacy that Nick Burns, the Under Secretary of State wanted to do to reach out to Iran. The nuclear problem started to loom large as we started getting scary intelligence. We learned about Natanz. We were toying with joining the Europeans who since 2003 were trying to negotiate deals with the Iranians. It was OK with Khatemi but when Ahmadinejad came in I think that was in 2004 or 2005 the whole thing went to hell and we had to face him and his obscene obnoxious rhetoric all of the time. We started getting worried about that. There was still a big thrust which Condi pushed to find ways to reach out to the Iranians and Ambassador Pickering and others on the outside who were doing track two diplomacy with the Iranians largely through their UN ambassador now foreign minister Zarif who was everybody's favorite Iranian including recently mine. But that is another story.

So there was pressure to find common ground, basketball trips and sports and outreach and we did Iranian broadcasting and the Iran Watchers which is where we trained people in Farsi and put them all over the middle east and Europe and the Caucasus and Azerbaijan I think to basically monitor Iran, and obviously the big center was Dubai where we would engage with the Iranians and Iranian dissidents and engage with people coming out and essentially try to have our own track with Iranian dissidents and contacts. But then Elliott's pitch was more, with a lot of people from DOD supporting him, a kind of regime change. It is a very thin line between regime change outreach to populations and we just want to be your friends track two cuddly liberal leftist outreach. Elliott and I managed to paper over the difference. Nick was empowered by Condi to look at how we could eventually do things including trying to open up an American services section in the protecting power embassy which was the Swiss. We would actually put people out there and such.

But we didn't get there because of various other things. One of the other things was the Al Kabir site in Syria. In the Spring of 2007 we got intelligence from a friendly intelligence service that there was none other than a replica I think it was the Yongbyon plutonium reactor of North Korea fame as Chris Hill was working it and right as we were doing this we found this other thing in the desert along the Euphrates in Syria. So obviously the U.S. intelligence community engaged very quickly. It looks like a whole nuclear weapons effort. This was so sensitive that there was just a small group that dealt

with this, and David Makovsky of the Washington Institute did a piece in 2012 in the New Yorker which is very accurate and Elliott Abrams then did a piece I don't know where. So much of this is in the public sector now.

The first thing is we did not want the secret to get out so for once the U.S. government could keep a secret. Which is very hard. So, in the State Department only three of us knew about it initially. Condi, the counselor Eliot Cohen, and me as the guy from NEA because Welsh was in the field. And they decided to keep it at that level. So, then Steve Hadley and the deputy and Elliott Abrams and Mike Singh knew about it at the NSC. Obviously, the Secretary of Defense, Eric Adelman and the Secretary and the chairman which was still Peter Pace and the deputy chairman was a marine general I think. Anyway, and the J-5. Those were the only people who knew about it other than say the 500 intelligence people. So, we spawned a working group to come up with a strategy.

I was along with Singh, the most junior guy. Our job was to kind of be the raconteurs. But my contribution was to think about how we had dealt with the Cuban missile crisis. So, I came up with a plan that eventually Bush accepted to attempt to expose the Syrians privately by an emissary, I picked John Negroponte, and to be ready to take military action at least on the pumping station which was about to come on line. The problem was this thing was going to come on line in just a few months. After it came on line any military action would send radioactive material in large amounts into the Euphrates and over the border into Iraq where we had 100,000 troops and were trying in Anbar province right along the Euphrates to win them over, and this was not a way to win them over, so I was very skeptical of this, of military action.

But we did have a plan that we could hit the pumping house and stop work because you needed the pumping house to pump water to cool the damn thing. So, we started negotiating with the Israelis, done by the president personally. And we were going back and forth on that whole issue. But the importance of this was that again I was working very closely with Hadley and Rice and I will come up with the name any second. The deputy national security advisor suddenly left so they had an opening and for whatever reason they turned to me. I will stop there.

Q: OK. That is fine.

Q: Today is December 13. We are resuming our interview with Ambassador Jeffrey as he goes to the National Security Council. This is in what year?

JEFFREY: This is in 2007.

Q: OK.

JEFFERY: In the midst of the al Kabar crisis I was approached first by Steve Hadley and then Condi Rice on taking JD Crouch's job. He had been in the job of deputy national security advisor at that point for almost three years.

Q: Just a very quick aside on J.D. Crouch. He had been named ambassador to Romania. He was there for three months and I guess he was offered the deputy job just shortly after she arrived and she left immediately. So, we had a chargé for some time after he left.

JEFFREY: It was sort of a strange leap because we just have had one other foreign service officer who has ever been in that job who was John Negroponte. It tends to go to military people as is the case now in 2017 and people like J.D. Crouch who had been coming in from one of the other two parties. It is really hard to turn down but I figured I would have no family time. So as soon as I hesitated, Condoleezza Rice grabbed me and said, "You need to do this for your country." So anyway, off I went.

The first thing that happened was they hired me without checking what the status of a foreign service officer is in that position because it is a political position as assistant to the President. You can be seconded to the national security council staff but you are in an amorphous position as deputy national security adviser where you are actually in a White House job. So I went over. Hadley gave me the final interview and then they put out a press release. Then to their horror they discovered what happened, so the XO of the NSC contacted me and said, "OK, we don't know if you can stay on as a foreign service officer. But we put the announcement out." I said "Well there is no choice. We can't embarrass the president of the United States. If I have to resign I will resign." It turns out that I didn't have to resign or maybe I did have to resign but they decided to ignore it. Stranger things have happened but certainly Steve Hadley whom I knew very well by that time was very appreciative of that and I think it cemented our relationship.

Now the National Security Council was going through several changes and coming after the Republicans lost both houses of congress in the fall of 2006. President Bush with advice from Steve Hadley and Condi Rice, and Secretary Gates was trying to, if you will, straighten out his foreign policy and get us moving away from constant wars in the middle east. Thus, while the surge was in effect the President put us on a glide path to leave Iraq as a quid pro quo for getting Senate support for the surge, and kept the troop levels in Afghanistan quite modest and as you saw managed to avoid both American direct involvement in the Al Kabar situation and in the 2006 Lebanon war. So the focus was more on trying to clean up the middle east. One of the things we did through most of that period was to put a lot more attention into the middle east peace process between the Palestinians and the Israelis. So that is the basic 50,000 foot view of the administration at that point.

Q: At the time in 2006 they were looking again at the Arab Israeli conflict who were the key players in the promotion of talks between the Israelis?

JEFFREY: This was entirely Condoleezza Rice. David Welsh played a role, Robert Danin played a role, but they playing supporting roles. It wasn't like they had a role like I described earlier with Holbrooke in the Balkans, like Dennis Ross played previously in the Clinton administration or the role he would play in the Obama administration. This was very much Condoleezza Rice herself. Elliott Abrams was the very influential near east guy on the National Security Council staff, and he was somewhat more skeptical but he was supportive. More generally there was sort of a division in the national security apparatus at that point because while Don Rumsfeld had gone obviously Vice President Cheney was still there. His views on how to handle problems most importantly Iran did not any longer command the sort of instant acceptance with the president that we had seen before. So, there was a shift basically in the direction of most obviously Condoleezza Rice but also Bob Gates and Steve Hadley, all three were working very closely together. Steve continued to maintain very good relations with the vice president as the arbiter, as his job requires. With Gates and Rice there were more open conflicts with Cheney on how to act on various things. The most compelling were North Korea, Iran, and Georgia.

Almost as soon as I got to the National Security Council staff the first thing that happened was that the president decided that he wanted to go to Iraq and then travel on to the AIEPEC summit in Sydney. The problem was that was going to be the week we were bringing back Dave Petraeus and Ryan Crocker to brief on the surge. There had been as I described earlier a tremendous national debate about whither Iraq. Most in the Senate and the House basically the whole congress thought we should withdraw. The surge was not popular. That is why not the surge but the popular view of Iraq had led to the loss of both houses of Congress, and skepticism given earlier attempts to adopt a strategy towards Iraq was certainly warranted. The difference this time was you had absolute presidential commitment to this. Bush thought this was the most important thing he was doing. We were putting very significant forces, counting marines, almost six brigades into Iraq, about 31,000 troops. We also this time, unlike a year plus before, were focusing on Anbar Province and other Sunni areas where we had tribes and former insurgents who as of that time wanted to become an irregular auxiliary force on our side to fight Al Qaeda rather than to fight with Al Qaeda. The difference between 2007 and 2006 was this time everybody embraced these guys, it was known as the surge.

We eventually recruited 100,000 people. And at some point, we started recruiting Shi'a tribesmen as well. So this was a huge success. We also had Dave Petraeus' counterinsurgency strategy which got troops out of the forward operating bases where they used to commute to and from morning and afternoon and put them out in platoon and company sized detachment all around the fault lines of Sunni and Shi'a areas because the fighting now is between Sunnis and Shi'a essentially it was a civil war. So, this was the application of the counterinsurgency strategy that Petraeus had developed at the command and general staff college and frankly was based on what Abrams had done in Vietnam 30 years before. So interestingly Bush was betting everything that Crocker and Petraeus would be successful in the Senate.

Q: What did success consist of at that moment?

JEFFREY: At that moment success consisted of the Senate and House not taking any votes or decisions or other things that would either block our ability to carry out the surge, i.e. cut money, or some kind of resolution that would undercut public morale because the president knew that Iraq was still unpopular. A little over a year later Barack Obama won and almost certainly won in part because he was running on a very strong anti-Iraq platform while McCain was running on a very strong Iraq forever platform. So, the president realized it was a very touchy domestic situation and he wanted this to go right. But by this time Hadley and Bush knew well how Washington worked and they were afraid that, I hate the word, the inter-agency would mess with what they were going to say by actually trying to tell them what to say or to monitor, approve, and kibitz on what they were going to say.

Bush had developed as did to his credit Obama after him a very strong appreciation for people in the field, ambassadors and combatant commanders. He would be as I described when I was in Iraq the first time very personally involved in what you were doing and what was happening to you and your family. He would constantly light-heartedly harangue Zal Khalilzad on the screen or then Crocker, afterward Petraeus or the third person typically with Petraeus and Crocker was my friend Charlie Ries. He would always ask Charlie how his wife Marcie who was also an ambassador out there was doing. It was a very close relationship; Bush had a great political instinct particularly when his back was to the wall. He had a great political instinct to just let these guys talk. Don't let the bureaucracy feed them things. But that is easier said than done.

So therefore, he decided that Steve Hadley had to stay back, not to monitor them per se or to coach them because they didn't need any coaching but to make sure nobody else tried to coach them. So, this meant that even though I had been on the job for a month I was going to be the national security advisor on the Australia leg of the trip. So, the first stop was, as I said, a surprise visit to Iraq. We were flying out to Ali al Asad air base and we were getting all the Iraqi leadership out there. The sheiks from Anbar province who lived all out there and then Prime Minister Maliki who had a grand comfortable helicopter ride out there and various other leaders to assemble with Bush and it was a very interesting scenario because this was returning home for me but it started off with the flight on Air Force One.

The problem is that Bush didn't want to reveal that he was leaving early to go to Iraq because we can't tell anybody. So, the question was how we get out to the airbase. Somebody came up with - you get five Suburbans and drive through what I thought were the most dangerous parts of Washington in the middle of the night, unmarked without any escorts with the president. To the big hangar out at Andrews where you could park it turns out a 747 inside so we basically drive into this hangar, get into this airplane and then when nobody was looking the 747 and the trail 747 would take off. This was a really screwy idea but it was a lot of fun roaring through southeast Washington like this. And in a totally unorthodox presidential movement.

So, it got even more unorthodox because as we were coming in for the final approach

Bush reminded everybody that he had been an air force pilot and he wanted to take control of the 747. So how much he took the controls I don't know but I can say that we landed safely. I suspect there are a few buttons the pilot can push so that the plane lands itself, but anyway, so he was in a good mood and he met with everybody. There was a sense of optimism with Crocker and Petraeus, who were getting ready to go back, and with Maliki and others that I knew. There was a general feeling that we might be turning the corner.

Q: A quick question with Maliki. The end game of the surge from Bush's point of view you mentioned was a SOFA. Was that discussed because in the end the SOFA failed and it failed to a large extent because of Maliki.

JEFFREY: To a large extent because of the parliament with Maliki not helping. But that was in 2011. We had to get this done in 2008. Let me get to that. It is one package. The only way I am going to do the National Security Council thing is if I do this in little modules, little parts in a row. We are not talking about one country, we are talking about 30 issues.

So, we then went on to the APEC conference in Sydney. The President was only marginally enthused about this per-se. But of course, he did have various bilateral visits which is the reason he was out there. We had the economic staff who did a great job, the economic security staff and the USTR basically doing the whole trade side of that and there were the typical APEC meetings, but my focus was on the bilateral meetings. We had several interesting ones. This was the first time I ever met with the Chinese leadership. That included Xi, at the time he was one of the people with them. It was extraordinary because they were all wearing the same color suits and they all had the same color of hair. They all seemed to have the same pens they all would reach into their pocket and take out at the same time and I am sure that the notes they were taking were all the same. It was polite, courteous but at the same time it was very superficial. We didn't touch on sensitive themes like Taiwan or North Korea. Possibly North Korea just in passing. It was just the trade relationship and happy faces.

The other two meetings that were significant were with the opposition leader in Australia Rudd, and with Putin. Rudd was interesting for two reasons. First of all, the president loved Howard, the prime minister of Australia. Howard was his go to guy on Iraq and on Afghanistan and Howard just had a very brash Australian outback kind of way about him that endeared him to Bush who sees himself as the outback guy from Texas. So we had all kinds of side events like dinners with these guys. You can tell the camaraderie was very strong. Rudd is a different kind of a guy. He is an intellectual, a former diplomat. A China expert, speaks fluent Chinese but he had been very critical of Howard and very critical of Bush being a left of center guy and Bush didn't really like him very much. Therefore, Bush wanted to know why he had to meet with the opposition leader. So we went around and around and he finally agreed. Then as happenstance would have it, he got to break up the meeting early as we were sitting there. Of course, this was thrown together at the last moment because Bush could not make a final decision, and it was we had to go to Rudd rather than Rudd coming to us despite protocol. Rudd being the

opposition leader; not in any particularly significant room we were in some kind of it was like a Masonic Temple room that might have formerly been a gym or something it was pretty nondescript.

We got about 20 minutes into the meeting which was mainly Rudd talking about China and Bush sort of nodding and probably surreptitiously looking at his watch. Suddenly there was a little bit of noise and such and somebody came in and said, "Mr. President, Prime Minister Olmert is on the line." We figured out that this must be Al Kabar because the president had left it with Olmert. OK I have got your back. It is your decision, I will support you whatever you do whether you want me to do it or you want to do this. So the problem is when I said the prime minister is on the line obviously we had to take the call.

We did not understand what "on the line was." There was a little empty room that probably was the foyer to the bathroom and there was the telephone on the floor. So the president of the United States and I laid down on the floor so that I could monitor the conversation which is basically Olmert saying I did it and the president saying good for you. But there was nothing memorial about that other than the message was passed on. Then of course we had to engineer the various things preparing for retaliation but actually we didn't see it because, and this is of some significance for the North Korea situation now, the Israelis got away with this. My big concern was that unlike a U.S. strike, an Israeli strike could have consequences because the Syrians could retaliate against Israel obviously very easily, either directly through the Golan or indirectly through Hezbollah. We didn't know at the time whether Iran, we were pretty sure Iran didn't know about this nuclear gambit of Assad's but we did not know.

What the Israelis did was they didn't announce it or do a victory parade. They didn't carry the pilots off on the shoulders of their ground crews. They just kept quiet. I was trying to think with a little bit of help from various sources what it must have been like in Assad's presidential office that morning. When he comes in and with almost nobody in Syria knowing about this thing because it was a totally black operation even from most Syrians. Sooner or later one of his flunkies must have said project whatever the code name was, we are not getting any communications from them this morning because the Israelis did a great job, in looking at the site and looking at the pilots they were using, they decided not to waste precision munitions on it but use gravity bombs and they all hit and bye-bye site and everybody in it.

So, I am sure Assad was saying have those communications people check their lines and make sure they are not down or there was not a sand storm or anything and probably we still can't get it, what is going on. Well do we have a helicopter or anything that can do a fly over. Well I don't know they are busy at that base and they don't have any fuel today. I mean hour after hour goes on. What happens is you have this vague sense. I am just imagining this but from various accounts I think it was pretty close to what happened. They only slowly get the idea that maybe something really bad has gone wrong.

Then the question is what went wrong. Because these guys aren't nuclear physicists. They don't know whether the idiots there had blown themselves up or melted themselves down. Then if you think a strike then a strike by whom. The United States is the usual candidate but also Israel given its history of striking Iraq and threatening Iran. But you still don't know who because there is no announcement out of Washington, nothing out of Tel Aviv, everything was fine. I imagine the sun was still shining. Guys were still bringing Assad his chai. You know there was other business of state he had to do. So, in this little tiny place he had this little tiny problem that nobody knew about. So, while he was trying to figure out what- happened and what to do about it. I am sure it kept on subconsciously occurring to him you know, this is a big thing at one level because I am not going to have a nuclear bomb. But nobody knows about it, as I said the sun is still shining. People are still bowing and scraping as I walk by, and tell me, why I want to start a war and spend the next two weeks like Hitler in Berlin in a bunker someplace. Hmmm. Why don't I just kind of wait until I get more information and we wait and they get more information and we still don't know who the hell did it. Well then, the story leaks out and eventually over months it leaks out and we went up to Congress and briefed the whole thing. But the Israelis waited years before they announced they had done it. And of course, the Syrians never retaliated. So that was the Al Kabar adventure.

But more to come. The North Korea issue was very hot during the entire period I was at the NSC because this was the last gasp effort by Condoleezza Rice and Chris Hill to try to get an agreement and it was very controversial because we had picked up information that they not only had the plutonium reactor which they eventually spiked if you will by blowing it up at the high point of the negotiations, meanwhile we also discovered the physical evidence that they also had an enrichment program. So even if we got rid of this thing we wouldn't be out of the woods with the North Koreans and also it was another indication that they basically were cheating and this whole thing was kind of a farce. Therefore, there was a huge dispute in the administration essentially with Rice on one side and the vice president on the other but many people were skeptical of this and it wasn't just the vice president. To some degree President Bush was. But to her credit Condoleezza Rice dug in and said look we have got to give this a try. I think in the long run the people who were skeptical were also right because like any other attempt at getting North Korea to negotiate, there is nothing to negotiate. They want to have not just nuclear weapons but nuclear weapons that could strike the United States, not because they are afraid we are going to invade them but because they are going to invade the South. Just like Ho Chi Minh and just like Kim's grandfather. And by that conclusion which I can now say in 2017 was not as easy to say in 2007 so we continued on that. Again, there was probably a fair amount of churn as that was one of the two most controversial issues in the NSC during that period.

The second controversial issue was Iran. I was very worried about some of the bellicose statements coming out of the administration that we would wind up getting in a conflict with Iran because what had previously happened was knowing that the Iranians were pursuing a nuclear weapons program we basically turned that over to the Europeans. The

Europeans, basically the three, Germany, Britain and France had been conducting negotiations and they didn't go anywhere. The Europeans were insisting on a freeze on enrichment and the Iranians once Ahmadhinejad got into power were not cooperative. Eventually the Europeans broke off the negotiations.

Back in 2006 we started encouraging them through Nick Burns the undersecretary and obviously Condoleezza Rice to engage again and by 2007 the president had taken the decision. This is an important one to understand in later what happened with the JCPOA. That of the two choices, a unilateral American effort which because we had already sanctioned everything we could ourselves, would have meant war. A repeat of Iraq in a country three times the size of Iraq. Or doing this through a multilateral process that involved obviously the Europeans, obviously the security council and China and Russia and using the NPT the non-proliferation treaty and using the hated IAEA, and it was hated because the fellow who was the head of it was basically a third world nationalist and was not very good, he just basically didn't do his job. Essentially, he took the side of Iran at every opportunity. I don't know exactly when but then we got a new head of the IAEA, Amano, it was some time in that period and that gave us hope. So therefore, once Bush had decided on that course of action we formed the P-5 plus One and we passed five of the six Chapter VII nuclear resolutions that increasingly sanctioned Iran in the security council.

People forget this including the Republicans who voted against the president in the effort to overturn the JCPOA in 2015. At the end of the day the decision was taken not by Obama but by Bush. Now Obama put a lot more effort into that and helped by the fact that Rohani became president, essentially there were three new characters. Rohani, Omano and Obama who got the thing over the goal line but it was teed up by Bush. That was a very critical decision in his administration.

Q: I always found it odd that Obama in defending it did not mention that more often.

JEFFREY: I noted that in a less extreme way than we are now experiencing. Obama's attitude was, I am the anti-George Bush. Therefore, how can my signature foreign policy accomplishment be something that Bush actually set us on the road to. And so that took up an awful lot of time. One of the side elements of this was we got a report, and this was an interesting vignette on Bush. We got a report from the usual sources that confirmed that the weaponization program that the Iranians had been pursuing as one of the three pillars of any nuclear weapons program had advanced very far but had ended in 2003.

A little bit of background. Essentially a nuclear weapons program needs three elements. One is fissile material to make the nuclear device. Secondly a delivery system and thirdly a weaponization program to make the fissile material fit into the delivery system. Now of the three pillars the problem is the two easiest to do, a delivery system and fissile material are dual use. You can have fissile material in a plutonium reactor for civilian purposes and you can have long range missiles not for civilian purposes but for conventional military purposes particularly if they are fairly accurate. But you can't have a nuclear weaponization program for civilian purposes. There is only one purpose. Therefore, that

is the smoking pistol, but it is hard to discover that because a lot of this can be done in underground test units. There is a lot of metallurgy and it can be done in a room about as big as the building we are in now. But we got very good intelligence about how far they have gotten but very interestingly they stopped in 2003. That is an interesting year.

The reason they stopped it of course was they had 100,000 American troops next door and they were afraid they might be next, so that is what we assumed. North Korea was also behaving. The only year in the last 25 North Korea behaved was 2003 as well. So the problem is first of all we wanted to be sure this is correct, and after a lot of additional research we concluded that while there could have been some individual cheating by some of the people because the individuals one Fakrizadeh I think is his name who is at the top of the list of people who had been sanctioned and is still sanctioned under the JCPOA for a number of additional years, we tried very hard to figure out what they were up to. They may have been pursuing some of this on their own; we don't know.

But it was not a major effort after 2003, which could indicate one of two things. They really were afraid to have something that could identify themselves with a nuclear weapon but would also put the lie to the famous Ayatollah Khomeini fatwa that Iran could never have nuclear weapons. But the Iranians also I think had made real advances in weaponization. It is not as hard as people think. Because you start with the ballistics of normal warheads and then you have to work through the special inside the machinery of a nuclear device but you have a lot of the ballistics already there. This has relevance to where we are with the Iranians today. I met with, it was off the record so I will say a very senior Iranian diplomat who was very knowledgeable about the negotiations with Kerry and I asked him about what we had found out. I got a denial of course. I said, "Look, I have seen everything. I am sure you have seen everything. I don't think you can deny this."

He smiled and said, "We didn't have a nuclear weaponization program, we had nuclear weaponization studies." But they never said that formally and have never admitted that in the context of the JCPOA, so there was no doubt they were doing it. We reviewed all of this at the level of the deputies which I chaired and the question was what to do with it. It was obvious to all of us we have got to hide this because we are in the process of organizing this international diplomatic effort to mobilize the international community against Iran. What is going to happen if in the middle of it we come out and say "Hey they stopped their weaponization, they had a weaponization program but they haven't been doing it for the last five years." So, we immediately stamped top secret on it and sent it upstairs to be blessed by the National Security Council. It lands on Bush's desk and he says "Absolutely not". Again, this is the Bush of 2007 who has learned from his earlier experiences and one of the things is you don't not tell the American people everything you know about some middle eastern country's weaponization program. So reverse course, get out there and let people know what is going on.

Q: Is this around the same time, I am not remembering the exact year, when the Cyber effort became public? The effort that we had to penetrate some of their military cyber communications.

JEFFREY: Yeah there was a whole lot of other ideas and activities going on to slow down the Iranian nuclear program but I can't talk about them.

Q: That is fine.

JEFFREY: But this was a huge preoccupation for this administration. It was also part of our public diplomacy policy for example. I and others went out and explained to Congress what was going on with what we had found and where we thought we were so we had to be honest this is not 2003 but it is evidence for the case that they are trying to develop a nuclear weapon. They have just decided to stop the development of that part of it for the moment either because they had been very successful or they are afraid they are going to be found out.

It was around this time we also discovered the Fordow site and of course the Natanz site they had also hidden but information that was passed on by the MEK the Mujahideen al Halk which is this very extreme group, it was on one of our terrorist lists for some time. Initially left wing then right wing nationalist anti-Ayatollah Iranian movement with great contacts in Washington. Who had come up with the intelligence or had delivered the intelligence so the Iranians had been found out.

We found out about Fordow and we kept it a secret. It was the Obama administration that broke that news. This was very helpful to us in mobilizing the international community because the Iranians were saying one thing and doing another. So, we had this huge mass of evidence that basically was very convincing. We proceeded along that line and essentially turned it over to the Obama administration where you got a lot more effort again without success until 2013. What happened in 2013, Rohani replaced Ahmadinejad. So, the Iran deal, the peace process that ultimately wound up in a summit at Annapolis, and the effort to defend the surge together was much of the focus of the last few months of the administration but there were a few other things we did.

One was the activities against Al Qaeda throughout the middle east, and there were several aspects to this. You had the issue of Guantanamo, by this time Bush had become convinced that we should close Guantanamo but we could find no place to bring these guys because no state wanted them. We thought about federal prisons and military prisons but again state governments were opposed and congress was opposed. For two reasons. First of all, there was a very anti obviously Al Qaeda sentiment and by this time Bush and people around him had shifted to some degree quite far to the left with resistance from Vice President Cheney. So, they bought a lot of the arguments that Guantanamo was a blot on America.

Again, you have to go back to Bush's world view after 9/11. He basically did not see Islam as the enemy. He saw Islam as he would put it as a peaceful and great religion that was being perverted by a few outlier elements to produce chaos in the middle east and a

threat to the United States. Therefore while you had to fight these guys you also had to be careful not to alienate the rest of the middle east. And while he would never admit it, I am sure at one or another level he understood that Iraq and all that came with it including Abu Ghraib had certainly worked counter to his initial instincts and actions after 9/11 of going to the mosque here in Washington and then doing other things to make clear this is not a war against Islam. So, he bought on to the argument, I didn't buy into it but he brought on to the argument that Guantanamo was a blot on our national consciousness.

Q: If we closed it did he have a framework for dealing with the inmates in some legal context outside of Guantanamo?

JEFFREY: Well that is two questions. You have got the physical question and you have got the legal question. I am glad you raised this because it indicates a very interesting aspect of Bush. It is very important to know the status of those people. These were illegal enemy combatants. That is, it is a subset of the laws of war. And under the laws of war you can imprison people who are on the other side as long as the conflict is continuing because you don't release people who can go back and wage war on you. That was, and of course we had very extensive programs to try and find ways to assimilate these people and get countries to take them and the countries would sign off on them.

The best for me was Saudi Arabia. They did the best job as far as I can tell of reintegrating people. It wasn't always successful but it was better than most others and we were most happy in turning people back to the Saudis, we were least happy with Yemen. I remember Yemen in particular and having visited Yemen I knew why you couldn't really expect a whole lot to happen there. So, the legal status of these people was clear but what people fail to understand is that we also were able to take legal action against many of these people essentially if they had violated the laws of war or committed other crimes. That is per-se being an illegal enemy combatant is not really a crime. Now the laws of war are tricky about that because you are fighting out of uniform and such but when we were talking about crimes we were talking about something that we could prove even in a federal court or a military commission that this person is one of the people who put together 9/11 or one of the attackers on the CIA camp in Afghanistan or something like this. So, a person might be in Guantanamo and he was in many cases in two separate categories.

One was illegal enemy combatant. The second was defendant in a legal process for having violated the laws of war or something typically terrorism laws. And people tended to miss the fact that you have these two separate statuses. I use the example of my father in law who was interned as a German soldier in WWII in Texas. As long as the war went on he was going to be interned in Texas. Because he was a prisoner of war under the laws of war. Well if he murdered an American officer he would also become the defendant, quite possibly tried by German officers but also by possibly in an American court. But in either case he would simultaneously be in two statuses, POW and defendant in a legal process. If he was found innocent in the legal process he wouldn't be released, he would go back to being a POW.

People missed this and the guy who missed it more than anyone else was President Bush and I will come to that. But that is the complexity of it. People said look, you have lousy evidence on them. Why are you holding these people without evidence? Because they are illegal enemy combatants. Why were we holding prisoners of war in WWII? We didn't have evidence against them. All the evidence we needed was that by you know some sergeant said, "I found this motherfucker you know with three of our rounds in him lying in a hooch off of Highway 13 after a fire fight." OK then he is an enemy combatant. I mean it wouldn't be something like that because those people were never brought all the way to Guantanamo. Typically, they were people who had been following and had been associating with Al Qaeda, not just the Taliban. For example, we never brought Iraqis to Guantanamo. We turned them all over to the Iraqis eventually and I will get into this later to some degree but with one exception, we never treated Iraqis as terrorists. No matter how they were using you know, force against us. Therefore, at the end of the day we had to turn them all over to the Iraqi government.

They released many of them who went on to be the hard core of ISIS. So, I told them not to release them. So the problem with Guantanamo was the U.S. Congress did not want to release them for two reasons. First of all, these were terrorists and we shouldn't be soft on terrorists. There was that sentiment. The other sentiment was nobody wanted these people in their own state regardless of what kind of facility, so while Bush pushed for, he spent an awful lot of time talking about this, particularly with DOD we never got anywhere, nor did the Obama administration.

So, at one point we actually had one of the terrorists from Guantanamo on trial in a terrorist case, and we were following the terrorist case. Now remember this is the Bush administration. We had gotten in a great deal of trouble in the period of Gonzales and some of Cheney's people on trying to be overly directive of the Department of Justice. In fact, stripping the office of legal counsel of responsibility for passing judgment on any executive branch legality issue and putting that I think either in the office of the vice president or the president's legal advisor, and that was turned down at the last moment by I think it was Condi, I think Condoleezza Rice directly to the president. But so Bush had learned through experience and he was very much a product of the experiences he had learned through his first administration to keep his hands off of anything the Department of Justice was doing.

I was involved at one point in a case where it was the assassination attempt that had an Argentinian connection and a Venezuelan Chavez plot against Chavez opponents in the States and we had picked up the guys before they were able to do the assassination. This obviously had extraordinary implications for everything in South America. So, at one point the FBI was about to act on something but it was not a propitious time because there was either an OAS summit or some other political thing in South America. So, I mentioned to Bush: Gee we are on this, we see the problems and I will just tell the FBI to hold off. I got a ten-minute lecture on how it is not the job of the White House to tell the FBI to do anything. In the atmosphere of 2017 this was interesting.

So, in the case of this terrorist who is being tried in a court in the United States because the military commission, I will get involved in that later, has been a total failure in every respect. But it is also totally unnecessary because federal courts are perfectly capable and successful in trying international terrorists. So, this was an international terrorist case and we were monitoring it. I briefed Bush and I said again remember these guys always have two statuses. I said, "Mr. President, not to worry. If this guy is acquitted there are federal marshals that we have posted who will immediately arrest him and bring him back to Guantanamo." Bush had another fit. He said, "Huh? I can't put anybody back in jail anywhere including Guantanamo if an American court has found them innocent." He is the commander in chief and I am trying to explain. "No this is wrong Mr. President. You are wrong, this guy is still an illegal enemy combatant." He just looked at me and said, "You don't understand politics do you. We are not going to do this." I said, "OK." So anyway, fortunately the guy was convicted because I don't know what I would have done.

I think there was a real possibility that the federal marshals would have refused because we can't give them, it is just like the Trump administration discovered, it is very difficult to give federal law enforcement officials orders to do things or not do things out of the White House. Then the case of the homeland security secretary to the White House Counsel you are not in my chain of command that is probably what we would have gotten. I was ready to call these guys.

Anyway, one thing that took up an awful lot of time was how we used the authorization for the use of military force in 2001 to go after Al Qaeda terrorists and other people who seemed to be like Al Qaeda terrorists the Al Shaba in Somalia and other groups. Then it started getting complicated with things like the pirates off of Somalia who were becoming very active in that period. I was in charge of that effort and we did nothing. There was an area where the Obama administration was much more creative than we were. They mobilized both NATO and the EU and the navy, tasked the navy headquarters Fifth Fleet in Bahrain. They got a lot more vessels out there. They also approved which we never could get agreement to put essentially armed escorts and Blackwater type people on the vessels which was very effective. They really beat the piracy threat back. One of the problems we had was we couldn't quite make the link between the pirates and 9/11.

But for the rest of the region we could and of course we focused an awful lot on this. Much of the action was on Pakistan, and there was a bit of a complication that could have been a problem for the White House but surprisingly was not. About the time of the surge the White House brought in Lt. General Doug Lute to be the deputy national security advisor and assistant to the President. For Afghanistan and Iraq. Now the way this was pitched was interesting if you go back to 2006 and 2007 when it happened it was Lute was going to be a direct line to the President through the Chief of Staff just like Fran Townsend was the homeland security advisor. Townsend did not work for Steve Hadley. Townsend worked directly through the Chief of staff to the President for all homeland security things. Now that sounds complicated and now we are going to have a third guy who just did Iraq and Afghanistan. As it turned out Doug Lute either voluntarily formally

or informally wound up working as Hadley's deputy national security advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan.

Now the complication was and Richard Holbrooke put his finger on this when he came in and had the coordinator job for Hillary Clinton later, that I had Pakistan. So, I had Pakistan and Lute had Afghanistan. How is this going to work? That is the interesting thing and it is the genius of Steve Hadley. Because Hadley was the kind of person he was, we had no friction between myself and Lute. Also, I was someone who knew the army and who had been in the army at about the same time and it was the same with Fran Townsend and her people and the rest of us. We basically cooperated seamlessly and very smoothly. So it looked awkward but in fact it was not.

But still it was a mistake to have two people doing Pakistan and Afghanistan because the main thing we cared about was not Pakistan other than the nuclear weapons and a little bit of India, it was of course Afghanistan. The Hakani group, the Al Qaeda elements and particularly the Taliban elements both the Afghan and Pakistan Taliban and we were very worried about the Pakistan Taliban. So, I spent a lot of my time on the issue of Pakistan because that was our main avenue of approach into Afghanistan, we were toying with going through central Asia. The Obama administration made more progress on that. But basically, the only way in was to overfly or go by road through Pakistan. We are paying them many billions of dollars a year through the other military assistance programs we are giving them.

We weren't getting a lot in return, in particular we weren't getting much cooperation against these groups. On the other hand, we were monitoring and helping the Pakistanis very closely on their own fight against these basically Pashtun terrorist groups, Pakistani Taliban and other groups and I have to say these were very difficult fights. And the Pakistani army, which is a conventional force and thinks in a kind of mid-20th century way, had a very difficult time against these groups. Often their bases in the FATA would be surrounded and we were working with them to try to break through to them. So, to some degree I can understand that they didn't want to bring even more pressure on their military because their military felt their job was to fight India not to fight these guys.

Likewise, diplomatically they felt that keeping an oar in the water with the Afghan Taliban was important to insure that we didn't abandon Afghanistan which they figured we would do sooner or later and turn it over to India. It was an enemy of my enemy kind of thing. So, this made relations with Pakistan very complicated and there were tremendous efforts, a lot of work with the Saudis with Musharraf. And then there was Bhutto. Madame Bhutto was killed. This was just horrific, but the amount of time we put into Pakistan was incredible. Admiral Mullen was our lead person on the personal relationship with Musharraf and the Pakistan military but it was a very time consuming and not very productive relationship, but we had to do it. Then separate from that but it often did involve Pakistan was the effort to go after Al Qaeda bands. My job as deputy national security advisor was to manage that.

Q: Just one quick question then. As Pakistan toyed with the Afghan Taliban and left the Haqqani network alone, they were opposed to Al Qaeda.

JEFFREY: They the Pakistanis were opposed to Al Qaeda. They were very happy with us being there and they were very happy with us being there and the Taliban being there. That was a nice situation. Where they didn't want us to leave but they didn't want us to defeat the Taliban either and they were very successful in ensuring that we wouldn't I thought. Dick Holbrooke was absolutely right when he came in and decided the secret to success in Afghanistan is in Islamabad, not in Kabul or in Kandahar. The problem was it is a little bit like North Korea. We have the mistaken belief that if you simply build trust and open communications and have a great negotiator success is always going to happen. But it sometimes doesn't. There are incompatible national interests. When national interests are incompatible you have two choices.

You live with them being incompatible and try to paste them over or you go to war. And nobody wants to go to war with Pakistan and up until today nobody wants to go to war with North Korea, you basically paste over the differences. But one of the ways we paste over the differences is to flog the dead horse of diplomacy and say we have got to keep all avenues open which makes sense. So at least we can pretend we are doing something but that often ends up that we are promising more than we can deliver. Diplomacy is not the answer to everything. You sometimes have to live with incompatibilities and hope they don't turn into something really bad or you have to go to war. Then the other side will change its priorities; surviving an American attack is more important than policy X. Most problems are not of that sort. Most problems lend themselves to diplomacy but with Pakistan we were encountering one that was a national existential issue for them. Today in 2017 we have a hard time with Turkey understanding that the PKK offshoot PYD and the Gulenist movement are for not just the president but for the vast majority of Turks an existential issue. And if we are not on it exactly where they want us to be on it, they are going to be very unhappy, and we can't bridge that gap. I think it is the same thing with North Korea. Nuclear strike capability against North America is an existential issue. For Pakistan making sure that Afghanistan doesn't fall into the hands of India and making sure that the Taliban isn't so strong that it will decide to take the Pashtun areas of Pakistan. Basically, you have got the same dynamic with the Albanians in the Balkans. The Kurds in the middle east and the Pashtun, mountain peoples who split into several different countries, nobody wants to see them unified. A very complex problem.

Anyway, both there and Yemen and elsewhere we were constantly reviewing how we could go after terrorists. Drone strikes, direct strikes or using our local surrogates were the three ways we could do this. We had a very complex system of review. In some places under certain circumstances the combatant commander could order strikes. If it were a military strike, if it was under title 50 the CIA they could do things but again they had to do it under certain rules. It was my job essentially to carry a chart at all times, in country X, agency Y wants to go after target Z. What are the rules of engagement? What is the approval level? And all of that. That was the formal system. The informal system because

these people all work well together because Gates or Hayden would not do anything without first checking with Hadley and the President so they wouldn't wake up and find out that we had lost an aircraft or that we had hit a school or something like that. Then they could drag me in and I point to the chart and say no that was delegated to the Secretary of Defense. That was delegated to the combatant commander. It doesn't matter. Once a screw up happens Hadley wants to know, the president wants to know why I didn't know.

So anyway, that was a very delicate part of the operation. We were very careful because this involved the deliberate killing of people in many of these situations. We had to be very careful that we weren't violating U.S. law against assassinations and particularly cases where it would involve Americans. But even Americans or not. Americans are just more sensitive politically but it is the same regardless of who. Essentially what you had to do was make an airtight case that the individual was still actively performing as an illegal enemy combatant. You can bomb illegal enemy combatants just like you can shell the front lines in Normandy. They are targets so therefore we had to treat them as targets. But you had to walk through that process every single time. We were really rigid about it. The Obama administration did a lot more of these strikes particularly drone strikes but again my suspicion is they used, knowing Barack Obama, the same very stringent criteria. The other issue that is always complicated is "collateral damage." Essentially, people who were not clearly illegal enemy combatants were sometimes struck. We tried very hard to avoid that but having reviewed many of these things that I can't get into for various reasons, the chances of somebody showing up at the wrong time in the wrong place was often quite daunting. If you were going to do this you tried to do your best but you had to realize that sometimes things wouldn't work out and sometimes things wouldn't work out for our people too.

OK going around the broader Middle East. Turkey was an issue that I followed closely because I had served in Turkey and at this time I had been selected to be the ambassador, to go out to Turkey so I had a particular brief on Turkey. The Turks were in a very difficult situation with the PKK in 2007-2008. They were also in the midst of Ergenekon crisis where Erdogan was almost overthrown by the military and the precipitating event was the Turkish president, a very undistinguished individual, was about to leave in 2007 and Erdogan was going to appoint as president Gul who was the foreign minister. Now everybody liked Gul. The only problem was that Gul's wife wore a headscarf and the Turkish military thought that it was an affront to the secular state and the legacy of Kemal Ataturk. There you would have a woman wearing a headscarf in the presidential palace. Now this is nonsense. Seventy percent of women in Turkey wear a head scarf although in the countryside it is also to protect you from the sun. It is not a particularly Islamic thing. But still this was a huge issue, and there was a debate in the administration on how much we might want to see the military succeed.

There Condoleezza Rice took a very strong position that we had to support democracy. Again, this gets to Bush and the whole issue of Guantanamo and other things. Throughout his entire administration Bush felt that we are not at war against Islam or at war with Erdogan because he is an offshoot of the Moslem Brothers. We are trying to

promote a kinder and gentler Islam and democracy was the way, the key to unlock that kinder and gentler Islam. You don't want to provoke people with Abu Ghraib; you don't want to provoke people with Guantanamo. You want to find other ways to go after terror. You want to be very careful with drone strikes. It was a sensible course of action that he doesn't get enough credit for. As I said Obama did a lot more drone strikes but if people said who was hard on Muslims? Bush, and who embraced Muslims? Because of his Cairo speech they would say Obama. But in fact, Bush was trying very hard but he could never get rid of the legacy in the middle east of Iraq. In the minds of some particularly in the Arab street an attack on Islam in the middle east was an attack on Arab pride. In the minds of people, we really cared about, it was what are you doing. You are just empowering the Iranians. You are going to turn this region into mush. So, in all of the things we did and much of our activities in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkey, going after Al Qaeda, Iraq, they all involved the middle east in the themes that have become central to this administration and United States foreign policy beginning with 9/11. This was huge, and the peace process too.

This was a huge part of what we were doing. Other than briefly Putin managed to attract our attention with Georgia which I will get to in a second, and North Korea, essentially that was our foreign policy. This complex of issues in the middle east. China we basically ignored. I mean we would have some trade problems and some cooperation on this and that. And you would have the Taiwan arms thing. We had several arms packages that I had to help navigate. They were problematic because you had Congress taking a very pro Taiwan position and the Chinese being adamantly opposed. Bush wanting to have a good relationship with the Chinese but also not wanting to betray an ally, the Taiwanese. Basically, that was a minor diversion. The South China Sea wasn't a problem.

Q: They hadn't built the atolls up yet.

JEFFERY: Right and they were a member of the six-party process that Chris Hill and Condoleezza Rice were running so the Chinese were in a good place on Korea. So basically, the Middle East in one or another form was the dominant theme of my entire term in the White house. With Turkey again there was some question as to were we rooting for the military or were we rooting for Erdogan. Essentially the decision came down that we have got to root for Erdogan but we were not going to do anything in either case. It was just an internal matter but because America thinks that for every leaf that falls we should have not only an opinion on it but a policy towards it. We had to figure that out but we came down in the right place I think despite all of our problems with Erdogan.

I am now talking 2017 and we have a list of complaints and such as high as this high ceiling and we have also just had an extremely successful military campaign against ISIS in Iraq and Syria largely conducted out of Turkey with Turkish cooperation. Which continues every day so Turkey is always complex. At one point the Turks were really concerned about the PKK attacks in Southeastern Turkey. Erdogan was trying to reach out to the PKK in this one instance and he was getting rebuffed and he felt that he had to show that he was tough and that if he could if not fully defeat them, then deliver reverses

militarily, that they would be in a better position to respond to his pitch. I will get into this a little bit more later.

Anyway Erdogan being more of a Sunni Islamist in terms of his national identity as opposed to being a Turkish nationalist didn't have any particular problems with Kurds who are also Sunni Muslims whereas the deep Turkish State as we call it, the Kemalist successors of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk particularly in the bureaucracy and above all in the military saw themselves as the State of the Turks and anybody who was not a Turk had to become a Turk whatever that means. But so Erdogan needed to have success against the Kurds. He was unhappy with us because he felt that we had by encouraging the quasi-separate status of the Kurdistan regional government in northern Iraq we had given a refuge to the PKK but it wasn't true. Masud Barzani was a bitter enemy of the PKK. He had fought them in 1997 and he was developing slowly but surely, encouraged by us, good relations with Erdogan which blossomed in the Obama administration lubricated literally by oil and gas.

But there was still friction with Bazani and there was a very serious problem with the PKK. This led to in the winter of 2007-2008 a major Turkish incursion about 5000 troops plodding at 7-10 thousand feet above sea level through three feet of snow trying to chase the PKK into northern Iraq. Well this did not turn out well as one can imagine. So then Erdogan sent an emissary, General Urgun Saygun, was deputy chief of staff of the Turkish General Staff, to come to Washington to deliver a message to the president. He got in to see the president and the message was: we need your help because this is really serious. We were very concerned about the incursion and the effect on Iraq. Again, this was Bush's preoccupation number one and now you had 5000 Turkish troops storming into Iraq even if it is very far away from the Iraq we all knew. If you have never seen that terrain, which I have.

Still so Bush basically figured Erdogan is our ally. We need him and he sent this guy, and Saygun was a very appealing character. A good diplomat as well as soldier. Saygun had some experience chasing the PKK too. He said he once went into Tunceli province and he was about 5'3" He would make fun of his height. He said he once led a brigade by helicopter into Tunceli province which is the one province in Turkey I never went to for good reason. Why he took his brigade into that I don't know but it was in the winter. He said he jumped out of the helicopter into 6 feet of snow.

So, Saygun went to the president and the president said. OK, I have got your back. Go see Jeffrey for the details. So anyway I sat down with Saygun a few minutes later and we came up with various ways that we would be very active in helping them against the PKK and we have continued that help to today even though for the last several years we have been arming the PYD which is an offshoot of the PKK, but the middle east is complicated; anyway they the Turks were very appreciative of that help. So, the Turkish relationship certainly compared to where it is today was in a much better place. There were some suspicions of Erdogan and his foreign minister Davutoglu because of their pan-Islamic pitch but as they couldn't put much juice behind it in terms of either hard or

soft power it remained rhetoric and it didn't really get in the way of anything we were doing to a serious degree. Let me see; where else are we? I have to go in a little bit.

Q: You mentioned that you did want to get to Georgia. I don't know if we will have time today.

JEFFREY: I will wrap it up. Yeah, let me just do Georgia and wrap it up. OK. And wrap up the NSC part of it because what I am trying to do as you know because you have been listening to me is I am trying to put this in an organized thematic way rather than go on day one, on day 23, on day 24 and so it has some kind of tie, it has a sense of organization. Basically, you are looking at a map as I am doing this. Again while 90% of our attention was on the middle east with all of these various aspects of it, and North Korea as a bauble dangling out to the side, the situation with Russia was growing increasingly worse and there were several reasons for this. First of all, Bush had decided as part of our campaign against Iran and their nuclear program, we would put a handful of ballistic missile interceptors in Eastern Europe, specifically Poland. The missiles would go in Poland and the radar system would go in the Czech Republic. At the time we were doing this there was a new effort to try to get a NATO expansion further into the former Soviet Union.

Now the history behind this is the Russians argue that Jim Baker and others promised them that NATO would not move further east. The administration took the official position that meant eastern Germany only and in fact we have never stationed U.S. troops in the former East German Republic the DDR. But we didn't necessarily commit to not expanding NATO. Germany citing these commitments and what is called the founding act between NATO and Russia claimed that what this means is these countries can become part of NATO. Obviously Germany voted for these countries to become part of NATO because we are talking about all of the former eastern European satellites and the three Baltic countries. Only limit was that NATO could not extend its military command structure to the East.

This is a huge problem now in 2014 and 2017 with the rise of Russian aggression while we can and do station our troops along with other countries in the Baltics and in Poland and elsewhere they are basically not in any kind of integrated command and planning system with logistics and headquarters with communication and all the things you need to fight a war, which we had in 5th Corps in Germany. We had a set of U.S. plans and we had a set of NATO plans and we knew where to go and where to get our fuel. Who the commanders were, what orders we would execute, and what terrain we would defend and all of that. That kind of planning and that kind of if you will command control and logistical infrastructure does not exist east of NATO as in 1989 because the Germans are interpreting it that way. They were doing it because they did not want to provoke Putin.

I think I mentioned when I was in the CSCE unit in the bureau we listened to Kozyrev in Stockholm in 1992 give an earlier version of what became Putin's 2007 speech in Munich on Russia needs to regain its place in the sun with the implication that means regaining its

empire. We were facing this because the speech came during my period in the NSC and Putin was beginning to act in an aggressive manner.

He was taking a very tough position on this missile question. I think it was something like ten interceptors in Poland, partially because he said he was very unhappy because Bush had broken out of the ABM treaty. Now with the North Koreans it is the best thing George Bush had done but at the time the Russians were furious at it because it was technology we have and they don't and they feared we would use this as they feared again with Star Wars in the 1980's that we would use it to neutralize their second-strike capabilities.

But with ten missiles this was ridiculous and with the missiles so configured they could only shoot at Iranian intermediate range ballistic missiles and not Russian ones. I mean the Russians at the time had over 1700 strategic warheads because we were still negotiating with them on this. That is where we are making some progress. We got it down to 1700 on both sides. Then the Obama administration took it a little bit further down to 1550. But that was the only positive thing we were doing with the Russians. We were having more and more problems with them in Eastern Europe. It started with the missiles but also then fortunately or unfortunately there was a quest to have an expansion of NATO into the Caucasus especially into Georgia, and Ukraine.

This was very significant because these were former parts of the Soviet Union and Ukraine of course has a huge history with the Orthodox Church and Slavic history going back over 1000 years because Orthodox Christianity made it to Moscow via Ukraine. Now to be sure the Baltic countries had entered NATO so people thought there we had shown the former elements of the former Soviet Union could become parts of NATO. The problem is America never recognized the Baltic states as part of the Soviet Union. And the Baltic states which are basically colonies of the Scandinavians and Germans are catholic and protestant western-oriented places. That is not the case with the Caucasus and Ukraine. The other thing is while the Baltics are of some importance to Russia from a military, geographic and historic standpoint, they are not central like the Caucasus and Ukraine. It is clear even under the best interpretation that Putin wants to compete with not just Europe to his west but China to his east. Sooner or later he has to think about that. He doesn't want to be in a rump Soviet Union with 170 million people. He wants to somehow mobilize central Asia, the Caucasus, Ukraine, and Belarus back into this empire. That allows him to play directly into the middle east, project power into the middle east and to Europe and thus build up more influence be it with gas deals, be it with military pressure in order to be one of the three big players in the world with China and the sort of North Atlantic conglomeration of states.

To some degree that is understandable. The idea of NATO as an inherently aggressive force or at least the United States is wrong but you can see its perception; but the fact that China is an aggressor state despite the fact that China is mainly worried about the United States but by its nature it is an expansionist, in some ways, state, and Russia is to its north and to its west. So, Putin was becoming more and more difficult and Bush

became committed to the idea of expanding NATO to Ukraine and to Georgia in particular. Saakashvili had all kinds of support in the United States. You had these color revolutions in Ukraine and in Georgia. We had leaders we thought were our kind of leaders so Bush pushed very hard. This led to all kinds of problems with the Russians.

At the AIPEC summit in Sydney in 2007 we had a meeting with Putin. One of the more interesting things about that was, and this is an interesting example of Bush's character. We were getting in the elevator on the 23rd floor of our hotel to ride down. Now elevators for the president of the United States are carefully manifested. There are only so many people who can get on them. Mainly the Secret Service guys, the national security guys. I was playing that role. And the military attaché with the famous football. Just as the door was closing Condi who was also out there said, "Mr. President, let me ride down there with you. I have got some things to discuss." So, she hopped on which is probably OK, I mean how much does Condi weigh. But then three or four of her staffers, her own retinue, were going too. Then to my horror, because you are the acting National Security Advisor you feel you are responsible for everything. This is the president of the United States. I had been on the job a month and I had known him mainly through video when I was in Iraq, but I am still getting to figure out his predilections and such. I want to do a good job. Anyway, the elevator alarm starts ringing. Now had the chief of staff Josh Bolton been there he would have immediately asked, as smart as he was, Condi and team please leave because obviously we are not going anywhere. Well Josh wasn't there and I wasn't going to tell Condi. I already had one exchange with her where she made it very clear to me that as a former real national security advisor she didn't need to learn from me what my role versus her role would be with the president. So, I wasn't going to tell her to get out of the elevator.

But I had a situation, so what did I do? I and the president's body man both had the same instinct, which is you can't hold up the president on a meeting with Putin. So, we both hopped out of the elevator. So, the doors close and off goes Bush. So, we are stuck on the 23rd floor. There is no other elevator because the secret service has shut them all down. So, I start running down the steps. I have got my bad knees. This guy was in his 20's and very limber so I said, "Ok you go ahead and the president should go." If the president is still waiting, which I doubt, you go and I will find my way there. So anyway, he runs down all the stairs, and probably like me he figured this is a vain effort because Bush isn't going to wait for us. Well Bush did wait for us. He kept Putin waiting because, and this is George Bush, He is no dummy. He saw the scenario. He saw who leapt to his rescue. He wasn't going to leave those people; it wasn't personal to me or the body man. He wasn't going to leave those people. He wasn't going to have us rush down 23 flights of stairs to an empty garage where a motorcade should have been. We were going to rush down there and we were going to see George Bush and the 20-vehicle motorcade.

So, with some effort the body guy managed to persuade Bush to go on without me. And so when I got there I managed to rush back and commandeer a vehicle. I ended up with most of the meeting with Putin. And Putin was in a bad mood probably because he had been held up. All he did for 15 minutes was to harangue Bush about America being a

failed state. We own all these T-Bills. When are we going to get our money back? When are we going to see the benefits of doing these kinds of financial dealings with the United States? I mean it was absolutely incredible. Bush had enough experience with him now. Remember he had gone through the look in his eyes phase and he no longer felt this way and Bush kind of almost said nothing and just let Putin rant for almost an hour.

But it was a rant. It was not polite, it was arrogant. It was the Putin that we all know about. In fact, Bush had a joke about Putin. Everybody knows that Bush had this little dog Barney. Barney was always in the oval office, and I was always afraid about being so enthused about something when briefing the president that I would step on Barney. Then I would have been exiled to the State Department liaison to Antarctica expedition or something. So anyway, Bush tells a story of when Putin came to Texas to Bush's ranch he proudly introduced Putin to Barney. Then a year later Putin is hosting Bush at some dacha outside of Moscow in the great fir forests or whatever they have around there, birch forests. So, one day Bush is sitting in his own little dacha and there is a knock on the door and his secret service guy says it is President Putin. So, in walks Putin with something like a Doberman Pinscher or something even bigger and more vicious. Putin just smiles and says "Bigger than Barney, Meaner than Barney, faster than Barney."

The idea is this is the caliber of the man you are dealing with. So Bush is enthused about expanding NATO. He has got his missile program and we did everything to try to explain to the Russians we are working on that. It was one of my projects, how we could get Russian liaison offices to be at both of the sites so they could see. Now the objection there was not by the Russians but the Poles and the Czechs because they were really happy to have these systems not because they were worried about the Iranians but that they were worried about the Russians. They weren't getting any American deployment so they saw this as American military deployment. And the last thing they wanted was it to come along with a bunch of Russian liaison officers. But still we were putting that offer on the table. Gates and Rice both at one time went out to Moscow to meet with these people. I remember both of them have grown up as Russian experts as Russian speakers and everything. They almost got Putin to an agreement but then it fell apart again. I just note that Obama then canceled it and put in far less threatening missiles, land versions of the navy's SM-3 anti-missile systems that are on most of our ships. Even then Putin has turned on that as another challenge. It just shows that in the end there is nothing that will please him.

The one thing he was most furious about was the expansion of NATO but nonetheless Bush felt he had an obligation to do this. The main obstacle was Angela Merkel. Basically, she saw this as too provocative. She was willing to go along with Kohl's NATO expansion as well as Schroeder who went along with the Baltics but as far as Merkel was concerned how do we get to these places. How do we defend them? Part of the problem we discovered soon in, although we knew this obviously it's why Turkey is so important. The Black Sea is the main way you get to Ukraine or Georgia because they both border on it. But we can't get into the Black Sea without adhering to the stipulations of the Montreux Convention which limit the amount of ships you can have in the Black Sea at any given time plus the amount of time you notify the Turks to get permission to

go in there. So therefore, to surge into the Black Sea to protect Ukraine or Georgia in an emergency not only is not a legal possibility but as we saw a few months later after the June Bucharest summit, NATO summit, was a physical impossibility.

Merkel knew this and didn't want to provoke Putin for a militarily foolish reason. So, she opposed Bush very strongly although they got along very well. It wasn't just the little back massage. I mean he liked her and she liked him. She clearly found him a bit colorful. So, they had the final video conference. I would always sit in on these things because I would listen to the tête-à-tête between Merkel and the translator. Merkel had good English but she always had a translator there because Bush would sometimes slip into colloquialisms and plus the play back and forth you would get an idea of what Merkel was thinking. So anyway, Merkel basically dug in her heels. This was just before the Bucharest summit and she said, "No, George. There is no way I am going to go along with this." The technical thing was to give the two countries MAP which is a NATO term for the next step in what then becomes an inevitable process of becoming a NATO state with all kinds of NATO support for training and other things. She said I am not going to do it. So, Bush leans back, I cannot mimic a Texas accent very well, "Angela, OK. We are going to have a shoot-out at the OK Corral there in Bucharest." Merkel hears this and she turns to the translator and says. "was ist das?" The translator replies "I don't have the slightest idea". So I grab Bush and tell them we have to explain the OK Corral. He doesn't know what is going on here. We have got a real communications breakdown. He said, it is going to be real easy. It is going to be fine. But it is going to be really tough. She smiled and said, "OK, George I am ready."

Sure enough she stuck to her guns. They didn't get MAP. But then all of the Eastern European countries mainly on their own but probably with a little bit of nudging from some of our staff because Steve Hadley was out here and some of the others who were trying to get the best possible deal. OK they can't get MAP but in return let's do something. Let's put in something saying their ultimate vocation is to become members of NATO. It is a salve to the pain of not getting MAP. They went to Merkel and said, "You are abandoning us, you who have come from our part of Europe. Why are you doing this?" She basically yielded.

This became of course Putin's excuse for going into the Crimea and going into Ukraine. He always points to the Bucharest summit declaration, but in fact it was a defeat for the effort to try and expand NATO because to become a NATO state the first step is MAP and they didn't get the first step. All they got was some language that people thought we would forget about.

Then we went out to Beijing for the Olympic games in 2008. Now Steve Hadley had a policy that everybody had to take two weeks off while working on the national security council staff so we didn't burn out people to the extent that you stay un-burned out if you have two weeks leave and your marriage stays together and such. But he was trying but Hadley being Hadley, he decided that he would also take two weeks off. The two weeks he would take off was during the Beijing summit. Hadley was not as interested in Asia as he was in the rest of the world. This was a fluff trip. The only thing we were doing there

was we were going to the Olympics. So, he sent me along. So, I went along with a very light staff because we were just going to be meeting with Asians there, essentially the Chinese. We had the usual packet of meetings with the Chinese.

And we stopped on the way in South Korea, and I had never been to Korea before so I was looking forward to that. But I really didn't think I was going to do a lot of work. Now I had a wonderful special assistant who traveled with me everywhere, a foreign service officer. But I also had a really great secretary Kim Lang, who had worked in the White House and then stayed on. She was non-political so she stayed on and just recently left. Kim really did a great job. I said, "You know this is such a fluff trip, I will just take Kim along because nothing is going to happen and I have got the Asia team and Chris Hill and the State Department Asia team so if anything happens with the Chinese, I can rely on those guys." Condi wasn't on the trip or anything so it was just going to be fun. We were going to watch all the events in the Olympics.

So, two things happen. The first thing was, and we will see if this stays in the final. We have to fly to Alaska and we met the governor of Alaska, Sarah Palin who was all charming and sweet and very gracious to Bush. Who was to know that just a few weeks later she was to become the vice-presidential candidate much to the horror and surprise of the entire White House. Then we flew on and of course if you look at the map you are doing the great arc and the great arc takes you just to the east of Korea. We are going to land in Seoul. We are sitting there and you have got Air Force One and then the trail 747 with the communications staff and some Washington folks and some journalists and everything. Anyway, it is a long trip and I am fading in and out and there wasn't anything to do. Suddenly the military aide kind of shakes me and says "We have a problem." I said, "What is the problem?" He said, "The North Koreans have scrambled interceptors." I said, "Huh?" What are our options? We can divert to Japan. We can keep flying and we are also scrambling interceptors. We will get inside their security cone in X minutes. Does this rise to the level of the president and do you wake the president and all of that? I had to make a decision. Anyway, people didn't know if the North Koreans had the range because it all depends on the weapons load and a few other things to actually make it that far. So all we could do is vector the speed of the jets. Now bear in mind these are fast jets, but also bear in mind that unless they kicked in their afterburners they are not much faster than a 747.

We looked at the map and consulted with the pilot and the military aide and we concluded that we were going to be inside of our own protection range before they got to us. Now the trail 747 is another story. Of course, it looks just like Air Force One. It is a 747 blue and white. We figured that the North Koreans were smart enough to know which one was Air Force One. I.e. the one that goes first. So, we didn't wake the president and we just kept going. We didn't divert. The one option was to divert the trail aircraft to Tokyo but then that would have been a huge scandal.

So, we just kept going and nobody knew about this, but it is an example of how crazy the North Koreans are. The Seoul visit in and of itself was absolutely uneventful. We just talked about the huge trade issues that are now torturing the Trump administration mainly

on beef. Therefore, they made sure we got a great beef dinner to show how good their beef was. Anyway so on to Beijing. In Beijing, we got there and it was a real fluff trip. Essentially, I just went around with the president to all of the events. Of course, he is a great sportsman and he loved that. I was less interested. The only thing I didn't go to was the beach volleyball. There was a reason for that. It turns out there is a tradition that you have to slap the butts of all of the beach volleyball girls which Bush gleefully did. If I had been along I probably would have been the one in the camera. Anyway, I stayed back on that one. As I said I had my secretary, Kim Lange who went up to the Great Wall. She was having a great time basically doing tours because I didn't have much to do.

Anyway, there is a big meeting in the Great Hall of the People. For the Chinese who are having the reception. There is no substance to it, just a reception for all the heads of state who showed up. There were a lot of them. We had some bilateral meetings with these guys but other than the fact they served us McDonald's packages nothing dramatic. We were expecting to get great Chinese food. In came all these McDonalds which they thought is exactly what we wanted. It was what we didn't want. Anyway, the reception is only for the heads of state and government. Anyway so we're at the Great Hall of the People and we are all sitting outside in the smog and overcast and suddenly again the military aide is pounding on the door. I am thinking Jeez, I hope it isn't the same North Korean jets who made it to Beijing and are still hunting us. I rolled down and he said, "Our satellites have picked up a launch of short range missiles from Georgia to Ossetia where the Russian peacekeepers are."

I said, "Oh God." OK I have got to go see the President. Particularly I was anxious the president would be with Putin because Putin was there. At the time Medvedev was the president and Putin was the Prime Minister but we don't know who was truly in power. So, the problem was I had no authority to go into the great Hall of the People and mingle with these heads of state. I decided I am the acting National Security Adviser, I have got to get in there. So, I start pushing my way through the guards and the guards tackle me. So, we are pushing back and forth and finally one of them is able to communicate: all we want you to do is to go through the mag machine. I said, "No problem here is my cell phone." And so, I went through the mag machine and they just stood aside and I went through and went running in there. So here is this reception and it is beautiful and it is exciting but I am not focusing on the tourist side of this at all. I am just looking around the 80 or 90 people. Being rather tall I could be spotted at a distance and Bush is really tall as well. I see him and he moves and his eyes alight on me. Suddenly he is no longer in a happy mood. He knows if this guy got into the Great Hall of the People it is something really bad. I briefed him and he immediately jumped into action and said, OK. Let's get Putin. He grabbed Putin and he basically told him look, you have got to be very careful on this. So do not over react. And Putin already heard about it and said they are killing our troops which was true. We will respond and Russia is not going to take this. And on and on.

So, we got back and he was on the line with Saakashvili. He was basically doing one of his "you are the city on the hill George. I have always respected you. Where is the 82nd Airborne?" Bush had to tell him the 82nd airborne isn't coming. But Bush did something

very courageous. Saakashvili had sent a whole brigade of troops about 3,000 to Iraq. And when he had sent them he was worried about Putin and thus saying this is on a leash. If I need them back you have got to fly them back. So, Sashkashvili said OK then will you give my troops back. I thought OK let's delay this a little bit. This would be American aircraft carrying thousands of troops into an active combat zone. Bush said, "No, I promised. These are his soldiers, this is his country. I am certainly not going to send my soldiers but I am not going to not send his soldiers back." So, Bush did this and made it OK with Putin, so this is really dramatic.

Now in the midst of this, who do I have staffing me? I have the Chrysanthemum club Asia guys who are off investigating noodle shops and other things and they don't care about Georgia. Where is Georgia? That is not in our AO. They were great guys and they did a really good job in East Asia but they are absolutely no help. So, and of course I didn't even have my special assistant. So, I turned to my secretary and said, "Kim, you are it buddy." Fortunately, she had been working with Hadley back in Washington putting it all together in Washington. We had a very angry vice-president back in Washington who wanted us to take more active measures. He was very close to Saakashvili. So, we would get in during the morning and we had a little tent we would put up in our hotel room because the Chinese are very good at electronic surveillance. Just Kim Lang, the president and me and the briefer. And we would get the latest intelligence and decide what to do. Kim would run off and deal all night long with Hadley because of the time difference. We would come in and she would basically say OK this is what is going on in Washington and I really was so proud because of the quality of the people you have in the bureaucracy if you just let them. You trust them and give them responsibility they will really do well. This was a huge possible war crisis and the entire national security council staff was a secretary. We couldn't have had a better staff than that secretary, and she just did such a good job.

So, and Bush handled it brilliantly. As I said he took the right decision getting the Georgians back. Those troops wound up blocking the Russian march on the capital. By this time the Russians had pushed out of South Ossetia and they had cut the road between Tbilisi and the sea which is the only way we could have supplied them. Now we are trying to move ships into the Black Sea but we have to adhere to the Montreux Convention. We wanted to move a hospital ship in because it is the nearest thing. It was not going to be threatening, but it was too big by the Montreux Convention. So that was delayed and on some of our overhead reconnaissance we were able to get the Turks to go along, but it shows you how important Turkey is. So, you have this very difficult situation but Bush mastered it.

At one point Dana Perino the press person put me out to do a press conference because we had the traveling press. I should have prepared myself better because they asked me the question: are you ruling out force in responding to this crisis? I hadn't run this by the president. But I knew OK what I said, we never rule out the use of force in any situation hypothetical or real. The usual State Department BS. Right now our focus and concentration is on addressing the challenges of diplomacy and on and on. But I had said it and I get a call an hour later from Dick Cheney who says, "Jim. The president

authorized that?" I said, "No Mr. Vice President, I kind of winged it." He said, "That is good enough." So Cheney gives a statement. It is one thing for Jim Jeffrey to talk about we are not ruling out force, but when Dick Cheney does it it scares the BeJesus out of people so I guess there is a lesson there. I should have predicted the question and run it by Bush to see what his answer would be. I thought my answer was fine.

Q: In all fairness you are right. I mean I think a normal talking point would be we never take anything off the table or we never rule out all of our options, the same sort of thing.

JEFFREY: Yeah but I could have better handled that sort of thing by saying Look, let's not think about this right now. Because we are not thinking about this right now. We have our normal policies which you are well aware of, but instead I have always hated mealy mouthed White House spokespeople dancing around the things and plus I was really pissed off at the Russians. By this time, we were first unhappy with Saakashvili but after his first offensive was very quickly crushed, the Russians were taking advantage and pushing out of Abkhazia and out of Ossetia and deeper into Georgian territory and it was very clear they were about to overthrow the state. So, at that point I thought hey a little bit of strategic ambiguity might be a good thing.

Q: What was Saakashvili thinking?

JEFFREY: There is a book on this by Ron Asmus who was deputy assistant secretary in EUR at this time who was very close to Saakashvili and took the position that we had encouraged him to be more aggressive and that we abandoned an ally. He was very harsh on this. In fact, I responded to that book because I was the guy on the ground and I felt bad because Ron was dying of cancer at the time. But still out of respect for Ron he was a major policy player. He got his views ahead of my views. I think that Saakashvili did something terminally stupid. He was lucky that Bush saved him. Then in the final analysis we put together a whole package of sanctions and a whole package of diplomatic activities. We enlisted Sarkozy to take the lead for the west. That made Sarkozy happy. It made Putin happy because he was angry at the Americans. He had seen us as egging on Saakashvili.

The result was unlike later in the Ukraine, Putin and Medvedev agreed to pull their troops back to Abkhazia and Ossetia. So, you got the status quo ante. Under the circumstances where Saakashvili had started it and had killed a bunch of Russians. This wasn't a bad resolution. It was George Bush using all of the skills he had learned in office to bring that one home. I will stop here. I have got to go. Next time I will do the Iraq thing and then kind of the body language of the NSC and whatever it was like working for Bush and some of the issues you have more generally.

Q: OK.

Q: Today is February 8, and we are resuming our interview with Ambassador Jim Jeffrey.

JEFFREY: OK, on Iraq by 2006 with the midterm elections Bush realized that he was, he had a tiger by the tail. The American people were very unhappy which affected the polls. We just had the Iraq study group come out with a set of recommendations that were fairly amorphous but certainly were pointing towards a gradual pull out, and essentially giving up the whole democracy agenda which was near and dear to Bush and was the core of his dealing with middle eastern terror from 9/11 on. So many of us including Condoleezza Rice who before had been advocating essentially the surge. The problem was neither Don Rumsfeld and I think it is fair to say Vice President Cheney, because certainly Cheney supported Rumsfeld, wanted to see the U.S. engaged in long term counter-insurgency which is what they saw the surge being. That was Condi's point when she came before the Senate in 2005. But by the fall of 2006 at least I and I think some of the other advisors and Secretary Rice were very skeptical not that a counterinsurgency would work but that the American people would support it. So, we were very cautious. Other people including a group of colonels in the administration, retired general Jack Keane famously with the Institute for the Study of War, Kim Kagan, and not Robert Kagan but his brother, Kim Kagan's husband. They all were pushing for something like the surge.

As I mentioned earlier, many in Iraq, especially Sunnis, were saying we want to get rid of Al Qaeda. So, let us come over to your side but we want to do it on our terms and this was all coming together, and it landed on George Bush's lap. Bush then decided that it was his job to bear the political risk and that he would do so in a forthright manner.

That meant that our biggest concern was would the American people support it. Once you have a president who says this is really important then that doesn't mean that the country follows him or her but it means that it is a lot harder to block him or her particularly on the short run. So then finally he had the doctrine for it that had been developed by Petraeus and Jim Mattis involved at Fort Leavenworth on counterinsurgency, so he decided as part of the whole kind of revolution in his sixth year he got rid of Rumsfeld and replaced him with Bob Gates who was generally a skeptic but was very much a believer in finishing the job in Iraq.

He gave a new prominence in foreign policy to Condoleezza Rice, the role of Dick Cheney in my view faded to some degree. He then had a new team for Iraq, Ryan Crocker and Dave Petraeus who were respectively the best the foreign service and the U.S. military could come up with in terms of people with experience in the region. So out they went with this new mandate and most importantly Bush committed to 31,000 more troops which was roughly a 35% increase in troops but more importantly under Petraeus they would be used differently.

Rather than operating out of these large forward operating bases or FOBs commuting to Iraqi areas and then commuting back in the evening. They were going to go out in 30 man or 30 man/woman platoons or 120 man and women companies all over the fault line

between Sunnis and Shia and basically put an end to the civil war. This worked brilliantly along with about 100,000 of the Sunni Arabs that came in. So, Bush suddenly found himself in a very different place within about nine months after launching this. Because the surge was announced January of 2007 Petraeus and Crocker came back for their famous presentation to Congress in September and by then it was still an open question. By late fall it was obvious that the corner had been turned. And very quickly the Al Qaeda insurgency died out.

Q: I have a question here, an historical comparison to what extent if any did this counterinsurgency policy resemble in any way the one used in Vietnam?

JEFFREY: Very much under Creighton Abrams which is the one we used and forgotten that I was exposed to when I had been there in 1972. The difference being both placed a real emphasis on not defeating the enemy but on protecting the population with the idea that is a better way to defeat the enemy. That is basically what happened to the VietCong and what happened to the various insurgents in Iraq. The difference was we used American troops in the surge whereas at the time of Creighton Abrams his American troops were leaving, but in both cases, it was a focus on the population and on classic counterinsurgency rather than focusing on the enemy and offensive operations that characterized it. So, you saw something like victory and clearly a much better situation.

Meanwhile in 2008 it was the Iranians acting as surrogates, specifically we looked at Al Sadr and Jash Al Mahdi but also certain Iranian backed groups that were much closer to Iran than Muqtada was. These groups were much more under the control of the IRGC, and decided to challenge both the central government and the U.S. This started in Basra where the British had basically lost control of the city years before and a major uprising led by Muqtada's forces, And then Maliki on his own decided just to rush down there and take it back, what he called the charge of the knights. Well the charge of the knights almost got him killed. It did get the chief of his bodyguards killed. He was very quickly pinned down. It was turning really bad.

Now there is something that is very interesting: everybody in the U.S. government and the military weren't happy because nobody had told Maliki to do this. We were very used to setting our priorities, giving our orders. We own all the resources, but Maliki kind of thought it was his country and he was going after these guys. Again, as in so many other things it gets to Bush and everybody is starting to turn right and Bush says no, we are talking a left turn. Bush's response was wait a second, you have been asking for years for somebody who can fight these Iraqi insurgents. Now we have got this bunch of Iraqis out there fighting. So bang, within almost hours, Marcie Ries from the embassy and Lloyd Austin who was the corps commander under Petraeus were sent down to link up with Maliki, a very famous Navy Seal admiral was sent down to start putting in the forces, and we sent advisory teams, we sent sniper teams, we sent Apache helicopters and essentially, we were all in supporting Maliki not with a lot of ground combat troops but with all of what we call the enablers. And very quickly the Mahdi army melted. The Iranians pulled their forces out and that was the end of the Basra fight.

A big victory for Maliki. Then Sadr tried it again in Sadr City and then the American

Army engaged very directly and brutally moving basically what are called Texas barriers which are ten feet high concrete barriers moving a wall constantly further and further to the east squeezing the Mahdi army which responded by a devastating attack which lasted for weeks on the U.S. embassy. There were casualties at the U.S. embassy. A PRT team from the U.S. embassy was hit in Sadr City and four people were killed. There was just an awful lot of violence from them, but again it was another victory so now in the space of a year you had victory over the Al Qaeda Sunni insurgency, and victory over Muqtada al Sadr. But now what does Bush do? He is in his last six months and he wants to put the relationship on a permanent basis so he signs a strategic framework agreement which is a classic agreement we have with all of our allies around the world for economic, diplomatic, military security, intelligence hearings and all sorts of these other things.

More of a statement of hopes and such without a lot of concrete things. Then he signs the separate SOFA because we have been operating in Iraq on the basis of a UN mandate which the UN Security Council only gave us on a renewable basis if the Iraqi government asked the Security Council to do that. So that is where we got our status of forces and everything else. The Iraqis said they weren't going to do that anymore. That meant if we wanted to stay on we would have to stay on by negotiating an agreement with the Iraqis which because we set up a democratic system meant this would be unlike Egypt passed by the parliament, which was full of people who were either opposed to us or knew the history of protecting the British when they wanted to keep troops on after Iraq became independent. So this was another huge fight and here again Bush showed his wisdom. He accepted a set of compromises. It begins with the title of the SOFA. We all call it the SOFA but it is actually words to the effect of an agreement to regulate the withdrawal of American forces from Iraq. So, it was very much a withdrawal agreement because Bush signed up to withdraw all forces by the end of December, 2011 because that was the only way it could get through parliament. So, we were able to maintain a presence for approximately three more years but with the understanding we would leave at that time.

There are two things to draw from this. This gets to the experience in the National Security Council. First of all, presidents can only in any presidential administration I have had experience in have two or three major foreign policy projects. With Bush 41 it was obviously the end of the cold war and the Gulf War and what flowed from that. With Clinton it was dealing with Russia, the middle east peace process culminating in the almost agreement at Camp David, 2000, and of course the Balkans. With Bush 43 it was basically the war on terror, getting us into Iraq and getting us out of Iraq. Nothing else was all that important. With Obama it was the JCPOA and perhaps the pivot to the Pacific. None of the other things really mattered. Condi was allowed to go off and try to negotiate with the North Koreans. Bush blessed it but wasn't really invested in it. Wasn't really putting skin into the game, wasn't putting risk into it. Just like Obama, let Kerry try to do Syria, just like he let Kerry try to do the middle east peace process, but again there was no real presidential juice. Everybody can sense this. So, these things are rare and it is very important looking at foreign policy and trying to execute it to know whether this is something the president really cares about. If it is there will be skin in the game. We will be willing to pay a price. We will be willing to take on Congress. We will be willing to do other things.

The other thing is that Bush's success in Iraq demonstrated another core rule and it runs contrary to what America often strives for, that is, massive high risk, expensive and sometimes bloody actions for a limited political goal is the way to succeed. That is, the surge was extremely risky from the standpoint of the Congress. Huge costs of course with an increase of that size and a lot of casualties at a time when the American public was against it. But it worked because it shocked the other side and it basically mobilized Maliki to throw his lot fully with us. In return Bush turned that into a limited victory, not transforming Iraq which was his original goal, but basically a glide path to get us out of there. That was acceptable to the Iraqis. Same thing with his father 1991; 500,000 troops on a massive campaign not to conquer Iraq but to push them back across the border. That worked too, Korea, 1950. In some respects the JCPOA, it didn't solve forever the Iranian nukes it just gives us 10-15 years of you are away from it and in return we used all elements of national power from military threats to huge sanctions to Obama challenging and taking on Congress,

So those are my lessons out of that. These things are rare and they only succeed if you are willing to use really high risk, high cost action, because the other side will fight like hell whether it is diplomatically or militarily, for some kind of compromise result. The Balkans the same thing. Massive American bombings and Holbrooke went in there. A lot of us watched him cut deals with Milosevic both times. He didn't ask Milosevic to resign or to change his stripes or anything else, just sign the agreement and stop shooting. So that is what I took out of it.

The other thing is in the National Security Council again the president always decides. There are people who have their informal relationships that either remain informal or at times, that was the early Bush administration which supplanted the formal process. That is not good because it cuts people and elements of the government out and there is a reason; everybody is sitting in the National Security Council meetings has a reason to be there. His or her people, his or her resources, his or her contacts and capabilities and legal authorities are all in the game. Therefore, he or she should be allowed to point out how and whether that can be used for what ends. That said even when you have a formal process that is right and everybody is on board, the president will still turn to individuals. In the late Bush administration, it was first and foremost Condoleezza Rice who had a very close relationship with Steve Hadley but they also then brought in Bob Gates. In the two years I was there I almost never saw a real divide between the three. Obviously at the end of the day Hadley had to support the president's position even if he were skeptical about something, but they were able to work it out and it was an extremely smooth and effective thing where everybody had their say but you knew who was probably going to win in the end.

Q: As you are on this subject, and we are approaching the end of the Bush 43 administration, how did you rate his foreign policy based on the promotion of democracy?

JEFFREY: This was a core Bush goal. It was employed almost entirely in the Middle East. The only exceptions were he was very enthused about Plan Colombia with good reason because that is probably the best example of American all elements of national power succeeding that I have seen since the 1940's; and far less successfully with Burma where his wife took a big role too. But other than those two minor exceptions there was not a concrete plan to advance democracy. When you had these color revolutions. You had one in Ukraine and one a little bit earlier in Georgia where it led to Saakashvili. You had one in Lebanon in 2005 after Hariri's death. The United States did various projects and programs and things but A it was not an all-consuming thing like Iraq was an all-consuming thing. And B, it only had an effect on the margins. Perhaps not always positively. It could have been one of the factors that led Saakashvili to provoke the Russians in 2008 because he thought the Americans saw him as a paragon of democracy and that was at the center of our foreign policy. But other than that, it was in the middle east and there with the realities of Afghanistan, Iraq and our efforts with the Palestinians.

Which led to elections in which both the Israelis and the Palestinian Authority people told us don't do this. This is at the beginning of 2006. We went ahead and did anyway and of course Hamas did extremely well. That led very quickly to Gaza falling into the hands of Hamas, several mini-wars with Israel, all kinds of other complications are flowing from that including the breakdown in Turkish relations. So it was the gift that just kept giving. By 2006-2007 there was no real emphasis on this. We let this fellow Nasrallah walk into downtown Beirut and let him overthrow the legally elected regime of Prime Minister Hariri. Hariri had to surrender and basically while he stayed on in power and he is still there it is very different from in that period 2005 to 2008. So therefore, in almost every case where we tried in the middle east it didn't turn out that way and of course we had no success with Mubarak. But Mubarak was so important to the president and so many things he was doing including Iraq and including just the Islamic world in general that, and of course Jordan is not a democracy either. So it eventually faded.

Q: OK, that was my impression in the field. It was often difficult for the officer to find ways of "foreboding the democracy agenda" because all we really did was express Washington talking points. If I were to distill it down into very brief things we would express Washington talking points whenever we had the opportunity but it very seldom turned out to be anything we did in terms of promoting a positive agenda with programs and policies and so forth.

JEFFREY: Yeah or even when you would have the programs they would be three percent of the entire U.S. EU, UN, NGO effort to modernize and to improve journalism and academics and all of that. They were nice little programs and we would go out and cut ribbons and such but this was not plan Colombia let alone the Marshall plan. That is a huge difference. That gets back to the idea of people obsessing on real presidential policy rather than others. The phrase I just used was if a penguin chokes on a peanut in Antarctica there will be a State Department task force set up to find out what the farm policy implications and human rights implications of this are and there will be national security council meetings and other things. And then we will then eventually start deluging posts with talking points and even worse, important demarches like deploying

anti-ballistic missiles in central Europe and such will be larded down with these things because the office of combating and containing the choking on peanuts crisis in Antarctica will not allow our cable to get out of the State Department without putting three talking points on their pet rock subject on there. This is what we do most of the time.

There are groups who care about all this, it is often Congress, it is often NGOs, it is often bits and pieces of the bureaucracy or the political leadership of the Department or some other element of the U.S. government, but they don't really matter. When you sit around in the NSC you very quickly know if you are going to survive focus on what the president and his or her top people care about and not all the rest of this stuff. That is particularly so when you have got ambassadors and political appointee ambassadors particularly who get this wrong who are trying to foist their pet rock on the president or on the next national security advisor. In the late Bush administration, it never got any further than me and I just had to figure out different ways to say don't call us; we will call you. But this is how democracy policy went.

So, we switch to the Obama administration. Anyway my reward for the national security council and my various adventures was originally to go to Poland which I had demanded because for Poland they had designated a political appointee and actually they had had a good political appointee out there, but I just decided I wanted to make it hard so give me Poland it would get me back into Central Europe, my first love. I like the Slavic world and I thought it would be a great retirement post. Then I got to thinking and I realized I am going to be pulled out and sent back to Iraq or Afghanistan in whatever the next war these guys are going to get me in. So, go someplace where they can't pull me out. I concluded that Turkey would be the place and Ross Wilson was leaving in 2008. I was initially going to go to Poland in 2007 so I initially tried to hold them off on that but I decided I will shift to Turkey and they will probably give me Turkey as I had spent an awful lot of time there. So they did. In the end of November 2008, I went to Turkey. I got there basically when Obama came in. Now to take a step back this is when the middle east is seven years after 9/11 with the Obama ascent to power and why Turkey played at least initially a big role in it. Obviously, Obama's election was a repudiation of the Bush administration, even if he had turned things around with the surge, it was a continuation of what had happened in 2006 and then in going back and looking at both the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and the Pew polls we had the lowest level of support and belief in American foreign policy by the American public. In the case of one of the two, I think it was the Chicago Council, since the 1940's. This was dramatic. It was down at least as low if not lower, in some cases it was lower than Vietnam right after the 1970's. So, the mood was very much retrenchment.

Q: And the mood was principally because the public did not understand why we were there or it was simply not the kind of victory that the public had been prepared to understand and so even though by 2008 we were in a relatively good position momentarily in Iraq.

JEFFREY: And kind of in Afghanistan even though it was slipping, No the problem was with the public it was mainly Iraq although among the cognoscenti we could see the same problem, Afghanistan was the same problem. There were far fewer casualties and generally less cost and more of a justification so opposition wasn't so big. The problem with Iraq was we went in without a UN mandate; we didn't have the bulk of the international community with us. Our justification for going in, weapons of mass destruction turned out to be not so. Now that was not the administration's fault. Intelligence agencies all over the world believed it. But still that really hurt and then there was Abu Ghraib and then the fact that we had a totally confused policy and internal backbiting for years seeped out into the public. I mean at least in Vietnam the objections to Westmoreland's way he was carrying out operations were nipped in the bud at low levels with John Paul Mann and Ellsberg who were in the field a lot. These were guys who were saying hey this isn't working. But they were basically stifled. Journalists picked that up and they wrote about it and that led to some disillusion for some Americans. But it wasn't as great or as obvious that there was a huge battle in the administration as from the get go about Iraq and it only basically solidified in 2005 and it broke out again in 2006-2007. So therefore it was seen as a loser.

Then you have the economic collapse, the worst crisis in the economy since the great depression. This took up a lot of Bush's time and a lot of Obama's time and frankly the system worked brilliantly with the two tranches at the top, \$800 billion roughly apiece and this was your country working very well and very closely coordinated between both houses of Congress and both sides of Congress Democrats and Republicans and the two president's working closely. It was magnificent and I watched a lot of that but that is not basically what I was doing. But the problem was, that further added to the skepticism of the American people, why are we out there? That is, you would think they would have never forgotten 9/11 and basically, yeah fighting Jihadis remains very popular as it did in the Obama administration. He became a big fan of drone operations, did more than Bush did. But in part because the American people wanted that and expected that but it did not translate into as Bush saw it to deal with these threats to America we have to be even more engaged in the world. We have to embrace our calling and our values and spread them out even more. That was out the window in a big way. So Obama came in with that message and the idea of retrenchment. Particularly in the middle east he wanted to pivot to Asia. Well the history of his administration is he really didn't pivot to Asia in the sense of having a real impact on Asia nor did he really leave the Middle East.

By the time he left in 2017 he had almost 10,000 troops in Afghanistan and about 10,000 in Iraq and even Syria. So this was not a pivot away, but his administration tried. My take and I am getting a bit ahead of myself but maybe when I get to the summaries I will hit Obama and Turkey. Faced with real hits to American global leadership on the horizon, the rise of China and the rise of Putin after Georgia. The economic disaster of 2008 which followed on a decade earlier I would call into question the Chicago consensus as people call it. That is an important economic part of our global system. Then the failure of the wars. The fact of 9/11. Bush decided to deal with these problems with Cheney and Rumsfeld by emphasizing and doubling down on American power to implement and almost impose American values through these democracy initiatives supporting

democracy color revolutions, Iraq and Afghanistan. Essentially leveraging American power not for the long game to use Barack Obama's term but for massive rapid gains while we still could. That led to massive rapid failure all across the board. So deviating from our normal, wait the other guys out of containment. Most of the world is with us so essentially deal in a limited way as Bush Senior did with the invasion of Kuwait, Clinton did with the Balkans, or with containing Saddam.

But you know we were shooting almost every day in Operation Northern Watch, Southern Watch. Yet we didn't try to overthrow the country and do regime change, and we certainly didn't do regime change with Milosevic. But then with Bush we really tried to use our power for almost Dulles' rollback policy. That was rejected very quickly in the early 1950's. Then Obama came back and he decided an alternative rollback which was to roll us back because he felt that our engagement was part of the problem. Obama had the same faith in the unstoppable power of American values as Bush did. But he deployed it differently. Bush felt it was his obligation to advance and impose those values on the back of a tank. Obama felt the less tanks the more it would imbed with the to use a Martin Luther King phrase, the mark of history. So therefore, it was his job to indicate there was a different sheriff now who was not going to be intervening in all of these things; who was going to be taking a step back. Let the region, the middle east bubble along. Not do military intervention today or anyplace else. He was very skittish about Ukraine and Crimea as well. Basically, it would all work out OK because much of the problem we had with the Iranians, with the Cubans, with the Russians were lack of understanding. So, we would do a reset with Russia and obviously do all of the things we did with Iran beginning with the JCPOA. You would reach out to the Cubans and lift the sanctions and such and I mean this is as naive a theory as Bush's because it presupposes that we are the problem and that there aren't real differences on how to organize states and societies and most importantly regions between us and our local competitor.

So anyway, in the middle east he was looking for a way to signal that we were the partners in a new distillation of Islam and western values. Of course, the place that you could most point that out to was Erdogan in Turkey because by 2008 when I got there, he had been running the country for six years and was still the prime minister and was pursuing an agenda of moderate Islamization. Letting people wear headscarves and such but still emphasizing the secular nature of the state and achieving wonders with the economy. Accepting the Annan Plan for a breakthrough in Cyprus, which is one of the great tragedies and a good example of how the EU couldn't do the most basic foreign policy, because the Turks basically accepted the plan. They did accept the plan and they got the Turkish Cypriots to accept the plan. But also he was reaching out to the PKK through various initiatives. He was reaching out to the Armenians; President Gul went to Yerevan. He was reaching out to the Greeks. There were all kinds of good things he was doing. He was working with the Israelis. He was brokering a deal between the Israelis and the Syrians. So, he was basically playing exactly what you would want. The major regional partner of ours doing the right things all around the region plus being both democratic and Islamic and also his efforts trying to get into the EU. So, what was there not to like from the standpoint of Barack Obama.

So, I was out there in Ankara yelling and screaming and jumping up and down “me, me.” And thus, the first bilateral visit of the Obama administration was to Turkey. We got a little taste of the problems with that in that Erdogan was angry at the new NATO secretary general and it took a lot of diplomacy to get him to accept the guy. He had once insulted Turkey. I forget what the specifics were but it was really ugly and it took a lot of work. So, Obama came out and gave a speech to the Turkish Parliament which is very similar to the one he gave a few weeks later in Cairo. His Cairo speech where he basically said we want a new relationship with the Islamic world. We want to accept that Islam is an important ally of ours in the fight against terror and all that. This was all balm and salve for Erdogan who just loved this and they had a really good relationship. It was a good set of meetings. It was as good as Bill Clinton coming out in 1999 which was just a decade earlier. So, Obama was a huge hit in Turkey and Turkey was now our battle buddy for all kinds of things. From Iraq to Syria and other things. But very quickly this turned sour and most of my tenure was spent trying to keep relations on keel because they ran into very rough waters quickly in part because of the situation in the region; in part because of the situation inside Turkey. First of all in the horizon we could see there were strains in Turkish society and the Gulenist movement was beginning to challenge Erdogan through the military. This was making Erdogan skittish.

Q: Take one second to describe the Gulenist movement.

JEFFREY: OK, the Gulenist movement is a Turkish based Sufi infused Sunni Islamic movement that was founded by a cleric and very quickly developed both in Turkey and all around the world a network of social service agencies, schools, charitable organizations, business associations, banking associations and a very key role in educating people to go to the colleges in Turkey very quickly. It was seen as a kinder and gentler form of Islam because the other major flavor of Islam in Turkey comes via the Muslim Brotherhood and a guy named Erbakan who was the leader of various parties before they were closed in the 1970s, 80's, and 90's and then they briefly became prime minister before the military did a coup in 1996 and '97. That branch is more of an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, it is a bit more political Islamic and a bit more universal than the Gulenist brand. But the Gulenists were very effective infiltrating the bureaucracy and various associations and other things. Because aside from their surface associations and infrastructure they had essentially a secret society three-person cell internal thing that had burrowed deep into the administration. They were the allies of Erdogan because he took over the main Islamic movement from Erbakan but he modernized it, emphasized the relationship with Turkish Islam and came up with a much more moderate, less Muslim Brotherhood flavored variant of this. So these two were basically working together.

Well Gulen had been persecuted by the military and had been driven out of the country. So, Gulen wanted to see the military taken down and Erdogan did as well. Therefore, they found some evidence of coup plotting. It was called the Ergenekon plot just before I got there. They had basically gone out after a lot of military officers. But by the time I got there, there was beginning to be a falling out and Gulen then had people who were beholden to him in the police and the judiciary go after military commanders who were

loyal to Erdogan and hadn't been involved in any coups, General Basbug and his deputy Ergun Sagin. I knew both of them very well and I could see that they were being persecuted. So, you had that internal situation that was troubling to Washington. More importantly you had a set of, within the first year I was there and with all the hopes we had put into the relationship, a whole set of things went wrong. First of all, we still had the bad aftertaste of the EU not supporting Turkey when Turkey had supported the Annan plan where the EU didn't. It then turned around and brought in Cyprus, the Greek Cypriot side, rewarding them for not supporting the Annan plan and then slowly but surely having Cyprus along with Greece in the EU. They then had more ways to torment Turkey and they were using that. The Turks were beginning to sense this.

Furthermore, the outreach to Armenia didn't work well in part probably because the Iranians and the Russians were not happy seeing this. The Russians had military bases and still do in Armenia, and they were unhappy with that. Plus, Turkey and Erdogan were very much committed to Azerbaijan not just because of shared Turkic heritage but also because Turkey was ever more involved in pipeline diplomacy with first oil and then gas pipelines from Azerbaijan. Turkey had ambitions and still does, of becoming an energy hub for the region. The Azerbaijan pipelines were very important to this. We were very much involved and invested in this. It was a big American project supporting this. We were doing it with American firms. To some extent BP was a big player in this. BP is a quasi-American firm as we looked at it out at the embassy.

So that also hurt the Armenian thing. On the Iraq front he was pretty positive except he was very concerned about the PKK operating out of northern Iraq. This led to some tensions. The first real tension came when the talks brokered by Turkey between Syria and Israel on the Golan Heights broke down at the end of 2008 and then in 2009 you had the first Gaza war. Erdogan was really shocked because the Israelis didn't tell him about that in advance and of course as an offshoot of the Muslim brothers his AKP or Justice party, Justice Development party had real ties to Hamas. So Erdogan basically reacted very badly and threw a fit at President Peres at Davos in January of 2009 and so we had an initial indication of the Erdogan who we have known since then as a person who can be volatile and strike out at the west but it was still relatively manageable then because you had not had the Syrian war yet but you had several other incidents.

Then little by little the good relationship with Obama wore off. Obama wanted to recognize the Armenian genocide. So the Turks really had to mount a major effort. President Gul did the heavy lifting but it left a bad taste I think with Barack Obama. Then the final thing is Obama turned to President Lula and Prime Minister Erdogan in early 2010 to advance a possible deal with the Iranians on the nuclear enrichment issue. We had tried a deal in 2009 and had gotten Ahmadinejad to agree on shipping the 20% enriched uranium out of the country to Russia. In the end though the supreme leader overruled Ahmadinejad. By late 2009 that deal was off the table. So, Obama sent Lula and Erdogan off to try and re-energize the September 2009 deal. It wasn't a very well thought out thing because the amount of the 20% enriched uranium of 1200 kilos was still in there although they had enriched considerably more. And other things indicating it was not well thought out so it wasn't clear to the bureaucracy. The Obama

administration's approach can be seen if anybody wants to google the Obama-Lula letter because Lula was so furious at this that he released it after the whole event had ended. So, when I got my instructions related to it I went to Washington and said I don't want to deliver these. The letter does not sound like what I heard Secretary Clinton and Bob Einhorn who was her nuclear guy talking to Davutoglu the foreign minister because at that point we were pushing for really tough sanctions at the UN which we eventually got. In reconstructing that and I kind of claim to be the ultimate expert on that I think that in order to push those sanctions over the top what we needed was another example of Ahmadinejad's perfidy so we would try this thing and then we could point to its failure. I am not sure that is completely correct but I think Barack Obama really believed in this. The key meeting was on the margins of one of his nuclear disarmament summits and the problem was I sat outside because it was principal plus one. Lula, Obama and Erdogan so I wasn't quite sure what was going on.

So, when I got this I was concerned about it but I was slapped down by Washington. It was the only time I had ever gone back on something important and said I don't think this is U.S. policy. Are you sure? Please confirm. And they very quickly confirmed it, so anyway off to Tehran Erdogan and Lula went and very quickly they got the deal and I was called by the Turks and they were really happy and I sent a report to Washington, but Washington had already heard about this and Secretary Clinton just went into a rage against Turkey against Erdogan and Lula and this led to a really bad situation where the Turks had felt they had been ambushed. Then they had also agreed, Lula and Erdogan, because they were both in the Security Council not to back the resolution and in the end although the Turks tried to be flexible Lula was not flexible and in the end both of them voted against the resolution which left another stain because now you had Turkey a NATO ally voting against a resolution that Russia and China voted for against Iran and it looked as if they were trying to butter up Iran. Now Turkey had its own interests with Iran from which it purchases a fair amount of gas but they are rivals in the region and this was basically Erdogan trying to play our game. Anyway, I will stop there because I have to run off but I will get to the relationship with Turkey and then I was yanked out of there.

Q: OK, it is February 13 and we are resuming our interview with Ambassador Jeffrey in Turkey.

JEFFREY: OK to continue with the Erdogan saga. In analyzing Erdogan people make two mistakes. One is to think he is not a democrat, supposedly he doesn't believe in elections, and the second part is to think he is a democrat like we define democrats. He is neither. Erdogan has succeeded because he wins at the polls or comes close enough to winning and is a far more successful a politician to mobilize the masses than anybody else in Turkey. He has even done well in many elections with the Kurds coming with his party just behind the PKK political wing which is now the HDP. Or was the HDP at the time and I think it still is. So, you have somebody who uses and works the democratic system in a country that is highly committed to an electoral system. I am essentially

certain that Turkey will not drift away from a democratic system. The problem is both Erdogan and the system that he works within are not pluralistic. This is something that I and others became aware of long before Erdogan. I did a cable, I may have mentioned it, when I was DCM, on the earthquake that killed 50,000 people and the reaction or lack thereof of Turkish institutions to this terrible tragedy that made Katrina look like the Normandy invasion in terms of American competence. So, I wrote a cable called VIP Lounge Society and talked about how Turkey is a set of top down authoritarian institutions. This is deeply rooted in the Turkish mindset and frankly that is not an oriental or an Ottoman thing if you look at German society not only before WWII but up to the 1960's you had a similar set of circumstances.

So, what this meant was that pluralism in Turkey, which was real, was achieved by a set of non-pluralistic institutions, the army, the bureaucracy, the judiciary is a very special part of the bureaucracy, political parties, major media elements, labor unions and big business, and certain other groups basically circling around each other making alliances and by having blocking power against the others created a pluralistic system of non-pluralistic elements. Erdogan basically saw this as a threat beginning with the army which was the biggest threat because the army was the most powerful institution and was particularly concerned about any move towards a less anti-Islamic less hard line secular approach by any government. So Erdogan set out initially with the help of the Gulenists to take down the army. He succeeded in both, stopping the 2007 military attempt to do a coup because the new president would be President Gul from Erdogan's party and his wife wore a headscarf, and that was of course a ridiculous to threaten a democratically elected government. Erdogan knew that and he rammed it through and the army backed down and then the Ergenekon case which had some merit came up and Erdogan used that to trim top levels of the army and basically put in people who were more supportive of him. As I had mentioned last time it was the Gulenists going after people like General Basbug and General Ergun Sagun who were definitely loyal to Erdogan and were not trying to launch a coup against anybody that gave Erdogan an early warning sign that he had yet another force that he had now to deal with.

So, the history of Turkey in the following five years up to the coup of 2016 was an attempt to deal with the Gulenists and their attempts to respond. In terms of foreign policy, under Erdogan's very active very vocal foreign minister Ahmed Davutoglu it pursued a kind of faux neo-Ottomanism of reaching out to the Balkans to Egypt to all of these various places to emphasize soft power. Now Turkey had a certain amount of soft power but much of it for example its economic strength was directed at Europe and to some degree Russia. Not to the middle east. The middle east is not a big trading partner of anybody unfortunately other than oil. Neither the Arabs nor the peoples of the Balkans, they had mixed views of the Ottoman period and Ottoman governance. And they certainly were not about to embrace Turkey the way for example Shia groups around the middle east embraced Iran. So not very much developed on that front. As I said, Erdogan was actively brokering deals between Israel and Syria on the Golan heights though that didn't come to pass. They were quite active again with Cyprus and Azerbaijan and Georgia and to some degree Armenia and with the Kurds in Northern Iraq, so it was basically a positive force in the region.

Q: As you are describing this, is there any reason to go into detail about the incident where the Turkish relief boat was trying to deliver supplies to Hamas?

JEFFREY: OK, I will get to that. Anyway, there were three major diplomatic initiatives that took up much of my time in the last half of my tour. One was the threat from Iran that was growing in the late Bush and early Obama administration's particularly their missile programs and their nuclear programs. As a consequence NATO decided to put anti-Ballistic missile systems in Eastern Europe. Now Putin reacted to that, this was a Bush decision and as a result these essentially strategic ABMs were not deployed; Obama changed the policy and started to deploy land-borne versions of the Aegis SM-3 system. But for that system to work it needed a radar. It is called a phased array radar or TPY-2 radar. The best place to put it to give coverage of all of NATO including Turkey from Iranian missiles was Eastern Turkey. Erdogan balked for various reasons. Those included his complicated relations with Iran where he bought about 20%-25% of his natural gas and some oil purchases. A fair amount of trade. He also was well aware of Iran's ability to use the PKK like Russia and Syria did against Turkey. So, he didn't want to antagonize the Iranians so he was quite a hard sell. Finally, I succeeded in doing so only after NATO which means the U.S. came up with a second site where we could put the radar and was able to declassify and release to Turkey the maps showing coverage if we had the radar in Turkey and if we didn't have the radar in Turkey, and I basically said, "Look it is your choice but if it is in Turkey we will be able to cover all of Turkey and if it is elsewhere we won't." These maps at some point could obviously become public. And Erdogan thought this was a clever ploy because he is a very transactional guy and so he basically said as long as this isn't directly tied in to any other system (he may have been concerned about our missile defense efforts with Israel) I am fine with it. So, we went ahead and deployed the radar. This is a good example of how cooperative Erdogan could be.

The last one was the Mavi Marmara incident involving Israel. This was an idea launched by some of the political and religious people close to Erdogan including a radical Islamic charity that had very strong international Muslim Brotherhood ties. Of course, Erdogan comes from the Turkish branch of the Muslim Brothers through Erbakan. So, they decided they wanted to do a relief column to go to Gaza and break the Israeli blockade which the International Criminal Court supposedly indicated was an illegal blockade. The Israelis were furious about this and asked us and asked the Turks not to make it happen. Erdogan insisted on going forward. Well the foreign ministry realized this was going to be a big mess because the Israelis threatened to sink the ships and certainly not let them break through the blockade, but how do you resolve this? Anyway, we worked out a deal with the Turks to have the Israelis enforce the blockade. There would be a token effort to ignore the Israelis. Then the Israelis would up the ante a bit in some kind of kabuki and then the ships could pull off and divert to Alexandria or someplace in Egypt where they would offload and the stuff would get to Gaza. So, we communicated that to the Israelis. I was so concerned about this that I went directly, I did this through Washington but I went directly to the Israeli ambassador even though I was asked not to

by the Turkish foreign ministry to double track because I have seen these things go wrong.

I figured we had done everything. The Israelis are well aware, people are in communication. It is time for us to get out of the middle because I knew this was a military operation and you don't want to muck things up. Well that may have been a mistake because what happened was, the Israeli foreign ministry and the Israeli government were aware of this but the Israeli defense minister Barak was not. So therefore, when the ships came the Israelis made their initial pro forma request to leave and were ignored which is what we figured would happen. That was part of the scenario with the little convoy which of course had lots of international people and press on it and such. The Israelis then escalated unexpectedly and dropped commandos on the Mavi Marmara which was essentially the flagship of the fleet and had a lot of thuggish young members of this charity, to be charitable, on board. They went after the soldiers as they fast roped down and captured a number of them and their weapons. Once Israelis had been captured, you can see films of Israeli soldiers jumping off the ship, being dragged around, being beaten with lead pipes and such. So anyway, the word was given: stop this now, get our people out of there. So, the next tranche really as it came down used their weapons and killed ten people including one Turkish American dual citizen. This created a huge blow up between Turkey and Israel that led to several years of negotiations, a court case and an eventual apology by the Israelis. Both sides withdrew their ambassadors and eventually their ambassadors were returned, but this kind of thing obviously was typically blamed on Erdogan because he gets bad press even though the Israelis shared at least half the blame for it and at the end of the day it added to his reputation as the west's bad boy. A reputation that is now coming back to haunt him and all of us as we need Turkey in Syria and it is not going well. So right about that point the Department reached out to me and said they wanted me in Iraq.

Q: I am sorry, what year?

JEFFREY: This was in 2010. I was originally not very happy about this. I was about to retire. I was approaching 64. I knew it would be a two-year assignment. I did not want to stay on beyond 65 for several reasons. One, I wanted to retire and two, I didn't believe that foreign service officers should use special privileges to stay on beyond our official retirement age of 65 because there are not enough ambassadorial posts to go around, and I liked Turkey. But anyway, Washington basically put more pressure on me and in the end as a foreign service officer you have to go with worldwide availability. I had thought that Iraq was behind me but I figured to be honest that I could do the job and so off I went. So, I am now in August 2010 showing up in Iraq. I will start on that. It was my last tour and it lasted almost two years. About 22 months. So going to Iraq in 2010 I was going to be under the regime of Barack Obama in Iraq, and that was a little bit like fire and water, although I have to say from the get go that Obama never said no to anything that I and the military commander there asked of him. But nonetheless he was at best ambivalent about Iraq, in my own talks with him and with other people and in just observing it. I will try to put some flesh on that comment. Obama obviously ran on a "we have got to end the war in Iraq. It was a really big mistake" foreign policy and it was a poster boy for everything

the United States shouldn't do and to some degree it was one of the reasons he won in 2008. The problem is that Barack Obama not only had to govern but he had to get re-elected in 2012 and he was well aware that America had put tremendous resources into Iraq and that at the end it had turned out pretty well thanks to the surge and Bush's decision in 2008 to withdraw our forces by 2011.

Iraq was not totally peaceful in 2009 and 2010 but the violence levels were down significantly. The confidence level was way up, the economy was improving and thanks to the engagement of international oil companies and a massive engagement by U.S. firms Exxon and Chevron and others in the north and in the south, beginning in the south and later in the north the oil sector was just booming and within a few years it would become the number two oil producer in OPEC and on a good day everywhere in the country produce almost 5 million barrels, almost half that of Saudi Arabia. That was really impressive. It was mainly Iraqis doing that with some American help with all the various sectors we had put a lot of effort into. Oil was one we put less effort into actually because the Iraqis had the money to do it. And they knew how to do it. And of course, they got the international oil companies in so they got tremendous investments at a good price with cost plus contracts which are controversial from several standpoints but from the standpoint of Iraqis they were paying one to two dollars a barrel and at the time our oil prices were \$100 a barrel so the country was in pretty good shape and Obama didn't want to shake that up. He realized that the American military, and he needed the American military, was very committed to basically declaring Iraq a victory, so Obama was very cautious.

In March he gave a speech at Camp Lejeune. He talked about his vision for Iraq which was in his usual glowing terms, not all that different from Bush talking about Iraq, that is a partner of the United States in the war against terror, that is a democratic liberal society that takes care of its people. But also, Obama then went on, which is not usual for a president, saying this does not mean that America can take care of every problem in Iraq whether America is responsible or not; basically the Iraqis have to pull up their boots and their socks themselves. That limitation of America's responsibility for Iraq rang obviously in my head as ambassador going out a year later. I had it in my head and it basically summed up Obama's view.

He didn't want to tinker too much with the society; he didn't obsess over the political parties and such and he was perfectly happy with prime minister Maliki whom Bush had been happy with. The problem was that as time went on Maliki turned from an asset to a liability. Very much so by the time ISIS came but he was beginning to turn by the time I got out there. The main watershed event was the elections of 2010. Maliki ran on the State of Law coalition of Shi'a parties but not all Shi'a parties, there were several others, and he competed with Alawi who is actually a Shi'a but who identifies with the Sunnis both in Iraq and among Sunni deep pockets sheiks and business people in the Gulf and in Lebanon and who had been the prime minister in 2004 and early 2005 and had done a very good job under very difficult circumstances as I explained earlier. He was heading this eclectic party that was mainly Sunni Arab. Under his leadership he got the Sunnis to vote in large numbers for the very first time which was a major American goal. In a

parliament of 325 seats Alawi and Maliki both got about 29% of the vote but Alawi got slightly more seats. Alawi got 93 to Maliki's 91. Well Maliki was furious. He did recounts and everything. He thought he was going to win after he had gotten the Americans out, defeated the Sadrists, all of the things that happened in 2008. But at the end of the day the numbers were still 93 to 91.

Now where this is significant, because obviously this is nowhere near a majority in a 325-seat parliament assembly, was the way Iraq really works. Under the constitution whoever gets the most votes gets the first chance to form a government including if necessary a coalition government, that is the president grants authority to try to form one. But the new parliament after new elections has to first elect a president and a speaker of parliament and you needed both of them before you could go through the constitutional process within parliament to form a government. The Iraqis in an informal way like Lebanon had already come up with a deal among themselves which is that the Sunni Arabs would provide the speaker, the weakest of the three. Kind of like in Lebanon and that is provided by the Shi'a although they are not the weakest any more. The president would be a Kurd like in Lebanon it is a Christian, and the prime minister, most important would be a Shi'a Arab where as in Lebanon it is a Sunni Arab. But again, in Lebanon this is etched into concrete in their system. In Iraq it was just informal, it was the way things had been since the first election in 2005.

So, it made forming a government complicated because it has to be done as a package even though in the constitution it is done in seriatim. First you elect a speaker of parliament and then you elect the president then he tasks a party to attempt to get the votes for a prime minister. You need the president to give the nod to the person with the most votes. So, the first thing Maliki did was he formed a coalition with the remaining Shi'a parties. Now he is up to about 130-140 members. Then he went and got the supreme court, the constitutional court to rule that the constitutional provision to give the mandate to the person with the most votes is based on the most votes in Parliament when that is to be seated, not most votes in the elections. So anyway, Alawi felt really cheated and claimed this was his election being robbed from him. Now again he only had 29% of the vote and 29% roughly of the seats in parliament and though he was a Shi'a Arab and was qualified to be under these informal rules the prime minister. In fact, he was seen as the champion of the Sunni Arabs and in the camp of the Sunni Arabs. As many Shi'a would say, of the Baathists. That is unfair to Alawi but that is simply how many of them saw that.

So, we are not going to turn the country over to the Sunnis who they associate with Saddam and the Baathists. So, there was a real opposition to that. In terms of the constitutional decision I knew Judge Midhat, who was the head of the constitutional court, well from my earlier tour. I think he is a fair guy. Was he under the influence of Maliki and the Iranians because the Iranians wanted Maliki very much to become the prime minister not Alawi. Possibly but he also interpreted the rules in a logical way because the constitution is not clear and the point is Maliki had a coalition of 130 some odd seats and Alawi did not. So, you could say the biggest group was obviously Maliki. Anyway, Alawi never got over this and felt that the election was stolen. He blamed the

U.S. especially Joe Biden because Biden was Obama's point man for Iraq and Biden had developed a friendship with Maliki.

So, the situation in August when I arrived was, the election had been four months earlier. There was still no prime minister because everybody was still arguing about this and Maliki could not get votes beyond the 130-140, that is he couldn't get a majority which was about 164-165. He was not there yet. Of course nobody would move on anything until you could move on everything. That is not how the constitution looks at it, so you had to get an informal deal to pledge for the prime minister before anybody could go and vote for the president. I mean it was pretty obvious that Talabani would continue on as the president and Najafi was the Sunni's guy for the speaker of parliament. So therefore, those weren't the questions, but nobody was going to vote on these things until they knew what the vote would be for the prime minister. Nobody was really going to vote for the prime minister until they knew what jobs they would get in the new administration so all of this was behind the scenes and it was very active when I got out there.

There were also a lot of problems between the U.S. military and the embassy. This was in my view nobody's fault. I knew both of the people there. First of all, Chris Hill was the ambassador and Ray Odierno the commander. It was just that they had different perspectives about where Iraq was going and they had different perspectives about Maliki. Odierno in particular was not very fond of Maliki. So, I was sent out with the task of finishing this off and getting a government formed. By this time, it was clear that the Obama administration was informally warming to keeping a troop presence beyond 2011. He basically could read the tea leaves and he didn't want troops to leave and Iraq to be abandoned and then something go bang in the night just before the 2012 election. I am reading a little bit into this but the point is people were now warming to the idea but we still hadn't accepted that idea and the plan was still, to the Iraqis and to ourselves, that we would not stay on, but nonetheless if we were going to stay on we needed a government to negotiate staying on with which meant we needed a government period. So, there was a real pressure to get a government underway. We also didn't want that because Maliki was the interim prime minister but very little was happening. He did not like the Iranian influence in this whole thing as they were playing a very murky game with Muqtada al Sadr and the Hakim family which was another political party that was very prominent. There was really bad blood among everybody.

Q: This was the moment in this uncertain political scene. Was there in your opinion a general view that the American military should stay, that there was enough uncertainty in the region and perhaps in Iraq that they still needed an American military presence?

JEFFREY: There was a strong view that the Americans needed to stay on by every political leader in Iraq other than Muqtada al Sadr. I don't know what his personal opinion was but his public opinion was that we should go. As I said the Obama administration was warming to that. Those of us in the field, military and civilian, certainly believed that. So that was the situation when I got out there and mission one was to form a government. Mission two was to simultaneously see if we could keep the troops on because that was certainly my own personal goal and I had enough informal

encouragement to do this and I knew that was Ray Odierno's view and I knew that was Lloyd Austin's view because I had met with Lloyd before I went out and he took over from Odierno a month later. So, this meant that there was real pressure aside from the general issues, to get this job done, to get a prime minister in. The third mission was if we don't keep the military on I would be stuck with an embassy that was looking like a mini-version of the military minus the military with bases all over the country, a \$14 billion FMS program and somewhere between 15 and 18 thousand personnel. I had to figure out how we would operate on that because ever since we had come in in 2004, as I had mentioned I was on the ground when we did that, we were a wholly owned subsidiary of the U.S. military for all the logistics and overall security and other things. We would have to do this all by ourselves in a very chaotic and still very violent environment.

So those were my three missions actually four missions because the first one was to have a good relationship with the American Military. Fortunately, I knew Ray Odierno. We had good points and bad points. I had gone out to Texas when he was the corps commander before he deployed in 2007. I had gone down to Texas and met with his staff. So, we were on pretty good terms. The first thing I did was to reach out to him. And Emma Sky who was a Brit and a long time Iraq expert, she spoke Arabic. I knew her from years of experience. She was his de facto political advisor and I immediately reached out to her and in every meeting I had in Iraq she was with me as Ray's representative, and I did this later with Sadi Othman whom I had done this with before. It is a good example of why to send people back to post, he became Lloyd Austin's special advisor on Iraqi politics. So very quickly we restored the relationship between the two agencies and were ready to focus on the other three missions, getting a government put together and keeping the military on and then having plan B.

The next thing that happened was as part of the Obama, well on the one hand and then on the other approach, he very wisely halted the troop drawdown in 2010 at 50,000. He decided we would keep the 50,000 on until the very end. This was a very wise move but Obama being Obama he had to do something, so he decided that the six combat brigades who made up the bulk of the forces had to be re-designated train and advise brigades. Or advise and train brigades. I don't know what it was but nobody took him seriously.

So thus, we would be ending our combat role. They had already been spending most of their time training and advising their counterpart Iraqi units so this was nothing new. But they were also from time to time getting into firefights and battles. Nothing like before but I mean this was not a peaceful environment. By this time Lloyd Austin had arrived and he was going to execute it, Biden decided to come out to celebrate. That was fascinating because as the military always says the enemy gets a voice and they decided that they weren't sure what that was, us going from a combat to a non-combat role. So by smearing our embassy with rocket fire just as Biden got there, including a very serious 240 mm rocket that fortunately landed in one of our containment areas, but it buried itself in about six feet of mud before it exploded. So, we had a lot of wounded people. But this was at night so it was a typical chaotic Iraqi situation with rockets coming in, folks

running around, lots of guns, lots of people, medivac helicopters coming in and of course the Secret Service was in the middle of this with Joe Biden.

Now the Secret Service are extremely well trained but none of these guys had been under fire before. We had all the time, so we knew what to do. They were quite nervous about all of this. In the middle of it all I decided I had to talk to Biden. He was calm himself. So, I decided it was better just to participate in all of this, so I told him, "Mr. Vice President, you really earned your combat pay," because anybody including the president who spends an hour in Iraq gets a day's combat pay. Or hazardous duty pay as a civilian government official. So, he said, "you really mean it. Do you think they were really trying to get me?" I said, "Yeah you are lucky to be alive Mr. Vice President." So, he was just happy as a lark but the Secret Service were really frightened because they really didn't have control. We knew what we were doing. We were getting the medivacs in; we were getting people deployed. We were moving around reinforcing in case there would be a ground assault, the typical stuff that would be just second nature to us. So, we got through the famous no longer in a combat role ceremony all in one piece. As I say we had a lot of people wounded, several seriously but fortunately nobody killed that day.

Then we focused on a government. By this time, I had spent enough time with Maliki who was about the only senior politician whom I didn't know from my prior tour. I had met him first when we had gone out with Gates on a prior tour. I had met him a couple of times when I had gone out with Condi and President Bush and I really didn't know him but I concluded pretty soon that he was a problem. Now Lloyd Austin warmed to Maliki more than Odierno did because Austin had been with him in Basra in 2008. Austin was the guy we sent down with Marcie Ries to reassure him when Bush decided yeah, we are going to back this guy. So, he trusted Austin and Austin basically trusted him, and I think correctly. But I still could see there was an awful lot of opposition by both the Kurds and obviously the Sunnis to this, but also other Shi'a particularly Hakim's Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution and that was a powerful force. But the Iranians meanwhile were working behind the scenes to get Maliki elected. That was a good example, a good reason for me to resist Maliki because I didn't want the Iranians' influence. I had seen before what that could do. Al Hakim, Amal Hakim who was the son of the Hakim brothers who had basically created that movement in the 1980's in Iran and they were all clerics from one of the two senior clerical families in Iraq, the other being the Al Sadr.

Anyway, he went to Tehran and met with Khomeini, the supreme leader. It was a very bad meeting of one black hat that is Saheed, one descendant of the prophet religious leader talking to another and it was a very tough conversation. He did not yield and he did not want Maliki to be the prime minister. The problem was the Badr Corps which should have been the military wing of the Supreme Council under Hadi al Amry, bolted and made common cause, with Iranian influence, with Maliki. So now basically you had Amar who only had about 10-11 seats in parliament and the Sadrists who were off on their own. They had 40 seats. They didn't like Maliki but they certainly didn't like us and they didn't like Amar. They were not somebody we could play with because they wouldn't talk with us and we obviously had problems with them. So, we were trying to find one of Amar's people. Adil Abdul Mahdi was someone we were trying to work

with. He later became the finance minister. He later became in the Maliki years, no in the Allawi administration the oil minister, one of the senior figures in Iraq. A very good guy, former communist who then had become a member of an Islamic party but pro-western and much liked and he had been the candidate of certainly some in Washington in 2005 when we got rid of Jafery after the 2006 election and got Maliki. So, I tried with him but in the end, we tried all kinds of things including getting the president to urge Barzani and Talabani not to have Talabani remain as the president so that Alawi could be the president and then Allawi would get the Sunnis along with the Kurds to vote for Adil Abdul Mahdi.

But Talabani would not leave. I thought it was a good idea of mine that Obama went along with but turned out to be a bad idea and blew up, but to Obama's credit he still listened to our ideas. I was given a lot of running room to drag this thing out to see if I could find an alternative. There were people in the State Department who were absolutely opposed to Maliki, people in the military were also concerned, I think Robert Gates in particular. I don't quite know where Clinton was and again the vice president was basically positive. Tom Donilon was trying to balance all of the balls. So, I had the option to keep the discussion open which I tried to do. Finally, however, I sat down with Barzani after we tried this ploy with Talabani, and Barzani said, "Look, I have been talking with Maliki. I have come up with an 18 to 22 point agreement between us that he will put into effect if I support him and I am going to support him unless you can tell me why I shouldn't. I said "Well I am still working;" Barzani said, "Look here is the thing. It is all set up. You tried, and you realize the Kurds get the president, the Sunnis get the speaker, and the Shi'a get prime minister. That is the deal we all agreed to and we encouraged you but the Shi'a are 70% of the population. That is the deal we agreed to when we liberated the country in 2003 and I can't change this. I like Allawi, he is a close friend of mine (and they really were close) but he is not going to become the prime minister. I would support Adil over Maliki because I don't trust Maliki but Adil doesn't have the votes. He has been trying for months." So basically, he was going to move off on his own.

Then at the same time I was up in Kirkuk, somebody in civil society, and I don't think this was made by some party but a civil society group. They challenged Fouad Massoum who was acting speaker of parliament and thus supposedly was responsible for getting the process going under the constitution. They charged him with violating the constitution because what happened was on the first day the parliament meets after an election they are supposed to elect the speaker, elect the president and then the president tasks whoever got the most votes. Well knowing this was complicated by Fouad Massoum who was a Kurd from Talabani's PUK but a very clever guy. He is now the president of Iraq. He decided not to gavel the meeting closed that day in April of 2010 when it first had opened so it was still supposedly open on its first day so he was not technically violating the constitution by not voting for the president and the speaker. So, somebody took him to court and the court found against him, and I remember I was shocked because I knew what this meant. The court found he was guilty and fined him \$20.00. But Fouad Massoum was incensed with this so he said that within two weeks he would summon the parliament again and that they would vote.

Given that step and what I had just heard from Barzani, off we went then to see what we could do. We went back up to see Barzani and met with him. Then along came the three amigos we called them, John McCain, Lindsey Graham, and Senator Lieberman. These guys loved each other and they got along very well and they had very strong positions on Iraq. They liked Alawi and they really liked Massoud Barzani and McCain had weighed in to try to get Jalal Talibani removed and he was kind of bitter about that. He sort of blamed me, but it was fine. We get along fine. But John McCain was very sad about this. At one point he turned to me and said “this is the legions retreating from Gaul” and he was very bitter about us leaving Iraq and he really wanted us to try to stay on. But anyway, he met with Barzani and in the midst of this Maliki said come on down and we will cut the deal. So now we not only had to get McCain out and we had to get Barzani down to Baghdad. He hadn’t been down to Baghdad for a long time. He hated going to Baghdad and if he came along he wanted to take a lot of Peshmerga with him. So how are we going to get him down? We had two C-130s. One broke down so we had to send the other one with McCain. So, I flew up on one of my Dash-8’s. We had these 45-passenger aircraft that are basically the air wing of State INL operated by DynCorp but we were using them. By this time eventually we had a fleet of over 40 aircraft. So, we had these things and they were very helpful.

So, we got them up and decided we were flying Barzani down. I remember we were trying to get McCain out and we had all these airplanes, and I posted myself on the tarmac right by the entrance to the plane making sure that all the Peshmerga would unload their Kalashnikovs when they got on because they were all armed to the teeth. They all had their ammunition in their rifles and I was observing them, making them take their magazines out and then clear the round and then get on the airplane because I didn’t want them shooting up the airplane. So anyway, we got them all down to Baghdad.

Where we had this meeting that Biden made famous when it went public in which I went to the meeting. It was with Alawi, Maliki And Barzani and some of their aides and it was hosted by the Kurds, they had a holiday house in the Green Zone so Barzani was the host. Anyway, I showed up as an unofficial member and I had Brett McGurk and Ali Khaderi. Brett was the guy we used with the Shi’a who of course I had been working with since 2004 out in Iraq and I brought him on board. When I went back out I also brought Ali along as well because Ali is very good with the Sunni. He comes from a prominent Sunni Arab family in Iraq and he and I worked together before. So, they were the two guys I used to work with and people might say, and people did say why aren’t you using the political section? Well the problem was this was so crucial and these guys had spent years and years working with their respective groups and they really knew them well and they were trusted, you just can’t bring in a person for a one-year tour even if that person has experience in the region and expect that person to get the same kind of clout. Everybody knew obviously Ali brought this extraordinary lineage with him and Brett was known as Bush’s guy and then as Biden’s guy. So, they were very useful. It was unorthodox but it was what I had to do. Now in the political section we had Greg LeGofro who was a very good Arabist and his job was to deal with the Sunni Arabs exiled in Amman because he had good relations there and his wife was in Amman. So, we sent Greg off all the time. He was basically the third member along with Sadi Othman

who, as I had mentioned, was Austin's guy who had very good connections with both sides. So, we had four people who had very good connections and that is how I did this.

So anyway, I was in the meeting brokering the whole thing. Finally they agreed but I will never forget because what happened was they agreed on a whole set of things including the 18 to 22 points Barzani had got. But at the end Maliki came up to me and put his finger on my chest and started hammering and saying Alawi will not live up to this. I said, "Hmmm, OK." So anyway, sure enough the next morning President Obama decides to congratulate everybody. Alawi rather than accepting the congratulations starts bitching to the president about the things that he wants changed in the agreement that we had worked out, and that with no agreement he would block parliament. So there was a huge furor. So I had to go back and fix that. Obama called me and I had to go back and fix that, get those things, and anyway Alawi then agreed. So the parliament is open.

Fouad Massoum opens the parliament and so it looks like it is all over and we can get along with our work in Iraq. So, the first thing they do is I am sorry I got that wrong. The first thing they have to do is elect the speaker. The speaker was Speaker Najafi who comes from this family where his brother Atil Najafi was the governor of Mosul and they were from an aristocratic one-time Ottoman military family that raised horses on their ranch near Mosul. They had pretty good relations with the Kurds but that ran hot and cold. At this moment it was pretty warm. So Najafi is elected per the first step in the constitution by essentially everybody because the fix was in. Almost all the parties excepting Muqtada agreed on this thing as part of the deal we had done the day before. Then so at the embassy we are all watching this on TV. Some of the less experienced people wanted to break out champagne, but I was pretty dour having gone through this for years. I said, "It ain't over yet. Just wait. Let's see what happens." There was some kind of altercation between Maliki and Alawi sitting in the front row so Allawi gets up and marches out with his entire delegation from his party, thus all of the Sunnis. This put Najafi in a bind but to his credit he is now the speaker and he stayed behind. He moved on to elect the president and this was Talibani. This made Barzani really angry at Allawi because this meant that Talibani, the man from the Kurds, was not elected with Sunni votes. He was supposed to be elected unanimously. So Talibani got elected but this blocked the premiership so we had this crisis with Allawi. So, I had to report to Washington and then I went out the next day to fix it.

Obviously, I had to see everyone, this is what I spent most of my time doing. Going around and seeing everybody and then going around and talking to them and talking to them and holding hands and sending my people out. This is extremely labor intensive and of course it is not classic diplomacy except it is classic American diplomacy in a situation like that. We had all done that on my first tour and I certainly knew how to do it. I had watched Negroponte do it and watched Bremer do it and I had seen Zal do it and Crocker and Chris Hill so it is what you do. Then I went around to all the leaders of the factions of the Sunnis and said, "Look, this was the deal we had agreed to the night before. Then Allawi came up with five conditions talking with the president. I then got the five conditions in. Now you guys are still throwing a fit over this. We need a government so get back in Monday. So, they all agreed. Come Monday they all marched in and all

voted for Maliki. Then they divvied up all the ministries. That had been agreed to anyway. So happiness returns. Obama called me and thanked me. I said, "Oh, I am going to regret this. We are going to regret this. This is not going to work out well." So anyway, why don't I stop there and I will finish up next time.

Q: Today is March 19, and we are resuming our interview with Ambassador Jeffrey.

JEFFREY: OK, remind me to turn this off when we put that thing on. So, my concern was that both I and others have their suspicions about Maliki's commitment to not only a democratic pluralistic Iraq, and we would have plenty of evidence later that he wasn't, but also that Iranian influence had played a significant role in blocking alternatives in the Shi'a Arab community to Maliki, which meant he was beholden to them. How much so would become apparent over the next few months. However, our basic mission was to do two things simultaneously. One was to persuade the Obama administration to try to keep troops on. The 2008 Iraqi- U. S. security agreement had called for all troops to leave by the end of 2011. Thus, less than a year away by the time we got the government put together. The responsibility for taking over the huge swath of responsibilities we have for Iraq would fall on the embassy. So we had to do two things. One is I agreed with General Austin to push for keeping troops on because I felt that it was absolutely necessary partially symbolically and partially with a troop presence we could be much more confident that bad things wouldn't happen in and around Iraq. The problem was there was no guarantee that the Iraqis would go along with this, and we knew the biggest problem would be yet another status of forces agreement that would have to be passed by the parliament because the other one had been.

But meanwhile my official responsibility was to figure out how the mission would take over all the things the U.S. military were doing assuming Iraqis would not agree to them staying. Now one of the problems with the U.S. military in all of these conflicts is that the military particularly after the publication of David Petraeus' field manual 3-24 on counter insurgency warfare had gotten religion on the need to deal inside states with various communities in a counter-insurgency counter-terrorism posture both giving a population a reason to support the local government, healing divides within the population that our enemies, terrorists or insurgents could exploit as in other countries. So, this led to a large military presence with its very significant what is called strategic communications, which is public diplomacy or civil operations cadre to push for an extremely broad approach to essentially manipulating, transforming, massaging, working with the Iraqi population. We did the same thing in Afghanistan. This is the genesis of the whole PRT program and many other civil operations. And much of the effort of the embassy. But while the embassy had huge resources they were dwarfed by the U.S. military. But the U.S. military was going to go home. For example, strategic communications, their unit was housed in a barracks-like basketball court-sized floor of one of our embassy buildings. There, row upon row of colonels and typically Iraqi or Arab Americans would sit monitoring the news and, coming up with strategic communications snippets that they would try to then program into Iraqi media, into presentations and CENTCOM policies, CENTCOM policies and this sort of thing. This was a cottage industry and was just one example of the many things that the military

thought was absolutely essential to continuing the American presence because this is how they defined the presence.

Q: Was there overlap with USIA in that function?

JEFFREY: Yes, of course. Because that was one reason why it was located at the embassy. But USIA was again much smaller. They would deconflict and would ensure no contradictory messages but basically the 800-pound gorilla was the military and they were in this realm across the board. Thus, CENTCOM came up with 1400 tasks beyond pure kinetics that the U.S. military was doing in Iraq, the USF-I, U.S. Force Iraq was carrying out; 50,000 troops and many thousands of civilians, contractors and others. Of these 1400 tasks a small percent were to go to CENTCOM, a small percent to the Iraqis, and an even smaller percent they decided didn't need to be done, although that was very small; the rest were going to be given to the embassy. We were going to have the world's biggest embassy with a planned end strength including contractors of 16,000 and we had put in for a \$6 Billion budget. But that was nothing like what the military had. So how were we going to do all of this? The answer is...

Q: Now when you say \$16 billion does that include force protection?

JEFFREY: Yes. In fact, that was a big part of it. How to deal with this both to insure that we had an adequate presence in the country to carry out still a very ambitious agenda even if you look at, I think I mentioned Obama's Camp Lejeune statement where we would want to help Iraq become a functioning democracy and a partner in the war against terrorism and various other security things in conjunction with and in accordance with the 2008 strategic framework agreement. But that we weren't going to try to fix every little thing. Somehow the military with their 1400 tasks were oriented on fixing every little thing, but from my prior experience in Iraq I knew they hadn't been successful. Even when they had 150,000 military and we alone at the embassy had \$22 billion. So, I didn't take that too seriously but still I had to focus on this mission.

Meanwhile on a parallel track, while dealing with the Iraqis, trying with my own government trying to push the U.S. to accept a stay-on military presence, and then to sell that to the Iraqis. So, we were doing two things simultaneously, a formal thing and an informal thing. OK let me stick with the formal thing for a moment. There was a great deal of skepticism in Washington whether we could do this at the embassy. I had been briefly the guy in charge of the civilian operations in Bosnia after Dayton. So, I knew what we had there. First of all, aside from the 60,000 NATO troops we had a very large UN presence, a very large EU presence, individual programs of many EU nations, and these were serious programs, not just in villages that people had signed up to to please the United States as we had in Iraq and to some degree in Afghanistan. These were major operations. So, the U.S. part of it, while substantial, was not all that huge and of course we had USAID involved and public diplomacy involved, we had other agencies, but again we were part of a larger EU-UN effort in Bosnia. Of course, it was a small country. Well Iraq is a very big country about ten times larger in population and geography than Bosnia.

We were pretty much alone. We had some international organization programs, particularly the World Bank was helpful and the IMF on the Iraqi currency issues, although the Iraqis were pretty good with a lot of help from us on the currency issues at the central bank. So, there was some World Bank engagement which was good, but we had most of the responsibility for the assistance. Of course, the money was going down and we were putting most of it into security things. Police training which was about a billion dollars. And FMF programs for the Iraqi military; the other economic and governance programs were basically drops in the bucket compared to those. But still our tentacles reached deep into Iraqi society. This was an issue because how are we going to sell it; the Iraqis recognized there was an embassy and an ambassador but basically saw the American presence in Iraq primarily as a military one. That was going away. All of them had conflicted views on that. Both the most pro-American and the most anti-American were conflicted. But none of them understood what an American embassy would be doing with such a huge operation and in fact we hadn't done that in Afghanistan yet and we still haven't as of 2018. And the Bosnia example is not really relevant.

I had been ironically one of the last American soldiers to leave Vietnam in 1973. The American military had turned over to a huge military assistance mission under a huge embassy some of the same responsibilities throughout the country with our consulates in the four major military regions basically functioning as huge PRTs and I realized what a huge job that was. But then again, we were dealing with a far more functional state frankly with far more governance and economic activity than we had in Iraq which was basically still dependent on oil income. So, this was a unique situation and there was a lot of skepticism in Washington. Some people in the Obama administration didn't want us to be engaged but the military including Secretary Gates and then Secretary Panetta after him and the Chairman Admiral Mullen very much wanted us to take this seriously. So, we did, but I had to convince Washington. So, I came up with a scheme because we were going to go back, Lloyd Austin and me, to present our plans. Remember this didn't include keeping military forces on because we hadn't gotten clearance from Obama yet. Now we were going to do this as part of the January-February (2011) visit to Washington but our ostensible purpose was to explain to the Armed Services committees and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee what our plan was with presentations by Austin and me; basically this was the model that Petraeus and Crocker had done with the surge and people liked it. So, we were going to go back and also CENTCOM had organized a huge conference at National Defense University essentially for the embassy to present how in the hell it was going to carry out the military's 1400 points. So, I knew I had a problem.

So, then I decided I needed something snappy so I came up with the five M's. Everything, all of my plans for this organization in the embassy because we are already huge, was oriented towards executing the five M's. They were minutes or months, i.e. the temporal aspect. We had to get all of this done by the time the military left in the beginning of December 2011. Money, we had to come up with the money from Congress. We targeted \$6 billion. That is one of the reasons we were testifying. I should have said the first M was mission. We had to define the mission. I wasn't going to

simply accept all 1400 tasks. Some of the tasks would have gotten lip service; some of them we would have taken seriously. So, the mission had to drive the money and then the fourth thing was Maliki because obviously for whom we were doing this duh, people forget about this. They think it is our battle space. We were doing this to a country of some 30 million people and all these programs were to the government or sub-elements of the government ministries whatever, local governments or to various aspects of the population. The economy, we have often forgotten about that so I put the Maliki M in so everybody would remember this is not just our plan. He has to buy off on it, which became a very big problem. I will get to that. Then the final one was management. How were we going to manage this whole thing with an embassy that had never done that and include managing the other four M? And of course, I had a great staff. I had Stu Jones as DCM. He was to go on to be ambassador to both Jordan and Iraq and acting assistant secretary for Near East Affairs. Ambassador Peter Bodde who had already been an ambassador and would go on to be ambassador twice more including to Libya and Bodde was in charge of economics and the reconstruction, the assistance programs. He was there and was a management cone officer. He was very helpful at looking at the management part of the five M's.

So, I came back, presented the five M's to CENTCOM and of course CENTCOM was very interested in this as the higher command of USF-I and the command that would take over the military mission once USF-I had gone. And the military mission, I forget what we called it because every country had a different one. It is not ODC, or maybe it is ODC or something like that. The commander of that which was going to be Lt. General Kaslen; he would have an official assignment to the embassy but a dotted line to CENTCOM so CENTCOM was very interested in this because they knew that some of the tasks would be theirs and the rest of them would be their guy at the embassy and they also, this was now Secretary Mattis was in charge of CENTCOM and he was very concerned about Iraq in which he spent a lot of time and lost a lot of people and thus with good reason. So, we were cooperating very closely with Mattis on this. I thought the presentations went well. Austin and I had already set up a joint coordinating mechanism where we would meet every week or so to go over all of the 1400 lines of effort in great detail, who was doing what and such

Also remember, the military separately had to plan for its withdrawal. One of the good things about Barack Obama is he said once we got down to 50,000 troops, we will keep the 50,000 there until the very end. He did not want to have a gradual slope. This was absolutely smart of Obama. Still that meant there would have to be a major effort right at the end to clear out 50,00 troops in a potentially hostile environment. This is not just something you can just have the troops bussed out on. So, we were doing all of this and this was occupying much of our time, and this was our overt mission.

Now remember we had a covert mission. Our covert mission was to persuade the Iraqis and then Washington to keep an American military presence on. This would have relieved me of most of my responsibilities under the five M's because whatever military presence, and it was going to be fairly small, we didn't know how big it was going to be, but we would have all of the ambitions for those 1400 missions. We had sent up various

balloons; while I was on leave tooling around Munich I got a message to come into the consulate to take a classified phone call from Tom Donilon the national security advisor. Well I knew, having worked in that office, what this was all about. There is only one thing. He said, "OK, we are considering it. When you come back in January with General Austin we want you to present your recommendations and what will they be?" "We need to keep troops on." "OK I think that will be acceptable. We still have to work out the details but we can run this through everybody." So as part of our activities in Washington General Austin and I met with Barack Obama and with the Vice President and with the National Security Council leadership. Obama decided we would keep troops on and he was kind enough to invite General Austin and me and our staffs to wander into the Oval Office where we just ran around and took all kinds of pictures. We have volumes of pictures. Everybody was happy but this was a huge responsibility. This was the beginning of February. We had to negotiate an agreement which took the Bush administration under better circumstances almost a year to negotiate. The first thing is we had to figure out what we would present to the Iraqis. That meant, while the president had accepted this agreement in principle, nobody had decided on troop strength.

Now the U.S. military had a very ambitious troop strength. I won't get into the details but it was very large, very substantial percent of the 50,000 force that was there. This posed a problem for me because I had taken a position that it was essential for troops to stay on. But I didn't think we needed a lot of troops. I was kind of skeptical as to why we still had 50,000 troops. I was glad we had them in case we had an emergency but essentially other than an occasional skirmish with some al Qaeda element there was almost no combat at this time. Now that was to change later in relation to our troop presence and I will get to that in a moment.

For the moment we hadn't announced to anybody including the Iraqis that we were going to keep troops on. We had to figure out what the ask was going to be. Now however the Iraqis got wind of the fact that the military wanted to stay on and they wanted-- many of them -- wanted us to stay on too. Certainly, Alawi who represented the Sunni Arabs although most of the Sunni Arab population didn't want us there, their political leaders did. And of course, the Kurds both the population and the political leaders wanted us to be there and some of the Shia. So, we kept on being pressed. Look, we are considering this, and of course we couldn't tell them what we had already heard because we didn't have clearance to do so and again there was no sense in doing this without the ask. So, among the people who were very frustrated by this was Maliki. He wanted to know what our plans were. Now this had an impact on one of the five Ms. Remember one of the five Ms was Maliki. So, every time Austin and I would meet with Maliki we would have specific issues to talk about. Political issues and we had our own brief Arab Spring where people started protesting all over the country. Maliki got nervous. Al Qaeda went in and blew up the Baji refinery under the guise of these outbreaks and protests. Maliki wanted us to respond militarily but we couldn't because they are a country now. But we did some things that helped them maintain their security but they had the wherewithal now to deal with this sort of thing. But it was a good example of the everyday sort of problems. That and you would have problems with the Mujahideen Al Khalq which was several thousand armed members of this Iran resistance movement that was very close to Saddam and

absolutely hated as traitors by the Iranians and thus the Iranians put pressure on Maliki to close down the camp which was north of Baghdad. They had a lot of political support in Washington even though they were on the terrorism list. Anyway, there were very complicated typical diplomatic relations with the Iraqis.

JEFFREY: Yeah, let's turn this off. Maliki had been through this once in 2008. He was the last holdout. He had three goals. He needed the United States, He needed the United States for his economic and security support. He needed the United States for his economic support. He needed security support not just because of his fear of the Al Qaeda forces but also of Muqtada a Sadr, Shia militias and potentially even the Iranians, although he had a good relationship with some of these Iranian militias at the time, some of these pro-Iranian militias. He also needed the U.S. to help Iraq become embedded better into the Arab world because Maliki was and still is in many respects an Iraqi and a nationalist and he didn't want to have Iraq have only one friend in the region which was Iran. He wanted to have better relations with the Arab States and he actually wanted to have better relations with Turkey as well because he saw that Turkey was very closely aligned with the Kurdistan regional government and there were ever more rumors of gas and oil deals which I will get to in a bit. But that was something he wanted to keep under control and again he needed the United States for that. He had been very supportive of the U.S. initiative which the Iraqis had accepted to open up the oil fields in the south to IOC development particularly by U.S. and major western oil companies, Shell in the gas area, Exxon BP and others in the oil sector. This was already basically indicating a great deal of promise for the Iraqi oil sector.

So, he was generally positive but he didn't want to get crosswise with the Iranians. He knew they were not in favor of it and he realized that parliament would be tough including his own segment the Dawa party but also some of the Sunni Arabs because there was very strong opposition among Sunni Arab citizens. The polls showed that it was less than 20% of the population who wanted us to keep troops on. It was highest among the Kurds, about 50%. It was lowest not among the Shi'a Arabs but among the Sunni Arabs. Even though their political party leaders were for it. We had Alawi the famous secular Shi'a leader of the main Sunni party but also Speaker Najafi whom we were in constant contact with, were concerned. They wanted us to stay on but they knew this was not a popular position among the Sunni Arab population. Their areas had seen the primary American presence and most combat had been in their areas. They didn't think that America had done enough to protect them from the Shi'a militias back in 2007-2008. So that was the political environment we were doing this in.

But again, we had this huge battle within the U.S. government over troop levels. It indicated several things, first the U.S. military's somewhat unrealistic view of what it needed to do. It took its 1400 tasks seriously for all kinds of things like force protection and came up with very large numbers. There was some skepticism among some in the Pentagon about this but by and large the Chairman and the Secretary supported what was coming in from the field. Again, I stayed out of that dispute because my position was we should keep troops on but how many troops to keep on was a U.S. military decision. The Obama administration didn't like the troop numbers and it was clear to me that there was

some turmoil or churn inside the political side of the White House on whether it was a good idea since President Obama had run on an “I will get the troops out of Iraq” platform.

He had been talked into this just like he had been talked into the surge in Afghanistan and just like he was about to be talked into engaging in Libya but by, if you will, the more traditionalist members of his cabinet and he had a good number of them. Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates and then Secretary Panetta. To some degree the national security people, the Chairman, the CIA director. But Obama being his own man was somewhat skeptical. His deputy national security advisor who was very close to him, Dennis McDonough who later went on to be his chief of staff. I could tell that Dennis had his skepticism, and Biden was hard to read on this, although Biden had the portfolio for Iraq. Biden had advocated of course for the minimum position in Afghanistan even though overruled by Obama and the military but frankly it was already clear by 2011 that Biden had been correct. I think that the timing was important because Obama made the decision at the beginning of 2011 to have a troop presence. Almost immediately thereafter you had the Arab Spring and you were involved in all kinds of churn including one major military campaign that dragged on for months and had us in the end involved in disastrous regime change that produced many things including continuing chaos and in the rise of local Al Qaeda and ISIS offshoots in Libya. The death of our ambassador there in Benghazi, political controversy in 2012. So, the idea of commitments in the Middle East becoming problematic.

Then you have the old issue of Moisi in Egypt, was this a good thing or a bad thing. In Tunisia it was OK. Finally, you had Syria. Even in 2011 the administration was divided over Syria. So, the Iraq decision sat uncomfortably in the midst of all of these. Plus, you still have Afghanistan plus the surge there that had been turned off the minute it had been turned on. So, you didn’t have a happy administration. It is trying to pivot towards East Asia but it has us saying to the president keep troops on and the president thus having to reverse his decision. This sort of surge if I can put it that way in Afghanistan. The ambivalent and contradictory responses to the Arab Spring, be it Egypt, be it Syria, be it Libya, and you have got the typically messy headache of a middle east for a president to pay attention to when wanting to pivot to Asia.

I keep repeating myself, but secondly, he had an election coming up. And he didn’t want to be the guy who lost Iraq, lost Afghanistan. Lost the whole shooting match of the middle east. So, he was compelled to stay on but he clearly from my perspective was not all that happy a camper about it. This manifested itself in this debate over the numbers. So anyway, the numbers, and I will have to get into a bit of the details here because a lot of this came out in the press. The numbers finally were jelled at up to 10,000. The military didn’t like this at all. I felt it was fine. When people asked me again my position was I wouldn’t comment on numbers but if I was asked which I was, it was fine.

Q: Well now for one second don’t talk about the absolute number but talk about the task that it was expected to perform and was it adequate?

JEFFREY: Yeah, that is a very good question because this hadn't been worked out in a whole lot of detail. Remember in the summer of 2010 we had gone from combat brigades to train and equip brigades. The ostensible mission was to continue training and equipping the Iraqi military and counter-terrorism assistance. But again, how large of a force did that require. What are your assumptions about force protection? How many places do you want to be? The answer was the military wanted to be most everywhere. Now remember with the failure of the British to control Basra and the outbreak of fighting there in 2008 the U.S. had swept into the South. So, we had for example a division headquarters in Basra to replace the British, and we had brigades in Hillah, or close to Hillah and between Najaf and Karbala. So, we had a third of our force in the south and of course the line of communications troops because that was just the route up from Kuwait literally. So, we were all over the country and the military wanted to stay on all over the country. They had partnering relationships with the local Iraqi forces and wanted to make sure that terrorists didn't come back particularly in Anbar province and Sunni areas and thus the other four brigades were focused mostly on Sunni areas because we didn't have troops in Baghdad anymore.

It was essentially trying to find a way with fewer troops to do the same mission. It was like they wanted to do most of the 1400 missions supposedly to be passed on to me but remember I, as all this was going on, was still preparing to do my five M's. Not able to get much of Maliki's attention which later turned out to be a real problem. Maliki wanted to say later when are you going to come and ask me (about troops)? I know you are going to ask me but when? What is the mission going to be and all of that. We kept saying no just wait. So as the numbers went down the military's ambitions became somewhat less pronounced because they realized by the time they got to the ten thousand they couldn't be everywhere. They couldn't basically still operate like they had been doing since 2003.

So, we finally had the number. We went back and had another meeting in the White House and the president blessed the number. He then called Maliki and told him 10,000 troops. Now I am a little bit unsure. I think he told him the troop number. But I am not sure because very quickly the White House, they were going to have to make a public announcement. This was the first time the American public was going to learn, June 2011, that President Obama of all people was going to try to keep troops on in Iraq. So, it came out in sort of a snarky way when we publish things that are uncomfortable in terms of domestic politics. So therefore, we ignore the impact on foreigners because they are unimportant they are over there. So therefore, it was not pitched in a way that would endear us to the Iraqis. We have done many things that didn't endear us. By this time the number had diminished to 5000 although they were still being cute with the number. We had agreed with the number among ourselves, and with that the President had let us go forward with Maliki but we had not been clear on what the number would be.

Q: Five thousand is approaching zero.

JEFFERY: Well no, five thousand could still have done the job because the way they would have done this, we would have brought our five TDY Battalions of infantry essentially and at about 300 per battalion plus some special forces. To basically be your own force protection and to be the interface with say five Iraqi divisions. So, you have a colonel and a battalion minus some of the troops wedded with an Iraqi division or a couple of brigades. There were several plans because we are still going to be all over the place. You would need the other 3500 for what we kind of call a permanent party because they would be running the bases, and the air and all of that. So it wasn't a bad plan. There were still problems within the U.S. government about the numbers but by this time we had gone forward with Maliki.

Now a negotiation basically because there was such struggle in the White House over whether this was a good idea or not. It hadn't gotten better over six months since the president took the decision in January or February. They essentially decided that they had to get conditions from the Iraqis. If you want us to keep troops on you have to do some things. They gave certain conditions. They needed all of the parties to ask for it. They needed this because Maliki had not appointed a minister of interior or minister of defense and the minister of defense was particularly important because the position had been a Sunni Arab and we thought that was important so we had that condition and there were several more minor things we wanted out of Maliki, but those were the two big ones. We also wanted him to convene the parliament or a forum and get all of the parties to agree. This is what we had done in 2008. Maliki was delaying.

So, we had two controversies at about the same time. One was we finally gave him a number which was 5000. That number was immediately leaked and Ben Rhodes rolled out an absolute denial saying the number is much less. It is only 3500. This is ridiculous. The American people don't care whether it is 3500 or 5000. What Rhodes was doing, this was so typical of Rhodes. Was, and to some degree Washington, they decided it is only the people who we call in the military PCS. Permanent Change of station. People who were not assigned TDY. Well you can assign a battalion TDY for six months so therefore it does not count against the end strength and all this military stuff. Nobody in America and certainly nobody in Iraq understood that. It was 5000 troops. So, then I was grabbed by a journalist who said, "Ben Rhodes has said that the Iraqi quote of 5000 was wrong and it is 3500 troops." I of course was furious because I did not have authorization to tell anybody what the troop strength was, but I knew what Rhodes was doing. So, I said, "Why don't you wait until Washington wakes up and ask them to fix this." Meanwhile I went back there and told everybody to stop this foolishness. It is 5000. That is what you told me to tell Maliki. That is what I told Maliki and that is what has leaked out and I live with it. They eventually did but with bad faith. So, this added more to the controversy, gee do we really want to keep troops on.

This second guessing themselves which was characteristic of the Obama White House at this point with Iraq. Because meanwhile another thing was happening. The Iranians had gotten wind of this so they had begun a campaign of attacking us. They hit the embassy; they hit my house with a rocket; they hit Stu Jones, my DCM's house. They knew what they were doing. They were right on target. They were using something called Irams

which were essentially huge barrel bombs rather like they are now using in Syria that they would mount on a 122 or 240 mm rocket but these things would have a very short range because they were about 400 pounds. They landed at the only military base we still had in downtown Baghdad. We had a battalion of troops there. The early warning system had worked and the troops had gone to bunkers, but this thing hit a bunker and blew it apart. So, we had 6 soldiers killed in one day. We weren't used to such casualties at this point; we had minor skirmishes with Al Qaeda but Al Qaeda avoided the American military when they could attack. They would attack churches, they would attack Shi'a markets, that kind of thing in the process of shooting at us. We had very few. I can count on one finger the deaths of Americans in that specific period. Now suddenly we were getting I think it was 14 or 15 Americans killed. They had struck many bases. They hit us repeatedly in the embassy as I mentioned. That was causing ummms in Washington too because It meant that the Iranians, and it was also troubling the Iraqis that the Iranians through their militias were trying to put pressure on us. So, we were getting yet from another direction a bit of static about well is it a good idea to keep troops on and all that.

Then the word came down OK the Iraqis have until 1 August to agree to our conditions or we are just going to pull the plug. I knew that by this time that is what the White House wanted to do was pull the plug on this thing. They had made the announcement. The Iraqis had kind of dragged their feet. So, I went to all the Iraqi leaders and said, "OK, you have got until 1 August. Let's get this thing done." Sure enough and that shows there was a certain enthusiasm for having troops. They did everything except Allawi, who had to agree because he had to be one of the participants in this set of conferences that the Iraqi president was going to call, said, "Look, I need until the second of August." So, I went back to Biden and said "We need until the second of August" Biden to his credit gave it to us. So anyway, on the second of August they had met the conditions. Much to the surprise and I think to the chagrin of Washington. You know they set up these missions for ambassadors to carry out hoping that they won't be carried out and all will be well. Then you come back carrying out the mission and they are not pleased. Some were pleased; some weren't. DOD was pleased. Secretary Clinton was pleased, she was a believer in having troops on.

So, we were now in a process of negotiating with the Iraqis for a troop presence that could then be approved by the parliament. That is why the political parties had to be brought in. Now there were three of these meetings. The president of Iraq, President Talibani presided over all of them. The Iranians were pressuring him. He was somewhat vulnerable to the Iranians but I do believe he wanted to keep troops on. And of course, Barzani was the strongest. He and Alawi were representing the Sunnis and Alawi personally wanted them to stay on but he had two problems. First of all, he didn't want to get snookered by Maliki and second, he didn't want to ruin his own base of Sunni Arabs who were very much opposed to this. So, it was very tricky. So, he took the position OK the last time Maliki was a holdout even though he was prime minister he was the last party leader to say yes to a SOFA going to parliament and be voted on. In terms of the SOFA one of the really good things we got which was very good. We had to exercise a little muscle with him but Lloyd Austin was very helpful, we got Washington to agree the SOFA would just roll over the 2008 one.

Now this was controversial because to get the 2008 SOFA, I think I may have mentioned this when talking about the National Security Council. George Bush had agreed to a big thing. The authority of the U.S. to try its own troops for crimes in Iraq was not absolute. Rather it was such that if the troops committed a crime that was covered under Iraqi civil law and it was enunciated in a list that the U.S. and Iraq had agreed upon, during off-duty time the said troop would be tried in an Iraqi court. This is a very unusual thing but this is what the Iraqis demanded for their sovereignty. Again, we weren't used to apart from NATO where you start off with a base NATO SOFA that is negotiated at NATO and then our own SOFAs are done too with Greece and Turkey that are essentially addendum so to speak on technical American things. But essentially everyone signs on to it and of course everybody benefits from it which is why when you go out or at least you used to go out to Dulles you would see a little German base with a German flag flying over it. Because they had the right to fly their flag over their NATO military bases under the NATO SOFA because the NATO SOFA applies to them in America.

It was the same thing but in the middle east first of all you had two things. You didn't have democratic regimes and parliaments or true parliaments and you had this antipathy toward colonial presence be it French or British or American. So, most places from my experiences in Kuwait and our experience in Egypt with Bright Star exercises, and the other things we have done there, we basically cut back room deals with the executive branch. The Emir or the president or whatever. We assume that he, it is always a he, will take care of the courts. But it isn't legally worth more than the powder to blow it to hell.

Iraq was more serious though. It had a functioning parliament. With that parliament the law was clear. Just like in America the executive i.e. the prime minister cannot exempt people from the laws of the land. That is how it works. That is why you have diplomatic immunity because it is based on a treaty that has been vetted and accepted by the Senate of the United States. Therefore, people have diplomatic immunity in the United States because that treaty has been endorsed by the Senate, and it is the same thing with us in other countries. But at least democratic countries. Iraq was not only a democratic country but we had put it together as a democratic country. That was the whole point was to have the people be sovereign. We just couldn't go around it. Michael Gordon spells this out in great detail in his book, and I can just basically skim over the surface of it but the book goes into more detail.

To negotiate with Maliki and Faleh Fayd who was his national security advisor we brought back Brett McGurk. Brett did a great job basically getting the Iraqis to agree that the text would be the same as the 2008 text. Again, that was a huge victory we got over the Defense Department lawyers back when we were still negotiating with ourselves on the numbers. We managed to get that thing because that was something that I and General Austin pushed for very hard. Because the lawyers wanted it revised but we basically said

it is dead on arrival if you try to change this., There is no changing. So therefore, the Iraqis were cool with the language per se because it was the same thing as 2008 including the legal bit. Everything else was just basically a regurgitation of it. They were OK with the numbers. It was a little bit lower.

Some said the Iraqis wanted 10 or 15 thousand and they didn't think that the fight was worth the candle with 5,000. I don't think so. I have heard that accusation but I have never heard an Iraqi say why are the numbers so low. Because the Iraqis knew us and they knew all we need is an airfield and all of a sudden there will be 30,000 Americans and then there will be 300,000 Americans. I mean how many experiences do they need to have with us. Be it 1991 in Kuwait, Be it a couple of months later in northern Iraq. Be it in 2003, be it the surge, I mean they knew we could very quickly reinforce. The key was to have the legal presence and the bases and that is what we were going to have. We were going to have a fair number of the bases still in effect. So, some, particularly Brett argued, well Maliki said look I will sign a piece of paper like Mubarak does. We couldn't buy that. First of all, the lawyers hated it because it would have no legal validity if we already had the precedent with regards to Parliament. How would this one work?

This was a huge problem and it was a problem for me because I was in charge of getting this thing delivered. And that was tempting and I was getting ever more worried about getting it through parliament because Alawi took the position I will only say yes after Maliki says yes because he didn't like the way he was played by Maliki back in 2008, and Maliki was sitting on his hands so that meant that all we had was the Kurdish bloc all enthusiastic for voting for this. Everybody in Iraq liked the idea of Maliki just signing it. Everybody, except the Sadrists, said in principle they wanted our troops to stay on. Which was good. We got that far. What we couldn't do is get the commitment to go to parliament and get a parliamentary endorsement. After much back and forth.

Essentially nobody in Washington liked the idea of doing this without a parliament. Now I would say that was the lawyers because they were right it had no legal validity. This is of some significance because this is exactly what we got in 2014 when Maliki did sign a letter so that we could rush troops back in when ISIS came. But here is my logic and I am being somewhat defensive here. We were faced with an emergency in 2014 where the Iraqis desperately needed security assistance and help; in 2011 there was no real security threat. As I said most of the violence of the last several months had been Shi'a militias instigated by Iran hitting us. By the standards of what we had seen as violence before it was relatively minor, and the Iraqis thought that with our help we were going to give them help anyway, regardless of how it came out with the military presence, we could deal with Al Qaeda, but so it went back and forth on this. But then essentially everybody said no this won't work.

There was an argument that the White House was happy with this. I mean it almost tried to kill this thing in the summer with the 1 August 2 August thing plus having argued it down from 10 to 5,000 troops. They were having real second thoughts about this. They were still having the election coming up in November 2012 and they didn't want to be seen as losing this thing. So, the timing worked out well. The Iraqis had their third

meeting in October. They still couldn't decide so this thing was hanging by a thread. So we didn't have the elections in America, this is 2011. We had this thing hanging by a thread. So finally, the president went back to Maliki and said what is the word. Maliki said I can't get this through parliament.

So, at that point in late October early November we had to get 50,000 troops out. Lloyd Austin had already planned for that because we knew we were going down to 5000. So, the idea was to get almost everybody other than a few people holding the keys to the bases while you bring in the additional troops. So, the plan was to move them all out.

Now meanwhile all of this time I had been working on my 5 M's. Because we didn't know if we were going to have the troops and if we didn't have the troops we would suddenly find ourselves forced to operate with these 16,000 people. We were going to get most of the logistics which was done by contractor; It was going to come to us which included KBR which did all of the logistical support, fuel, the dining facilities, and all sorts of logistics. And then through the military the office of defense cooperation would be running most of the security assistance. The U.S. military left were small detachments, and all of the FMS contractors, Lockheed and General Dynamics and all of that for the tank programs, the F-16 programs and others would have thousands of contractors at these bases. The U.S. military would have small detachments there at bases with the contractors. It would be responsible for the logistics. It came with KBR which was called logcap which everybody used. It was a military thing that we took over, and the military would provide security, but this was all again legally under the U.S. embassy. It was all just DOD money and DOD contractors and DOD supervisors but it was a DOD element that was technically under the embassy. So, all of these 16,000 people were mine. So, we were planning for that while also in the withdrawal while simultaneously planning to keep troops on. So it was a very busy time.

The third thing that we had then was the oil sector because the oil sector started really doing well. But at the same time in Kurdistan the Kurds had developed some really good fields with the help of contracts that they had made on their own with IOCs including Russian and Chinese firms, Chevron was active up there because Chevron was not active in the south. These however were problematic for the Iraqi government because they weren't cleared with the government. Now in the constitution the provisions on oil differentiate between old oil which means oil fields that had been developed by the time the constitution came into effect in 2005 and new fields. For new fields, the region, and there was only one region, Kurdistan, had a constitutional right to play a key role in this. Now Barzani and his natural resources minister Ashti used that to the maximum by cutting deals for equity shares for oil companies. That is what you didn't get in the south. In the south you had basically auctioned off oil fields on the basis of we will pay you per barrel a certain amount and we will cover all of your expenses, so it was a cost-plus contract which is unusual. It didn't specifically allow, but they took the liberty, IOCs, to have bookable barrels which is extremely important for your stock market evaluation, at least for western firms. But still they are only getting one to two dollars a barrel at a time when it was close to 100 dollars a barrel. But they were getting all of their expenses covered. So, for many reasons including the bookable barrels in the long run for our

presence in Iraq many companies including Exxon signed up in the south. Most of the service companies, Schumberger etc in the field were U.S. companies. So, the U.S. had a huge presence there.

We were focused on this and perhaps this is the only thing the embassy was doing on its total own because this was not something the military had a stake in, and we had the expertise, we had the people, we had the contacts with the oil companies. That was a major effort. Peter Bodde was doing it and it went all the way back to Crocker. It was very successful but now the Iraqis in the north are doing that. The U.S. position thus on oil investment in the north, Kurdistan, was somewhat ambiguous. Because these things were not approved by Baghdad we had to warn U.S. firms to let the buyer beware. Normally we support anything to develop Iraq, but in this case, they had to know they couldn't legally make the argument even though the constitution was ambiguous on this. On the other hand, when I would present the argument, this was all cleared talking points in Washington, I would also tell the firm on my own, but you know what? It is also good to develop all parts of Iraq. So, I don't think we are going to inhibit you in any way.

The problem with that was at a certain point Exxon decided that it wanted to go into the north too because it did seem to have very interesting prospects there. Now bear in mind once you get the oil in how do you get the oil out? The answer is the Turks were working very closely with Masud Barzani and everyone because of Erdogan's own not pro-Kurdish policies, but certainly his glasnost with the Kurds inside Turkey, the AKP had also warmed up to Masud Barzani. The idea was that the Kurds would use the excess capacity on the Kirkuk Ceyhan pipeline to send their oil to Ceyhan which is a Turkish oil port. And that Erdogan would allow this.

Erdogan did. Partially because he was interested in gas and there is an awful lot of gas, some of it flared gas in Kirkuk but a lot of it is unassociated gas in the north. The Kurds were already running their electrical generation 24 hours a day unlike the rest of the country and all on gas. They were way ahead of the rest of the country on gas. The Turks were interested in 5-10 BCM annually as part of their goal with gas also from Azerbaijan also possibly more from Iran to become a gas hub and both as a gas hub because that is beneficial in many ways, but also to wean them from their dependence which is about 60% on Russia. So, the Turks were very active in the north. As I said, Maliki was trying to have a better relationship with Russia and with Turkey. We tried to broker that but it didn't go well because they had different views on gas but this was a very active part of our operation which was separate from the main one of how we would keep the U.S. troops on and how we would take over everything.

Q: What was going on in everyone's mind at this moment because of how complicated the whole Kurdish thing is. Was it simply at that moment he was less worried about the Kurds in general. Syria had not blown up yet. He was not as worried or did economic needs and development needs just sort of trump his concerns about the Kurds.

JEFFREY: It was all of the above. Erdogan had worked out several ceasefires with the PKK Kurds while I was there and supporting that. And then he got a big one in 2013 that basically froze everything for two years and allowed the Korbani operation in northern

Syria where everyone supported our essentially going to the rescue of the PKK offshoot the PYD and Kobani. And he developed a very close relationship greased literally, lubricated literally by oil and gas with Kurdistan. But that of course hurt him with Baghdad and with Maliki. So, to some degree it pushed Maliki a little bit closer to Iran because Turkey and Iran are two of the three big outside players, the other big one being Saudi Arabia which had typically inept diplomacy. The Turks and Iranians are better.

Then Exxon which was not only one of the big players in the south but it had gotten a contract for a huge project certainly tens of billions of dollars of freshwater injection or rather salt-water injection into the existing fields which had been around for a long time to maintain and increase their production. This was then the only way that Iraq could get to its goal to pump almost as many barrels a day as Saudi Arabia produced, like nine or ten million. In some statistics I saw they produced 12 million barrels a day. Their reserves, their known reserves which were mainly in the south and in Kirkuk were 160 to 170 billion barrels. Which is two thirds of what Saudi Arabia has. 260 billion barrels. So, they had some real hopes of getting that oil out because this was very easy oil to produce. Just a few dollars a barrel to produce it because it kind of basically bubbled up rather like in Kuwait. The failed development because it had been neglected since the 1980's required a lot of work and that of course was all part of the cost plus contracts.

So anyway, Exxon negotiated a deal done directly between Rex Tillerson and Barzani and his people to also have Exxon take over six fields in the north. The Iraqi government went crazy over this especially the deputy prime minister of oil, Sharistani who was from the south and basically, he wanted to throw Exxon out from its very lucrative for all parties fields in the south, and we had to do a lot of work to avoid that. So finally the compromise was Exxon lost the contract to do the salt water injection which the Iraqis still haven't figured out how to do without Exxon. So, this was a huge mistake and a huge setback. This is one reason why while they are very successful, they are pumping five million barrels of oil a day. Not exporting it all but on a good day they have the capacity of five million which is roughly half of Saudi Arabia's but they would be higher if they had this salt water injection project up and running, but it still hasn't taken off so this is one of the political costs of Exxon going in. But Exxon had its own reasons for doing that, and as I said it figured correctly it could remain on in the south and it did.

The oil sector was one of the positive aspects of Iraq in this period. As was all and all the constitutional system. The security was other than these Iranian backed militias hitting us, not bad either. The main focus was what is going to happen. If we don't have an agreement for the military to stay, now we have to get serious about the five M's. Well we had gotten the money; we had come up with the management mechanisms. We were down to the last minutes and we had the mission because I had ratcheted back much of what the military had started off with. They wanted us to operate essentially consulates all over the country. Certainly, Basra, Erbil and Kirkuk, we had consulates and we operated them essentially as consulates in the summer of 2011. They also wanted us to stay on in their bases in Mosul, in Ramadi in Anbar Province, in Diyala which is a very dangerous place, In Hillah which is north of Najaf also Kabala which is between the two. Because of the significance of Shi'a religion down there. And we couldn't support that even with 16,000 people and six billion dollars. Because to run essentially a mini-FOB a

forward operating base to take over from the military, because apart from these consulates we also had this set of military bases that now were becoming FMS sites being run by the ODC, a small detachment of people technically part of the embassy, running it and doing force protection and the helicopter evacuation and all of that, and then you would have the FMS program and all of that. We had that in Besmaya for the tanks and it in Taji for the F-16s and several other places and another one up in Speiker in Tikrit, so we had about four military FOBs. They again were under me because again I was the only guy. I was it and these were all the office of defense cooperation.

Then on top of that we would have these seven consulates, but each consulate was $\frac{3}{4}$ of a billion dollars a year and about 700 people. And the problem is because it is like living on the moon. First of all, you need very good security, that means hundreds of people to do perimeter security and to do movement security. To do movement security you need very highly trained Americans to do most of that. We use some Iraqis but not a lot. We used almost no third country for our movement security although we used a lot of third country for the perimeter security. But then you needed even more qualified kinds of people, ex-delta force kinds of guys and Seals to do the reaction forces. That was the highest level and you needed helicopters constantly present for those missions, and that is just the security.

Meanwhile you need all the logistics in place. You needed people to run the logistics things like an embassy administrative section, but you needed a contractor to run all the food, you needed a contractor to run all the medical supplies you had to have essentially a couple of hospitals with doctors essentially trauma because we had to ensure everybody that we had the golden hour. For anybody that got hurt we had the medevac helicopters. So, we had this huge thing that would service up to seven consulates plus these four FMS sites that were the size of consulates that were with hundreds or a thousand people or more and then we also had the airport because I took over the military side of Baghdad International Airport, so I had my own airport as well. I had, counting all elements of the civilian side, I had about 65 airplanes countrywide. So, we had this huge thing that was just eating up the Department of State budget. This was over 10% of the Department of State budget, and of course it was very risky. It was down range. The Iranians had kind of let off hitting us but every time Tom Nides the deputy secretary and Dennis McDonough the Deputy National Security Advisor and then the chief of staff and Tony Blinken, Biden's guy and later the deputy secretary of State would come out to visit, then the Iranians would arrange a welcoming ceremony and they would be ducking and covering with everybody else. This is going into the 2012 election so it was bad enough trying to keep troops on from violating the 2008 pledge but then Obama had to worry about what essentially might pass which was Benghazi. They were afraid of a big Benghazi in Iraq and they had very good reason to.

I was worried about this too so I was more focused on how do I support all of this stuff. My answer was and Stu Jones' answer was we need to get rid of these things. There are too many of them; why do we need them? Well they have always been there. Who is going to maintain contact with the local Sheiks in Anbar. What about the religious center in Najaf? We are turning it over to Iran. To some degree we were, but just how often do you move around. You would have these cells of 650 or 750 people, but you would have

within it a communications unit. A helipad and people managing the helipads and everything else. When you got down to it you would have about five or six political officers who would actually be doing the reporting with this huge tail on top of them. It didn't make sense and so bit by bit in negotiating with Washington and again this was between the people who wanted us to do everything which was elements of State and certainly some in the National Security Council and certainly the military and DOD, and then some who just wanted us to get the hell out of there which included some of the people in the White House. Some people in Congress like McCain who wanted us to stay on very active and some on the Democratic side who wanted to slash all of our money and so we went back and forth in his huge battle. So pretty much on our own we decided we would get rid of Diyala, Mosul, Anbar and Hillah and there was a huge gnashing of teeth, and the intelligence community was unhappy about this too because it was a platform for their activities. The military was unhappy but even with the six billion dollars we didn't think we had the money and we certainly didn't have the management capability, enough helicopters to do the rescue missions and just moving people back and forth. We couldn't travel by road or we would be losing people all of the time.

So, we basically got it down to the four FMS sites, the three consulates, the embassy and what we called Shield which was our police training site. The police training thing which was an extremely ambitious program by INL to take over a large military operation but it was very expensive, almost a billion dollars because the military can self-protect. The military would drive around with the armed police trainers who were civilian contractors. They tended to be the same people when I took over but these people because they were police, not military, the State Department wouldn't let them be armed so therefore we had to come up with many hundreds of security personnel to go around with them which caused problems with the Iraqis because they weren't used to seeing civilian security details instead of military ones. So, there was problem after problem after problem. But we were working our way through that because we wanted to figure out how we could still be a huge presence in Iraq while recognizing we couldn't do all these missions that the military had done. We could not duplicate the military because we were not the military. We didn't have the ability to protect ourselves. We didn't have access to funds and other things.

The other problem was, and again because Maliki had been totally focused on keeping troops on, he didn't want it. Every time at the end of our discussions with Lloyd Austin about where are you in the deliberations about having troops on and all that? I would then pull out my maps about what would happen if we didn't have troops and where I would be and such and Maliki didn't want to talk about it. So that M, the other four Ms were OK. That M, was the most important because it was his country, was not in place at the end of November. So, we had two missions now that the military was clear it had to withdraw. One was we had to stand up this huge embassy operation. The second was we had to figure out a way to maintain a security relationship with Iraq despite not having U.S. military as a separate entity there with troops and everything past 2011. Now we had worked this all out back in 2010. Lloyd Austin and I agreed that we would not even deploy this as an option because it was so extensive that our fear was as soon as Washington saw it, especially the Obama administration saw our plan, the embassy plan

they would say well we will go with the embassy plan and we won't keep troops. Because what we had planned to do is we would build around these FMS FOBs if you will, and we were talking about contracts of about 10 to 16 billion dollars including a large F-16 purchase, C-130 purchases, 150 Abrams tanks which did very well in the fighting against ISIS. Fortunately, we did get them out. And much other equipment, most of it the Iraqis bought but we had billions of dollars in funding for FMF that we gave them too, so we had an awful lot of money pouring in and we had all these bases. In addition, we looked for very strong counter terrorism cooperation at the intelligence agency level but secondly, we had various kinds of special forces we wanted to be out there married up with key Iraqi elite counter terrorism forces including the counter terrorism service which covered itself with much glory fighting with ISIS.

Q: Let me just ask you a quick question. If you are about OK we are going to remove the troops what was the analysis or the understanding of what Iran is going to do once we leave.

JEFFREY: Well the argument was that Iran would be happy that we left because what Iran was faced with is, and I am very aggressive on Iran, Iran is a threat to the American regional order, but it is legitimate to say that Iran's first concern, rather its second concern that it devolves to very quickly is being a power projection wannabe regional hegemon. But it's number one interest is self-defense. It had gone through a brutal war with Iraq starting with the Iraqi invasion. Now most of the brutality and the casualties came when Iran then invaded Iraq on its turf in 1982 and 1983. People forget this although nobody in the region forgets that. The point is they first of all didn't want Iraq to be a power projection center against Iran. It is not an accident that Iran stopped its nuclear militarization program in 2003 just as it saw 150,000 troops cross over the berm in Iraq and decided maybe it didn't need that problem or didn't need to continue work on it right now. Because that of course is a smoking pistol unlike long range carrier systems or even enrichment programs which are theoretically dual use or useful for conventional weapons. But weaponization of nuclear warheads is only for one thing which is weapons of mass destruction So the Iranians first of all, and then they thought they could by working through the parties that were funded by them and were working for them that they could politically squeeze us once the troops were gone. We did not have the power but the Iranians didn't know that, to simply decide it is time to dump the Maliki regime and put Alawi in there or separate out Kurdistan or any of the other things the Iranians thought we might do.

And it was good because as the Iranians were worried that we would do all these really scary things it meant that if we didn't push the envelope we could kind of live in the same space with them which was our goal. Remember this is the Obama administration that is sending secret letters to the Iranians and trying to get JCPOA agreement. So then in addition to the counter terrorism and intelligence sharing and the FMS programs we had a whole variety of missions using the U.S. military for. We were thinking of exercises and bringing people in. We were thinking of continuing to secure the oil terminals that were offshore in international waters. We had Coast Guard ships there. And basically, it was a huge package of things. So, I presented that package when I went back in December to

Washington to President Obama. He liked it and then he presented it to Maliki. Maliki liked it and much of the last six months of my tenure in Iraq was taken up by three things.

One, the erosion by both the U.S. and the Iraqis although mainly the U.S. of that security program which indicates how questionable that would be. I have got a lot of thoughts on that because this was very instructive. Secondly, the deterioration of the political environment with Maliki taking on the Sunnis, and thirdly just trying to operate. Because what we had found out was again we had taken all the military's logistical sets, but everything we were doing in that country we had been doing as if the U.S. military had landed on Mars. The Martians were in their caves and the U.S. military in their own areas and in those areas were totally sovereign. But now we had the Iraqis in charge of sovereignty. They had the security mission of the border even if they had no way to defend it and only limited ways to monitor it. We were doing some operations that I will not get into. We are still doing some operations on various things there that we had agreed with Maliki that we could do and didn't want to make a fuss about. The problem is some of these involved the Iraqi radar operators suddenly seeing things that they are wondering where are these coming from? So it was very difficult to work through that, but the basic problem was just the logistics. For example, the thousands of people who were doing security work, they all needed weapons licenses. Well the military had been able to issue them but now we had to get them from the Iraqi authorities. Then everybody who came into the country now needed an Iraqi visa. The Iraqis weren't set up to do that. The military had its own crossing point out of Kuwait. That was of course closed down and all of my people, my ice cream trucks had to cue up with literally thousands of other trucks on the Kuwaiti border to get through 19th century Ottoman standards of customs clearances and such, and we had terrible problems with the police program because they weren't allowed to go out and train the people and it was a very ambitious problem to go out and train them.

Neighborhood policing and community policing and how not to shoot people and how to resolve domestic disputes rather than just hitting people over the head and the Iraqis were used to us taking the police out and training them to shoot M-4s and they were wondering what happened to that training. Why do I have to go through sensitivity training and their classrooms and such. So, it was a nightmare for weeks. What we had to do was we basically had to re-organize the embassy into task forces to deal with all of these problems with the ministry involved. Almost every ministry had a slice. Then we had to start shedding some of the things from the military. For example, why did I have to use the military system to buy fuel. Iraq was awash in fuel. We just got rid of it and started buying fuel, but that requires figuring out how do you do banking; how do you purchase vouchers, all of that, so we had people working night and day. Another thing was I realized suddenly that I had hundreds of trucks running all over the country, some of them being seized by insurgents, some of them being shot up, bringing up all of my stuff. We had no idea. So, we set up, just like the military had, a movement center in one of our compounds all hooked up with radios and blue force trackers. So, I had a whole team of people all contractors monitoring where all of my trucks were all over the country and then we could go to the Iraqi interior ministry and figure out why they weren't giving them the clearance to cross. Actually, after a while this almost became fun. We were

running our own operations. Again, we had this huge fleet of helicopters that were moving out to these seven sites we had, eight sites including Shield downtown. It was across the river in Baghdad.

We were bit by bit getting the Iraqis used to this huge American presence but it was no longer the military which was exempt from Iraqi admin and legal procedures. This had to be with the Iraqis and they had to facilitate our presence in ways they were not used to and hadn't thought would happen. And this was just constant day in and day out negotiating at every level. I had a wonderful team but I had to spend about 2/3 of my time. Meanwhile we had a problem with security because as I said the crown jewel of the security system was these bases we were doing for FMS. We had the FMS contractors from Lockheed and General Dynamics and Raytheon, all of the others out there. Carrying out FMS contracts. But then at every base I had a little command and control cell of U.S. military who reported to Lt. General Caslen who was the head of the Office of Security Cooperation or whatever we called it there. They were crucial because they were the people who did the force protection. The force protection was American and other contractors under a DOD contract but they of course were running the command posts that each of these FOBs had and they were responsible for getting quick reaction helicopters in, running the little helipads, getting medevac helicopters in because we always had to have that. So, they did the security, the helicopters and the command and control.

Then suddenly the DOD lawyers said they can't be out there under the Vienna Convention, they can only be in the capital because that is what the Vienna Convention says, so we tried to go back and say their duty station in fact is Baghdad, Ok, we are happy to say that. They are just TDY in country out at these sites just like when you go out as political officer and visit the farm lands of outer Australia. They said, no but there is no Iraqi authorization. So, I sat down for three hours with Fayr Fayad who was the national security advisor and we made a new agreement that laid out the Iraqi and American authorities in each of these bases because they were co-located bases. They were all on Iraq bases. There was just an American compound that had been the American base that the Iraqis just glommed onto because it was always good to be close to the Americans. Now it was an Iraqi base and the Americans had our presence in it. We just put the whole thing together with a couple of lawyers and the two of us in four hours and I sent it back to Washington. This was just before Christmas at this point and they said, "Nope, this still won't work." So, it went to Ash Carter who was a deputy secretary at the time. He didn't like it. So, I just pressed on, And General Caslen risked his career although it didn't hurt him because he has now been the longest serving West Point commandant, and he was the runner up for National Security Advisor to Peter McMaster. So, he was well thought of. And one thing is he was a man of real integrity and smarts. He decided he would support his ambassador so we both went back and said this will work, leave us alone. This again went to Ash Carter and then to the Secretary of Defense. Everybody said you have got to yield. I said, "No I am the ambassador I know what I am doing. This agreement works. This is the only way we can operate here. I will go to the president." We sent the question out to Hawaii where Obama was trying to

have a Christmas. Obama took one look at this and said, of course. So anyway, we got to keep our bases.

Meanwhile bit by bit the whole security system we set up was being eroded. One third by Maliki who was suspicious of us being embedded in his counter terrorism service and his intelligence activities. Of course, the Iranians were working their own mischief as well. Through people that were close to them saying why are the Americans in here and such. There was a normal feeling why do we still have the Americans there. We had to keep reducing the police program because it was clear that they didn't like that very much and that was a major part of our security operation. We couldn't get the exercises we wanted in part because there was no SOFA. We lost the ships eventually that were protecting the offshore terminals which was a big thing for the Iraqis. Just because the Iranians had been making noises about Iraqi oil exports. And as to the reason I finally figured out why this was happening and then it just accelerated and continued with Steve Beecroft, basically we were being nicked and dined 90% by Washington and 10% by the Iraqis. The reason is we do not have a four-star general who had SVTS with the Secretary of Defense every week on what he needed and his troops needed in Iraq. Absent that, no matter how much you jury-rigged all of these bits and pieces, it looks good on paper and even if you can get the funding for it and you can get the INL elements with the police agreement, you can get the military to find ways to do training, get special forces to do training and come in and do this and that. And you can get the intelligence community to link up and you have got these billions of dollars floating around. To put this all together and make it work as an embassy chapeau alternative to a military presence in a country, as equivalent to a true military presence under a combatant commander, is just very hard.

Now the interesting afterthought on this is in June of 2014 Barack Obama decided he is going to pull the last 10,000 troops out of Afghanistan. He makes a public announcement, and what he says is, and it shows Obama does pay attention. This is three years after I briefed him in the Oval Office. He says, "The model that we are going to use with our security cooperation in Afghanistan is the model we put in place with Iraq." Then he ticks off all of the things that I had discussed with him and he had discussed with Maliki, most of which had been atrophied by that time but how is he going to know that? He ticks them all off and he is smiling at this plan and I am saying oh no. But far worse a day later Mosul falls. And the Iraqi army is streaming south in shreds. The whole thing collapses and that was the end of that. We, Obama is rushing in troops initially to protect the embassy. Then within months to stop the campaign against ISIS. Meanwhile he reverses himself again on Afghanistan and decided to keep 10,000 troops on. So, this was a huge experience in trying to use embassies to be the major security deliverer. The first time we tried it since Vietnam. That didn't work well in 1975; this didn't work well through 2011-2012. The proof of the pudding was the collapse of the Iraqi army in 2014 and it won't work well in Afghanistan either. So, there is a real strategic lesson out of this. You need American troops on the ground, even if the security things you are doing with the local forces, intelligence, police security forces and all of that can be done theoretically through programs that can be run through the embassy, it doesn't work.

Anyway, that was one of the big lessons. Two other things and I will wrap up now. As I said after a couple of months of really exciting micromanaging on the part of me and Peter Bodie and now Stu Jones has left and Peter Beecroft is DCM and all these other great people, our management counselor and folks who are doing the LOGCAP and all of that, KBR contractor support. We actually got to kind of enjoy it even though we were having terrible problems and we couldn't get weapons in and we were doing things day by day. After a while we realized we were going to break the back of this thing and we were going to be operating countrywide with 16,000 people and all of these airplanes and all of this money and it is going to be ugly but we can do it. So, in that sense we were able to stay on. We were able to execute many of the military's 1400 tasks. That is on the surface we had intelligence cooperation. On the surface we did have obviously trainers out there helping their counter terrorism forces. We did have the FMS program. That did not change. What we weren't able to do was the synergy of being able to ball that all up together and say here is an extraordinary security package that we have given you that has got links to CENTCOM, links to the Defense Department, links to us, links to the CIA. Everybody is working together; that didn't work. But the basic survival of the mission and all of its elements by the time I left it was basically new normal. It didn't look anything like the normal embassy that I have ever seen. It didn't even look like Vietnam. We were able to make that work, so the five Ms actually worked minus the military thing. Poor Barack Obama thought it would work and that is why he used it as a model for Afghanistan so it was a good model even if we had problems doing it.

The last thing was, and this portended much with the rise of ISIS a few years later, was once the U.S. forces left, and it took me a long time to figure this out. Maliki felt vulnerable. At various points when we had our brief Arab Spring situation in March of 2011 when in doubt he was afraid the Baathists would rise up. He would turn to General Austin and we had taken the troops out of the cities and he was wondering about getting troops back into the cities. Austin was smart and he said, "Look I can't do that but I can back fill out in the field some Iraqi unit that you can then bring in. So, bring in that division and my guys will move into his battle space. So, Austin was very good at helping Maliki out. We also of course had 22 platoons separating the Kurds or actually working together with the Kurds and the Iraqi Army along the line between Kurdistan and the rest of Iraq because the Kurds had pushed south at various points and there was a lot of tension and some shootings and we had intervened in that. That was going to be another one of the things we were going to do after the military left. We were going to keep again under Lt. General Caslen a group of colonels who would be out in the headquarters monitoring and managing this thing and basically intervening as American officers are good at doing. The problem with that was that ran afoul of State and Defense over who would pay the TDY costs of having these people out in the field. This was the kind of stupid thing we ran into all of the time.

Anyway, getting back to Maliki he suddenly was afraid that because we weren't kind of controlling the Kurds in the north with our troops that was a problem. We didn't have these quick reaction forces that could move in on extremists and help them out and the embassy had our own things and he was uncomfortable with those. In fact, he threatened to shoot down a drone at one point. We had put up a drone from the embassy, though I

think it was General Mattis who had gone out and visited, and made a courtesy call on Maliki. Of course, his security people got with my security people and said what do you have? Well we have drones. Look, can you put a drone up so we have visibility at all times over the convoy. Well sure when the convoy went into Maliki's compound Maliki saw the drone and he said he would shoot it down himself if he ever saw that again.

So, we had a nervous Maliki and he had the Arab League summit. He basically looked to us for help in getting some American assets back in to help him. Actually, we were able to do it but the Americans had to blab about it to the wrong Iraqi and it hit the press so Maliki had to pull back. So, he was really frustrated. He took this out on the Sunni Arabs whom he didn't trust. Right at the time when the American troops left as he was flying back from his meeting with Obama he decided to sign a warrant on the vice president Tarik Hashemi who was essentially the head of the Muslim Brotherhood party in the Parliament, and I had known Hashemi for years. I almost got killed leaving his compound in 2005 by Al Qaeda. The detail that he may have had ties with al Qaeda I wouldn't dismiss out of hand but the point is this was Maliki at his very worst, but of course he wasn't stupid so he made sure that Tarik Hashemi could beat feet up to Kurdistan before the Iraqi warrant could be executed. But still we had a crisis. The Kurds didn't like the fact that he was up there because they had their own problems with him and they had their own problems with Maliki. This created friction with Sunni Arabs, while all of them were not supportive of him, his party was not all that popular. Still he was a Sunni Arab and he was the vice president and what is going on. Technically the vice president in some weird part of the constitution we helped put together did not have immunity so that is why he was able to do that.

Then Maliki was very reluctant to pay the awakening Sunni Arabs. There were 100,000 of them on the dole. Some of them had gotten jobs in the security services or elsewhere in the government but most of them were still getting stipends and a kind of militia. Maliki was very difficult paying them because he felt he was paying people to rise up against him. Still he kind of did that but eventually after I left the payments stopped and he was just acting in a more erratic manner. So, the last political crisis we had was that the Kurds and Muqtada al Sadr and Alawi all decided they would bring down Maliki with a vote of no confidence. I didn't think it would work because that requires the help of President Talibani, and for whatever reason, some people would say it was Iranian influence, others would say Barzani was getting ahead of himself, Talabani wouldn't act. I also felt they put too much faith in Muqtada al Sadr and his crazy party and his crazy way of doing things. But anyway, I felt that what they should do is modify the constitution and impose term limits so Maliki couldn't run again. That was my scheme, but I wasn't in charge anymore not that an American was ever in charge, and these guys thought we have got the votes for a vote of no confidence and we can get rid of him. I said, "I don't think so. If you try a term limits thing I think it will work because that didn't require the president in this case Talabani." Barzani told me look I have known Jalal Talabani for 50 years and you haven't, I know where he is." That is not what I was hearing. In the end they got nothing because they went for too much and Talabani didn't back them.

So when I left as I said we were operating there. The FMS program was working and that eventually got them where other than the stuff they lost they were able to use against ISIS effectively. We maintained enough contact with the counter terrorism service and some of their intel people to ramp up again in 2014 and we had the contacts and such. But this idea of 16,000 people and the 1400 missions the military had given us and the very ambitious programs of security assistance across the board and all kinds of things all interagency it was just too ambitious. The management we had but we didn't have the Washington management. We didn't have enough of Maliki. So, we had the mission, a sensible mission and a lot of it was accomplished. The oil sector, keeping them democratic, keeping the security together. We had the money; we got \$6 billion. We did not have enough for some of the more ambitious military programs like seven consulates but we had enough to stay active throughout the country and eventually I decided I would just fly into those areas where we didn't have bases and rely on the Iraqi local security to protect me. It worked out. The first time was a little scary but we started doing it. And then we had the time. We were able to survive, although almost failing during the first few months.

The military left but we actually had enough time to put it all together, and we had our own internal management under enough control so we were able to be very flexible and figure out how to operate in this whole new world. But we didn't have the Washington management on the security side, and we didn't have Maliki with his full endorsement of the American presence because he didn't see that presence as serving his security needs because he couldn't understand how all these parts would fit together even though he had been briefed by not just me but Obama. That fueled his tendency that was already pronounced to go after his enemies. At the top of his enemies were the Sunni Arabs. Bit by bit, step by step he pushed them ever further into the arms of what became ISIS. By 2013 this was becoming apparent and in 2014 the chickens came home to roost first with the ISIS seizure of Fallujah which was a classic Maliki mistake where he had tried to arrest a parliamentarian from there who obviously had immunity and, in the process, shot the guy's brother and so then there was an uproar and then Maliki pressured by all the local authorities stupidly pulled all the Iraqi army forces out of Fallujah. Well you can never rely on the local police in Iraq. Certainly not to hold off ISIS. ISIS swept in from Syria and in a day managed to take Fallujah. Then of course the far more serious collapse of the Iraqi military six months later. This came from bit by bit we lost our ability to monitor, manage, advise, and to kind of lay down the law as a quid pro quo for everything we are doing for your country including billions of dollars of money to buy arms. Maliki replaced good officers who we knew were good officers with sycophantic nobodies who rose and got their stars only because they knew how to kiss up. It is that simple, and those were the people who ran leaving their troops unled behind. So, on that unhappy note I will end my interview. So I think that is it basically.

Q: OK so today is March 23 and we are concluding our interview with Ambassador James Jeffrey.

JEFFREY: Once again I would like to thank the ADST for all of its efforts in making this come to fruition and the effort and professionalism of Mark Tauber and his predecessors. This has really been an eye opener for me in looking at my own career, and I hope it can be of some use to others.

Let me share one of the insights I gained, and then some specific more tactical ones, I gained in this review of my career which forced me to think not only of what I was doing for the last 43 plus years but how it fits into various word of the day buckets. Essentially three, the cold war period from obviously 1946-1948 to 1989-1991 but in my case from 1970 when I arrived in a unit that had the responsibility for partially securing the Fulda Gap against the Soviets to my presence in Munich from '89-'92 when I saw it all go down. Then secondly the period of absolute American cultural, military and economic dominance from roughly that same period 1989 to 1992 perhaps even a little bit before. On through, despite a few hiccups, 9/11 and 2008 to roughly 2012-2013 when Walter Russel Mead published an extraordinary piece in the American Interest called the "End of The End of History," saying now we are now beginning to face peer competitors. That has become the third period and it is not a watershed as 1989-1991 was. It is more of a fading of one and the arrival of another rather like when the cold war came in from that period 1945-1946 through 1948 to the Korean War. As we face ever stronger opponents and many of our assumptions particularly about China as The Economist recently wrote in March 2018 "Why did we Get China Wrong over the Past 30 Years," but also on Russia and on the dominance of American values including the democratic and liberal values and the assumption that we would always be number one and be able to dictate or at least determine global events. That has all been called into question and we are totally in a new era.

That era has largely been after I left government but in my last years in government I could see us moving in that direction and a lot of my work since leaving government which I haven't covered in this review of my career has been focused on how to respond to it. But that is a different story to some degree. A couple of points about what brings all of this together, these three periods. The first thing is that at the very core of American foreign policy, going back to Wilson or even further. Kori Shake just published a book on the transformation of global leadership, the transfer of global leadership basically forms the 19th century on in a series of episodes beginning with the 54"40" or fight and the Oregon territory to the Spanish American war and actually even back to the Monroe Doctrine of how we took over from the British global hegemony if you will. But we were a different kind of global hegemon than the British even though we picked up a number of their different skill sets. I think that has to be the central point in all of our foreign point analysis. We are running a global security cum economic monetary value system and we tried that with the 14 Points with a more international organization flavor in 1918. We started adding values during WWII with the Four Freedoms but still with an international organization flavor the UN charter of 1945 and our hopes with the security council. But then as the Cold War set in and the problems of using the UN security council became apparent we shifted in another direction and that is where you got just NATO, the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall plan, the other alliances we formed around the world, but also international organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank and what

became the World Trade Organization to advance the economic and monetary side of this global system.

But at the center of this global system is collective security and at the center of collective security is the United States' willingness to defend the challenges to it. That is the fundamental truth of foreign policy since 1917 and very much so in a very formal way since 1945. It has been challenged by some on the left realist school of foreign policy. Walt, Mesheimer, Bacevich and others and it has been challenged by the right by both isolationists and America firsters. We have a president who is at least ambivalent about this. But nonetheless in one or another form it remains the secular religion of the American international class and it remains frankly the last hope of most of the liberal democratic nations of the world however much they deplore a given American trade action or a given American demand for more money spent on defense or whatever that sounds like the military should be dormant and that certainly flies in the face of I think Secretary Kerry's favorite comment "less military, more diplomacy."

The problem is that it confuses the nature of diplomacy. That is like saying less protein and more carbohydrates. Diplomacy is to the military as is nutrition is to protein. It is the higher level and nutrition consists of various kinds of nutrition, protein, carbohydrates and fats. Unfortunately diplomacy consists of various tools of which the military is probably the most powerful but also the most dangerous and risky. Therefore, not necessarily the one that we want to be the first to be used. There is also political in the broad sense from purely trivial things like state dinners for visitors to Washington to UN votes to essentially the whole political moral, legal agenda, rule of law and all of that, and then the various economic tools from the monetary, the role of the dollar in the world. Our energy policies including export of oil and gas these days and our trade and commercial policies around the world. The mix of policies that make up diplomacy varies from issue to issue and from president to president. And presidents make all of the key decisions in foreign policy. There is no model for which mix works.

There are a few lessons that I have seen close up that I will pass on. The first is that presidents make all of the top decisions on the really important things. The second thing is and I may have gone over a bit of this earlier, any president can only have one or two at most, maybe three foreign policy issues. The reason for this is the nature of how you get success in foreign policy. If you look at our successes since WWII. WWII was an aberration because it was a total victory fought by a total effort. The Korean War, our policies towards the Soviet Union in Europe from Berlin to crises to NATO and on and on as for the Cuban Missile Crisis, the challenge to the Soviets in Afghanistan to the Iranians when they came in to Iraq in 1983 in response to the Iraqi invasion, the Tanker War against Iran, the Gulf War against Iraq. The Balkan Wars against Serbia. The initial operations against Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and elsewhere, all the way up to the JCPOA, you have two principles. One is you have to put in a whole lot of risk, energy, effort, and pain. Pain to yourself and to the other side into any foreign policy success; the pain does not necessarily need to be kinetic. It was eventually in the Balkans or in the first Gulf War. It can be a military logistical operation like the airlift to Israel in 1973. It can be the threat of military action essentially what got us over the Cuban missile Crisis and what

got the Soviets to stand down in the Yom Kippur War when we alerted all of our forces which I mentioned when I was one of those 3 million plus forces alerted. Or it can even be nonmilitary. By and large the main punitive measures taken against Iran when it got to the JCPOA were economic in nature particularly the NDAA oil sanctions and some of the UN actions.

But the second thing is, and all of these things are politically difficult be it sending troops into combat or taking on much of the U.S. Congress as President Obama did on much of the JCPOA, and involving considerable risk and really total mobilization of all U.S. elements of power, economic, political, diplomatic., Political being in domestic terms particularly with the congress and various interest groups in the media. There is usually or almost always a military component even if hidden; there was a military component to the whole JCPOA because the threat of military force either our threat or Bibi Netanyahu's may have moved the Iranians to some degree but more important it moved the Europeans and the Russians even more to come up with a compromise.

All of this effort and heavy lifting and fighting congress and fighting your allies and fighting your opponents around the world, but just for a limited result. I may have mentioned my first exposure to the U.S. army when I was a college student left a big impression on me because my honors thesis was on the Korean War. Many said all we got out of the Korean War was a total failure, whereas looking at the Cold War as a whole our limited victory in Korea showed we would lose 35,000 troops to defend a piece of at the time useless real estate simply because it was on our side of line drawn in 1945 -- and had a huge impact. Among other things in Germany for re-armament a few years later. But the whole idea is we have got through that thing by offering a compromise. The Cuban missile crisis was a compromise including pulling the Jupiters out of Turkey. We didn't demand the demise of the Saddam regime in 1991. We didn't march to Baghdad, as it turned out very fortunately. As it turned out we got a victory we could all be very proud of and we helped shape the middle east for a decade afterward thanks to that victory. The same thing with Iranians first in Iraq and in the Gulf. All we wanted them to do was, not to surrender and to have a signing ceremony on a modern version of the USS Missouri, but simply to stop doing what they were doing and get out of our hair. Same thing with the Soviets in Afghanistan. Which probably more than any one thing brought down the Soviet Union. Again, we didn't demand a surrender, in fact we didn't even demand them to go home. We just wanted to make sure they understood they would pay a very heavy price for as long as they wanted to be there, we would be there on the other side. Those kinds of very limited quid pro quo almost realpolitik solutions have been what has worked.

They also stick in the craw of America. An America whose first war was a total victory in 1783 and whose memories still seem to end again with the signing ceremony on the Missouri had a hard time particularly the U.S. Congress and elements of the politicized media and internationally oriented establishment in America in accepting these limited victories. So, the deal doesn't look good on the surface because what I am saying is, a

whole hell of a lot of heavy lifting, military, with Congress, taking risks, body bags, everything for limited results that in many cases look like what happened with Milosevic in Bosnia. We were back fighting him four years later in Kosovo. Simply giving both sides a chance to do it all over again.

But that is how the Roman Empire worked. It is how the British Empire worked from 1815 to 1914 and it is how we have worked. So, the alternative when we go for broke, when we roll the dice for total victory for roll back or regime change be it when we marched into North Korea in 1950. Be it Vietnam, in many cases what we were trying to do there was to roll back Ho Chi Minh's victory of 1954. Be it the alternatives people keep pressing for with the JCPOA and of course above all else our adventures in Iraq and Afghanistan, illustrate that when we try for everything we get nothing.

2021 Addendum to Interview

Q: Hi, everyone. Stu Kennedy here.

JEFFREY: Oh, how are you doing Stu? Good to hear you.

Q: I've been bored like everybody else. Well, I am sad that we didn't cover Syria.

JEFFREY: We'll get to Syria now if you want.

Q: Absolutely. I'll turn it over to you.

JEFFREY: I am James Jeffrey, it is February 9, 2021 doing an interview with ADST.

When I last spoke, I discussed retiring from the Foreign Service in 2012. I spent the next six years on a variety of essentially part time activities. I was a fellow at the Washington Institute, a member of the Defense Policy Board, later a member of the CIA's external advisory board, an advisor to Exxon and on several other boards and I taught at George Washington University. I had no intention of going back into US government service. I was approached at the beginning of the Trump administration by both Rex Tillerson and Jim Mattis—both of whom I had worked with—on possible jobs, I had really not a lot of interest in that. And also there was a major problem, I signed one of the letters criticizing then-candidate Trump. And I was pretty sure that if the position were one that required congressional confirmation, that the White House personnel office would have nixed me. And in fact, I was thrown off of the Defense Policy Board by the White House personnel office soon after the Trump administration came into office. And so I continued my outside activities, until Mike Pompeo was selected to be secretary. He reached out to me for possible jobs. We talked about the possibilities, but also the issues including the letter. And so that didn't go very far.

But then, in July of 2018, he approached me and asked if I wanted to be a special

representative for Syria, reporting directly to him. This idea had immediate appeal to me, I had learned to know Pompeo and to appreciate him when I was on the CIA external advisory board. He was a no nonsense guy who had I thought a realpolitik view of the world, well balanced with President Trump's more difficult to define international views. And we got along well together. I also liked the idea of a special envoy, because having had as my last job in the Foreign Service, running a post with 16,000 or perhaps more, we were always hiding the numbers from Washington personnel. I was interested in a job with minimum administration and maximum diplomatic juice. And the other thing is that I would be reporting directly to the Secretary, which was the model that I had been used to when I was the Iraq envoy for Secretary Rice. It's what had traditionally been the case with special envoys, Dennis Ross on the Middle East during the Clinton Administration, or Strobe Talbott as the Russia representative during that administration, so that was appealing to me. Also, the idea was that they would bring me back as a Foreign Service officer, rather than a political appointee. And returning to the Foreign Service being recalled, so to speak, that had its charms as well for someone who had been in the Foreign Service for 35 years.

But in doing so, I had to think about where we were with Syria policy. And in fact, one of the things that Pompeo pitched to me was, if I did take the job, I should put together a serious strategy for him based upon where the administration was and what had come before. So I'll take a second to talk about the extraordinary tragedy and the extraordinary mess up that two administrations had made with Syria. The Syrian conflict began as one of the Arab Spring rebellions in 2011. Very quickly, the Assad regime used the kind of brutal, absolute, horrific violence against civilian protesters that we saw, for example, in Libya. And this pushed many, many Syrians very quickly, to armed opposition. There was also a religious aspect of this, to some degree, the Assad government was largely composed, beginning with Assad himself, of Alawite Arabs, who are a heterogeneous offshoot of Shia Islam, whereas most of the people in Syria are Sunni Arabs, and many of them resented the Alawite dominance of the government. But the main problem was the oppression of Assad and his cronies. And this eventually became a roaring civil war. It drew in various powers throughout the Middle East, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the Emirates, all of whom wanted to see Assad overthrown because they saw him as an ally of Iran, which was true, and in the case of Turkey as a problem on the southern border. But each of them had their own different, somewhat at odds interests, be it which Islamic group to support. The Turks, the Muslim Brothers; the Saudis, and the Emirates, these other groups, some people supported Salafi groups, for example, who were quite extreme.

And the US also got involved. It began slowly, a program of supporting armed opposition that had been vetted by us. This eventually was run by the intelligence community, and it became, according to press reporting, a billion dollar program. It was also from my own experiences later on the ground, a quite successful program. And the result was that Assad was quickly on the ropes. With all this pressure on him, even though the internal opposition was divided, and the outside support was divided. But to the rescue came first Iran, and then after 2015 Russia. President Obama dismissed the Russian intervention claiming that they would get involved in a quagmire. He was applying American views to a very different country, Russia. It turned out not to be a quagmire for Russia. By the end

of the Obama administration, we had three separate policies towards Syria, an official policy supporting the UN reconciliation effort. This was under UN resolution 2254 signed in December 2015. A classic UN approach, a UN Special Envoy will try to bring the sides together. There had been prior international conferences on Syria, the idea was to create a new government, a new constitution through a process that would be free and fair and democratic. With the UN leading of course, such a process would have led to Assad's demise. So therefore, the Russians, while giving lip service to the resolution in the Security Council, were doing nothing to implement it on the ground.

The second policy was officially an "overthrow Assad" policy involving covert support to the Syrian opposition by the Obama administration. However, this operation well—what is the official? Well, certainly the “overthrow Assad” was our official one. While it generated a lot of resources, Obama's heart was not in it. And the third policy which was very important because it consumed most of the bandwidth of American engagement of Syria was the effort to defeat Daesh or the Islamic State, which had its headquarters, if you will, of its territorial state in Raqqa on the Euphrates in 2014. US, as well as Iraqi Kurdish forces had intervened in Kobani in northeastern Syria on the Turkish border to rescue a group of Syrian Kurdish fighters, the YPG, who were essentially an offshoot of the Turkish Kurdish PKK, this long term revolutionary, somewhat Marxist group that had been conducting a terrorist insurgency against Turkey since 1984. But for the moment, everybody was focused on the Islamic State, the Turks at that time, who had a ceasefire with the PKK, were willing to allow the US and the Iraqi Kurds to help the Syrian Kurds. This led very quickly to a major American military presence in northeast Syria in support of these Kurdish fighters who turned out to be very effective against the Islamic State. And they were moving towards the capital of Raqqa slowly but surely, with American airpower supporting them. So that was a third element of the official policy.

But more generally, Syria was an extraordinary mix of issues that scratched almost every concern that the United States, the international community would have, in the post 1989 era; it generated waves of refugees and internally displaced people, roughly 12 million, almost half the population. This was specifically Assad's idea of demographic, ethnic cleansing, essentially, to reduce the Sunni Arab population, because almost everybody who fled other than some Kurds were Sunni Arabs. The 6 million, not only went roughly half to Turkey, the rest to Lebanon and Jordan, but a million of them fled suddenly to Europe in 2015. This led to a major destabilization of European internal politics, particularly in Germany, and the reverberations of that are continuing today. But it basically got Europe's attention very dramatically. At the same time, you had the growth of terrorist elements in Syria, Assad had declared everybody who took up arms against him to be a terrorist. This was not true, but that was his official position. But in fact, certain terrorist groups grew up, essentially out of Al-Qaeda. Now, Assad, ironically, had been supporting al Qaeda's efforts to bring people through Syria into Iraq, to wage war against the United States and the Iraqi Government after 2004.

And this came back, if you will to bite him because there were a fair number of Al-Qaeda elements in the country. They eventually formed two separate movements. One was Al-Nusra, mainly in the northwest, an Al-Qaeda offshoot that was focused primarily on fighting Assad, and then the Islamic State or ISIS, that was led by the former commander

of the Al-Qaeda in Iraq forces Al-Baghdadi, who, seeing what was going on in Syria, took some of his senior leadership, many of whom had been Baathist army officers and knew what they were doing in combat, into Syria, where they formed a powerful fighting force. ISIS was officially for some time still part of Al-Qaeda, but it had a different philosophy. It brought the anti Shia enthusiasm of the Al-Qaeda in Iraq forces with it. Secondly, however, it believed that in the here and now Al-Qaeda should establish a territorial state. And in the chaos of 2014, it established a huge state as large as England, with perhaps 9 million people with a budget of probably a billion dollars and an army of 30,000 troops in Syria and then in Iraq. And thus it became a major threat to the international community, particularly because, like the core AQ of Osama bin Laden, it believed in organizing attacks into the West, and that's in 2015, Europe, in Paris, Brussels, and then in Berlin and England and in southern France which have suffered a series of devastating terrorist attacks killing many hundreds of people. This, again, got the attention of the Europeans and the Obama administration, and it was yet another outcome of the Syrian conflict.

A third outcome was the use of chemical weapons. Obama had famously drawn a quote "red line," saying he would act militarily if Assad continued using it. Assad did use it, Obama blinked and negotiated a deal that, in fact did not eliminate all chemical weapons, their use continued throughout the rest of the Obama and into the early Trump administration. So this was a huge failure of American foreign policy and is recognized as such by many of Obama's senior officials, Ben Rhodes. Samantha Power and Susan Rice have all spoken out either on the problem with the red line specifically or the overall failure to take responsible policy towards Syria. But again, Syria had these many problems: the refugee problem and a terrorist problem. For the Turks it was the PKK problem because our support for the local offshoot, this Kurdish offshoot of the Syrian Democratic Forces, was seen as a threat to Turkey. Well, for us, it was seen as an effective way to fight ISIS.

Meanwhile, the Iranian presence became of concern to Israel, because the Iranians while primarily there to support Assad, saw this is an opportunity as they had seen in Lebanon, with hezbollah, to position large quantities of accurate missiles and rockets aimed at Israel, and to increase and facilitate the flow of systems into Lebanon. So the Israelis were now drawn in. The Turks also became drawn in militarily in part because of their concerns about the Syrian Kurds, in part because of their concerns about the Assad regime. So by 2018, when I was looking at the job, you had five outside armies, from major states involved in one way or another inside Syria, Russia, Iran, the United States, Turkey and Israel, because Israel had started a bombing campaign against these Iranian rocket and missile systems. You had the refugee crisis that was impacting half the population, you had the concerns of all of the neighbors that this mix of problems could flow over. The Trump administration initially did not do much better than the Obama administration in dealing with Syria, it got rid of the overthrow Assad policy, but it did, at least on paper, support the UN process, but it didn't seem to be going very far. It was further reducing our military armed assistance to the opposition. Primarily, all that was left were some elements in the southwest that were being supported by the US. Its official on paper policy was a political settlement to the conflict that met US needs. All Iranian

forces out, that was a reflection of our concern with Iran, getting another foothold in the region. And thirdly, the enduring defeat of ISIS. But it was largely the fight against ISIS that occupied most of the attention of the Trump administration in the first year and a half. So that was the mess I looked at to try to come up with a policy.

My conclusion was that you have to start with basics; and the basics for the US internationally, even if in the Trump administration there was some challenge, since the 1940s, was running a global collective security system. Everything else, the role of the dollar, our human rights policies, our values, our Hollywood, soft power, and all of that flow from that basic reality. And that's the reality that I've been immersed in that I've described previously, for my entire career. That, of course, applied to the Middle East as well. We had started with the Yom Kippur War in 1973, to a major diplomatic and military role in the region. And we'd use the military to support the diplomatic advances such as peace between Israel and Egypt. And we have used our build up of allies and partners through our diplomacy to be able to more effectively engage militarily because you need to fly over places, you need bases and you need allies. And we built this up over 40 years.

The Syrian conflict was threatening all of this, first of all, because it had drawn in Russia and Russia was intent on doing exactly that: overthrowing the regional security system of the United States, as it has largely done in the area to its periphery, certainly eastern Ukraine, Crimea, in the Caucasus, and we saw every intention of Russia to do the same thing in the Middle East. They could not replace the United States with their own security system, they didn't have the diplomatic and military power or the expertise, but they certainly could pull down the American system. And Syria was the place they were doing it. Syria was also the place where Iran was most committed, and most invested in trying to expand its regional agenda, somewhat different from the Russians in specifics, the Russians needed Iran to prop up the Assad regime but also to pull down the American system. So while their end goals were different, Russia and Iran were effective partners.

This created a huge pressure on the entire regional system. And it meant that, in my view, the United States had to act in a concerted fashion to take the lead to carry out those three goals, a resolution of the conflict, Iran out, and ISIS definitively destroyed. This would require putting all of our elements under one strategy and led by one entity, the entity was me, that was Pompeo's idea, but that meant I had to grab all of the strains. And what you had—and this is typical, I would say of most of our policies after 1989—having concluded there was not a real security threat to the American collective security system on a large scale, we learned since 1989 to look at manifestations of problems as the issues we would deal with. The failure of women to receive investments in villages and small towns, the problems of trafficking in people, migration issues, drug use internationally. And for each of these things, we created a bureaucracy to deal with it. That was pretty much the way it was with Syria, we had a group of people who were looking at the refugee problem, we were spending and are still spending a billion dollars a year for Syrian refugees in humanitarian assistance. There were people who were looking at the terrorist problems with Al-Qaeda and Al-Nusra. In fact, we were conducting raids, and we're still conducting raids all over Syria against these people, as well as against ISIS.

We were conducting this campaign with the Syrian Democratic Forces, this Kurdish element in the Northeast with a military presence on the ground. We had other people who were concerned about the chemical weapons operation, although President Trump did a pretty good job taking care of that with the two military strikes. In the last three plus years, the Syrians have used chemical weapons only once, it was a minor use of chemicals that didn't create any serious casualties.

So for the moment, we can say that was solved, but it was certainly something that had a lot of attention and remains very, very much on the agenda. But we also had the concerns of our Saudi and other Gulf partners on Iran's general expansion in the region. The Israelis were focused on the Iranian missiles and rockets. Otherwise, we weren't too concerned about the Iranian presence in Syria. The Arabs were focused not so much on the missiles, rockets, though they definitely felt threatened by them. But rather the way that Iran was embedding itself into Syrian society more and more as they had seen it do in societies and cultures and governments of several other Arab countries, notably Iraq and Lebanon, and to some degree, we're seeing this in Yemen as well. So all of these things required a comprehensive approach. And I put together a package which I briefed.

The idea was that we would focus on the UN process as the official American position, that we had given up on overthrowing Assad, but we would demand accountability for his war crimes and use of chemical weapons, clarity on what weapons he had, clarity on his nuclear program that the Israelis bombed in 2007. Again, not prosecution of war crimes, but a commitment not to use terror on his own population so that the half of the population that had fled their homes would come back. We also wanted him to push out the Iranianas, once there was a ceasefire. We knew that he saw the Iranians, correctly, as effective allies against the armed opposition. But if there were a ceasefire, if there was reconciliation, there was no need for the Iranian presence. But in particular, we wanted the Iranian long range missiles and rockets out. They weren't helping Assad in any way. In fact, they were drawing Israeli fire on his territory, occasionally on his air defenses. We also wanted to enlist everybody in the common fight against Daish or ISIS in the northeast where our troops were, it had been pretty well wiped out by 2018, its capital Raqqa, had fallen. And by early 2019, it lost its territorial hold on the Euphrates and had been overwhelmed by the Syrian Democratic Forces and the Americans. But ISIS still existed throughout the country, particularly in the areas under the control more or less of Assad. Assad was never effective fighting ISIS with or without the Russians; we had to launch raids, launch airstrikes, throughout the country beyond the northeast from time to time, leading to some deconfliction with the Russians. So it was a very complicated agenda.

But the approach I took and Pompeo accepted was, again, to focus on the official UN process. The problem was, we knew that Assad, the Iranians, and Russians wanted nothing to do with it, they wanted their own total victory. So therefore, we needed a military side to our effort as well. Now, John Kerry, when he was trying to solve the Syrian process, the Syrian problem, had come to the conclusion that the US needed to be more active militarily. And he advocated, for example, a no fly zone, but President Obama and the US military turned him down. The US military was not very enthusiastic

in mid 2018 to a larger US military presence. But there were ways we could leverage what was going on. We had control of the Northeast, the airspace and the ground underneath it. We had control of an enclave on the Syrian-Iraqi-Jordanian border in the southeast, and the Russians very much wanted us out of there, we refused to, there were various probes and battles, including the famous one with the Russian Wagner mercenaries, the United States won all of them, and had made it clear that it would hold that territory. The truth is that, by simply being there, we were denying terrain and resources, including most of the country's oil fields, from the Assad regime, thus putting pressure on Assad militarily. In addition, we had the Turks in the northwest, who had dug in and pushed back several assaults by the Russians. By the fall of 2018, with a lot of work by us, including interventions by President Trump, we'd stopped a Russian-Assad offensive and that situation was relatively stable. Again, it was putting pressure on the Assad regime and its allies by the large Turkish military. And the remnants of the Syrian armed opposition were also needed. Unfortunately, the Al-Nusra terrorists were there as well. It was a very complex scenario, as are all the sub scenarios in Syria. Finally, we had the Israelis who were dominating Syrian airspace with strikes almost daily against the Iranians, in some cases the Syrians. The Russians tolerated it. They had their own channels with the Israelis, so that all in all put pressure militarily on Assad; it also meant that the country was close to a de facto ceasefire. And since the summer of 2020, because all of this has gained Assad very little territory, the time is more than right to move into a political resolution of the conflict.

We also decided to maintain and increase the Obama administration and early Trump administration's pressure campaign against the Assad regime by sanctions, by denying it any reconstruction assistance, and diplomatic isolation. Here, we were much supported by international organizations. We were also supported by the European Union, which had their own sanctions on Assad. On that issue, unlike Iran, the European Union was at least as tough as us, and by the Arab League, which had thrown the Syrians out at the beginning of the conflict. Our goal was to keep all of these disparate elements focused on getting a political solution and putting pressure on Assad to get a solution. Most of this was in place, but it wasn't coordinated. And as I said most of the activity was focused on, particularly by the US military, on the fight against the Islamic State. We had to bang heads a lot to ensure that the Israelis would get the requisite support, much of it sensitive, that we eventually provided to help them in their operations against the Iranians. The Turks were difficult because they were unhappy with us supporting the SDF, as it was a PKK offshoot in northeastern Syria. But in the northwest, the Turks were holding terrain against Assad, we supported that in many different ways. And Pompeo liked the idea of a consolidated policy that would focus officially on a pressure campaign of all elements—military, economic and diplomatic as I've described, on Assad and on his allies in order to get them to sit down and actually support the UN process, to which they were only giving lip service.

Much of the next two years plus that I stayed in that job, I was carrying that out. We were quite successful in maintaining that disparate alliance, which as I said, included the European Union, the Arab League, and we had three members of the European Union at the time, counting Britain, France and Germany, and three Arab League states Jordan,

Saudi Arabia, and Egypt with us on what we call the small group which coordinated policy. So that was the center of our diplomatic efforts. The second tier was with the UN with first Stefan de Mistura, the UN Syria envoy; later, Geir Pedersen, his replacement, who still has the job, but also directly either by me or often by Mike Pompeo to Secretary General Guterres who was also good on Syria from our perspective. We had the Turks and the Israelis, who were outliers in some respects, but both had major military operations inside Syria. We had the SDF, our Kurdish partners, in the fight against ISIS, who were not particularly supportive of Assad either, although they weren't part of the opposition, in part for their own reasons, in part because Turkey blocked them. We had the official political opposition, working with the UN, in the resolution 2254 process, and we had the armed opposition; we had ceased supporting it in the southwest in the spring of 2018. But we still through the Turks, had some contacts with them.

So that was a very broad coalition which my job was to maintain day in and day out. We had two challenges to this whole operation over the two years that I had my two jobs. The first was to get the Turks from scrambling everything because the Turks had multiple threats coming out of Syria: the Iranians, the Russians, Islamic State, which, while the Turks had ignored them to some degree, eventually started launching a set of terrorist attacks, mass casualty attacks inside Turkey, obviously, the SDF as a PKK offshoot and the Assad regime also was seen as a bitter enemy. And Russia itself was threatening to Turkey, they were dealing with Turkey, or they were dealing with Russia all over the region, from the Black Sea, to the Caucasus, to some degree in the Balkans. And they had had a 400 year history of dealing with the Russians, and didn't want the Russians entrenched anymore to the south. So, but Turkey was particularly unhappy with the U.S. presence in the northeast working with the SDF. The Turks in fact, wanted the U.S. military there, because they understood the pressure that we were placing on Assad, they just didn't want us working with the Syrian Democratic Forces, because they were PKK and had about 100,000 people under arms, we had provided most of the weapons. They were light weapons because we didn't want anything that would threaten Turkey, but they still saw this with some reason as a potential threat to them. And they put us under pressure to limit or constrain or put time limits in one way or the other on our support to them. But there was an unwillingness to do this for many reasons. So this tension with Turkey was extremely problematic for us, because it called into question not only our presence in Syria, it also called into question our ability to support Turkey and what it was doing, again on the political track, in support of the UN. Turkey was good at holding terrain and stopping the Russian-Assad advance in the northwest Turkey was very good as well, so on much of the Syria account, Turkey was one of our most important partners. On the Northeast issue, however, it was a threat to everything.

And the second thing that we were trying to do was sensitive negotiations with the Russians. We weren't talking to the Iranians on anything and we weren't talking to the Syrians either. So our only "other side" interlocutor was the Russians; we felt that once the United States had conceded that it wouldn't try to overthrow Assad, and once it became clear that the armed opposition would also not be able to overthrow Assad militarily, (as I said, the country was in a relative stalemate, but that was only because of the presence of the US, Turkey, and Israel), then the situation we thought was right for

the Russians to work with us on some some kind of compromise. We pressed them repeatedly, we offered step by step to lift the sanctions, to provide economic assistance, welcome Syria back in, if it met our requirements, that was to get the Iranians out, or at least the weapon systems that were threatening Israel, cooperate with us in the fight against the Islamic State, find ways to bring back the 12 million people who had left their homes, bring accountability for those who had committed war crimes, clarify the chemical weapons situation and allow us to ensure in the OPCW that they were no more chemical weapons in Syria, and work constructively with the UN on a new transition government.

That was our pitch. And, as I said, we would put on the table various mixes of us withdrawing forces, us working with other countries to accommodate some of Assad's demands, but particularly economic sanctions lifting, relieving some of the economic and diplomatic pressure in return for the Russians getting Assad to actually cooperate with the international community and do the things I've just outlined. The Russians came close. And they were so interested that at one point, Pompeo and I went off to Sochi to meet with Putin. We laid out this whole idea. The Russians however remained adamant that while they realized that Assad was a lousy leader, they had no alternative and Russia had interests that would best be met by the presence of Assad. And thus, the Russians were not willing to do anything that might risk the stability of a regime that was pretty unstable. And we were, of course, doing everything we could to make it unstable. So in a way the Russians wanted us to jump first, we would stop all of our operations to make Assad as unstable and as weak as he and his economy were. And once we had done that, and Assad was now confident as the winner, then the Russians would, they told us, be able to work with him, and he would accommodate our concerns through the Russians. We didn't buy this, the US and our allies go-first idea. And so despite many what we thought were positive openings, the Russian channel has not gone anywhere in the past three years, following up on a similar experience that Secretary Kerry had when he was pursuing it with Foreign Minister Lavrov, from 2015 to 2016. But nonetheless, we were putting the regime under pressure and I'll return to that.

The other main thing that occupied my time, the Turks. President Erdogan had a good relationship with President Trump. Trump basically wanted troops out of the Middle East. We know his view towards Afghanistan. He was kind of ambivalent about Iraq. But in Syria, he never really understood the mission. He felt with some justification that he had finished off the Islamic State as a real threat, as a strategic threat in 2018, when we had taken down the capital in Raqqa, he felt that cleaning up the remnants of the Islamic State was a job that the Europeans, who had more to fear from the Islamic State, and for local countries to pursue. This was a classic Trump view of foreign policy. The United States only does the big things when nobody else can step in. That was the case in the big fight against the Islamic State from 2014 to 2018. But the others should pick up the slack, when it's not such a big problem, because we had issues such as North Korea, China, Russia, where everybody knew only the United States could take the lead. So, President Trump was interested in getting our troops out. And he had, as I said, a very close relationship with President Erdogan. So in December of 2018, Erdogan called him and once again, ranted, as was his like, over our support for the Kurds in the northeast, and

President Trump was not a huge fan of the Kurds either. He saw it in a very transactional way. And when Erdogan said that he would take over the fight against Daesh in the northeast, why didn't the United States just get out of the way? Trump says Okay, that's a good idea.

And so he launched a new initiative to pull our troops out and let the Turks come in. This created a crisis, first of all, with the SDF, with the American military, it's why Secretary Mattis resigned, why Brett McGurk, our coordinator for the Coalition to fight Daesh also resigned from the State Department. So this was high drama. We did several things. First of all, it turned out that the Turks really didn't have the military capability to move down to the Euphrates and fight ISIS, which was the whole argument they were making, once we sat down with their military, rather Erdogan's plan was to go in and go after the SDF Kurds in the north. But that was something that not even President Trump wanted them to do. And in subsequent communications with him, he made it clear that they couldn't go after the Kurds. So we still had a Turkish problem. And meanwhile, we were under pressure to withdraw our forces. President Trump's thought—and the forces were, at this time, probably 2000 or less, but they're almost entirely US. A couple of other Coalition against Daesh or against ISIS countries had small Special Forces elements there, but they didn't make them public. It was basically a US presence. Trump felt, look, I'll continue to provide the control of the airspace, the airpower to attack these ISIS targets and extremists. We'll do medivac, we'll do raids. But why can't our European partners in the coalition provide these 2000 or 1000. The military thought we could do it with less than 1000 troops.

In principle reasonable, in practice impossible. The reason is that, unlike Iraq, where we had about twenty coalition countries providing forces in the fight against Islamic State, Syria, of course, was politically and diplomatically touchy because the central government that they all recognized even though they were opposed to the Assad regime certainly hadn't invited them in. There was also the issue with Turkey and the SDF, there were problems with logistics, we were operating on a shoestring that was very, very austere as someone who's been there ten times I can attest to that. And we got no one who wanted to be there without us. In fact, in meeting with all of the ministers of defense from the coalition, major coalition countries, mainly European along with New Zealanders and Australians, in Munich in February 2019, their chorus was "in with you out with you." And so Acting Defense Secretary Shanahan had to report back to the president that there was no way anybody would replace us. I reported back, working with both Lindsey Graham, who was in Munich and had a lot of influence on the president, and with Secretary Pompeo. The result was that the President then two months later reversed his decision to withdraw the troops. The troops, of course, had been slow rolling the order to get out. They were still basically there. So we continued on. This situation continued. For some time, we knew we had a Turkish problem. So therefore, we worked with the Turks to come up with a buffer zone or safe zone, constructed along the Turkish border with the Syrian Democratic Forces who would withdraw, U.S. and Turkish troops would patrol on the ground, the Turks would have air observation over the region, and that we felt would solve the Turkish problem. We negotiated at a high level with the Turks for about six months.

We finally put this together in the summer of 2019. U.S. and Turkish patrols begin in that area in August of that year. We thought that we had perhaps resolved the problem with Turkey, which as I said, was the biggest impediment to us carrying out our overall Syria policy. Alas, it did not turn out that way. There were some problems with execution, the Syrian Democratic Forces had not pulled their forces out of the central area, which was the first area where we were doing this and we were doing this in tranches. It's about 400 kilometers between the Euphrates and the Iraqi border on the Turkish border. We had started in the central 130 kilometers. And the SDF forces supposedly had withdrawn between four and fourteen kilometers, demolished their fortifications and put their heavier weapons, mortars—they had some artillery and tanks, some rocket systems and such 30 kilometers back, and all of this was supposed to be monitored by us and the Turks. But to some degree, the Syrian Democratic Forces were cheating. The Turks were angry at that. The Turks also were doing your own violations, particularly in flying missions over the SDF without clearance with us. So we had the usual diplomatic work, but we thought that all in all, the glass was about two thirds full.

We misled ourselves. At the UN General Assembly meetings in September of 2019, I met with all my Turkish counterparts, including people not just in the foreign ministry, but the presidency and the intelligence community, good contacts with the defense minister, and they all seem to be well, grinning and bearing it a little bit, okay with this concept. But at the end of the week, I talked to one final Turk, who said that President Erdogan was really unhappy. One reason for his own happiness was that President Trump didn't see him during the President's visit to New York for the General Assembly. This wasn't any attempt to affront Erdogan, for one or another reason, Trump really saw almost no one there. So the result was that we had a very, very unhappy president Erdogan and he was hearing all these reports that we were not able to get the SDF to fully implement its policy.

And so about a week after the New York meetings, he called President Trump again, and this was another almost *deja vu* of what had gone down in December, he basically said that he was coming in and for Trump to get his forces out of the way. Now, this led to the biggest crisis of the Trump administration, at least in foreign policy, just as the red line issue was the biggest crisis or controversy of the Obama administration, ironically, or perhaps not, both of them involving Syria. We had never given the Syrian Democratic Forces any military guarantees against the Turkish incursion, we said we would oppose it diplomatically, we would impose penalties such as sanctions on the Turks if they came in. But we did not promise them that we would intervene militarily. And frankly, we didn't have the forces to do it. I then started working to pressure Ankara. We didn't have forces on the ground, the Turkish army was there and they had tens of thousands of Syrian opposition forces who were armed by and under the orders of the Turks who were also ready to come in. Now again we had not told the Turks that we would oppose them militarily, rather, we told them that we would oppose any action of this sort diplomatically. And Trump knew this. So he didn't threaten to use military force, rather cautioned Erdogan that to do this would be a disaster. He then had a follow up call with Erdogan where he was clearer, urging him not to harm American forces who might be in

the way of his troops, and to, above all, not attack the Kurds, but the whole purpose of Erdogan going in first was to attack the Kurds. And so the upshot was that we had a huge crisis with Turkey. Once the Turkish forces came in, we had to withdraw forces from that area. And that, again, led people in the media, people in the international community and in Congress to think that we had shifted our policy, that the troops were there to protect the Kurds against Turkey and Trump had pulled the plug on them and betrayed an ally.

That's not the case. These troops were being moved out of the way because they would have been in the middle of firefights otherwise, but that was the impression that was given and insult was added to injury, or injury to insult after that when the President decided again as in December that we would just pull all of our troops out, the whole thing seemed too confusing to him, particularly as the Syrian Democratic Forces, as we had warned the Turks repeatedly, would turn to the Russians. Bolton's book talks about how Mike Pompeo had warned them, and I had warned them also, that if they come in and go after the SDF, we won't try militarily to stop them (i.e. the Turks). But the SDF will call on the Russians to come in, and we won't stop the Russians. And that's exactly what happened. So the Russians were beginning to pour in from the west. We had the Turks coming down from the north, we had the Syrian Democratic Forces maneuvering in all directions. You still had ISIS elements floating about launching terrorist attacks. And you had several enclaves of Syrian forces, under Assad, in cities in the northeast, this was extremely confusing to President Trump. So he just basically said, Look, I kept trying to get our troops out, the deep state, bureaucracy, whatever, won't do it. So now I want them out. And so on top of everything else we had that on, that fueled the flames of fury, particularly in the Congress, where after this thing settled down, I had to spend twenty hours addressing essentially everybody in the US Congress, partially on my own, partially with Secretary Esper, the Defense Secretary and the chairman General Milley trying to explain what we were doing, because the Congress really thought we had given the Kurds military guarantees and we had then betrayed them. That's not the case.

But on the other hand, I can understand why people saw it that way. But the question still was, what are we going to do with the Turks? Now the Turks, as I said, pushed down towards the main East West highway some 30 kilometers south of the Turkish border. In that central 130 kilometer block of territory where we had begun to implement our safe zone, the Kurds were putting up very active resistance in two cities on the east and west side of the corridor. And so the Turks were so much slowed in overcoming resistance. This gave us some time to try various diplomatic efforts. The first was that President Trump reached out to the Kurdish SDF commander, Mazloun Kobani, who was the genius behind much of the campaign to take down ISIS and much appreciated for good reason by the US military and frankly, by me, as I was the de facto chief of mission for Syria. I was his liaison from the State Department, and Mazloun explained that he could give all kinds of guarantees to the Turks if they would stop the attack. The President was encouraged by this, he tried to reach out to Erdogan again, had Mazloun write him a letter putting this all down, the President then sent the letter to Erdogan. Now, Mazloun Kobani is, as I said, he's one of the best and most honest fighters in the Middle East. He is also a senior PKK "cadro." And this was anathema to the Turks, particularly to Erdogan. And he claimed he never opened the letter. But on the other hand, he wasn't all

that upset at President Trump. Meanwhile, we tried the most effective two tactics. First of all, we were putting the Turks under tremendous economic pressure with new sanctions that we rolled out within days. And we didn't raise a finger to stop the Russians from coming in. And the Russians began hemming them, from the east and from the west, so Erdogan was going to be running into trouble in any case. We then thought that the time is right, to try to negotiate a way out.

And it was up to me to come up with the actual policy. I concluded very quickly, having spent nine years in Turkey, that there was no way that the Turks, having secured a relatively easy, low cost military victory in the northeast and essentially defeated at least parts of the SDF and thus the PKK, there was no way the Turks would pull back. But I thought that there was a real possibility that we could get them to freeze in place, we could set up a ceasefire and end this foolishness, but that would require both carrots and sticks. The sticks of course, were the Russian presence and our crushing sanctions. We started by sanctioning the minister of defense, a friend of mine, but, you know, war and diplomacy is hell. And we were ready to go on further including Erdogan and the central bank and all other kinds of juicy economic targets and the Turks knew this. They were also very concerned about the Russians and they needed to help with them. So I was brought in, President Trump decided that Vice President Pence would take on this effort. Pence called us all into office in the West Wing. The proposal would get the SDF out of that central 130 kilometer wide by 30 kilometer deep area where the Turks and the forces had driven in and then we would freeze the conflict and go from there.

We all flew out to Ankara and we had a whole day of negotiations and started with Pence and Erdogan with myself and Erdogan's National Security Adviser Ibrahim Kalin meeting for two hours, where Erdogan explained all of his complaints about the United States particularly working this PKK offshoot, the SDF in Syria, on and on and on, and Mike Pence would listen politely but kept stressing that while the Turks had a point, there would be no relief from ever more sanctions unless there was a ceasefire. So then we went back out, and there, we had Secretary Pompeo and Ambassador Satterfield and Robert O'Brien our national security adviser, so everyone who is significant in the whole US government foreign policy apparatus short of Trump was out there. And the Turks had everybody there, the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the head of their intelligence, their national security adviser, their chairman of the Armed Forces, and we worked out on a map how the ceasefire would happen and all of the various political and human rights things that we would throw into what became a one page document. While this was going on, my job was to reach out to Mazloun and get him to agree to this. I was doing this with a cell phone while sitting in the meeting in the presidential palace in Ankara. But fortunately, we had great Foreign Service officers who are always attached to the Army Special Forces out there with them. But we relied on our personnel who had volunteered for this very, very dangerous duty. And they had been, at various times almost overrun as the Turks moved in and as the various forces moved around, as we still had one officer with Mazloun.

And so I got his agreement to withdraw his forces within five days. And the Turks agreed to a ceasefire, we agreed that during that period, we wouldn't impose any new sanctions

on the Turks. And that after five days, if the withdrawal took place and the ceasefire held, we would then rescind all of the sanctions we had already imposed on the Turks, and the ceasefire would be made permanent, and the Turks agreed to this. Meanwhile, Erdogan was in a box because he had told his public that not only would they push into this area, but they would push into the entire northeast, from the Euphrates all the way to the Iraqi frontier, the whole 400 kilometers wide to 30 kilometers deep area. And he then said that he would start resettling Syrian refugees there, this was a huge issue for Turkey, Turkey has done an extraordinary job of providing first class accommodations, support, education and everything for about three and a half million Syrians. These aren't ethnic Turks, these are ethnic Arabs. It's simple, it's something that Turkey has done, it's a thing that Turkey, which is often seen as a bad actor in the international community, does not get enough credit for. But it was absolutely extraordinary. It has cost them \$40 billion, but it's a political hot potato, as you can understand. And so he was telling his people that he would move a million or two million of these people back into Syria. Now I know that area, there was no place for them to go.

This was absurd, but that's what he was promising his public, he would not only give them a victorious military campaign against the PKK, but he would deal with the refugee problem. His difficulty was that he couldn't move east and west of the area that we'd negotiated with him because you already had Russian patrols there. And throughout the day that we were negotiating with him on our agreement, Erdogan, who's very, very experienced and very clever, kept on asking his staff and pointing to the map and saying, Well, what are we going to do about these other areas? Erdogan and we were pressing the others, what are you going to do about this? And Erdogan was going to go off to see Putin in Sochi a week later, and work out that deal. And we told him good luck; and what turned out, Erdogan went up there and he did a separate agreement with the Russians, where the Russians committed to have the SDF withdraw from their areas, essentially two 130 kilometer roughly, blocks to the east and to the west of where the Turks were in central north eastern Syria. But the Russians, of course, didn't bother, as I had done, clearing this with Muslim and the SDF, and they're still there, it was basically another feint by the Russians to tie down the Turks. The Turks have their 30 kilometer by 130 kilometer deep enclave in the northeast, but they haven't been able to get any further. And the Russians now have a military presence, which of course is extremely inconvenient to us. The reason it's inconvenient for us is that we still had the issue of all of our troops withdrawing.

Fortunately, on the plane back from Ankara, Secretary Pompeo was already in touch with National Security Adviser O'Brien who was in another plane, on how we could persuade the president, not after months to reverse his decision, as he had done in February 2019 the last time, but this time within a week to reverse the decision and let us keep our troops on, and the various actors, like Lindsey Graham I believe played a role, I know O'Brien did, I know Secretary Pompeo did, retired general Jack Keane who the President listens to probably weighed in as well. And the upshot was that the President once again, for the second, or if you count the time before I came in, the third time, reversed his decision. The troops were allowed to stay. And today as I speak, four weeks or three weeks into the Biden administration, those soldiers are still there. They're still the core of

our fight against any resurgence of ISIS. And they're absolutely essential to a final solution to the situation in Syria. I left, just after the election, it was time to go, I was pretty sure that the new team would come in. And while I knew them all, I've worked with them in the Obama administration, I felt that it was time to go. It had been an exhausting job. I needed some knee surgery and running around northeast Syria was the last thing you want to do for your knees. And so I turned it over to my deputy, retired colonel Joel Rayburn, who took charge until the administration changed, but what the administration will do now, Syria policy is up in the air as is much policy.

My conclusion is we were effective in several areas, first and foremost, by a clear chain of command. The Secretary gave me the responsibility for the entire portfolio. And that was accepted by the National Security Council. And after a little bit of tugging and pulling by the Defense Department, it helped that I knew Secretary Mattis and I got along well with his successors, Shanahan and Esper, and we all worked together as a team, our people worked well together, I hired a team of experts but also worked with the Near Eastern Bureaus, the Levant Office. I had a Russia expert, a foreign service officer in from Moscow, a retired colonel who had spent much of his life in Turkey, to do Turkey, and other experts to help us do the work. I'd also picked up the job of being the coordinator or the envoy for the defeat of ISIS when Brett McGurk resigned in early 2019. So I had that team as well. But that work was more regular. It was not as diplomatically dramatic to say the least, as was the work with the Turks and the Russians and various other actors on Syria. So the first lesson was we had clear lines of command and control.

The second was we had an international coalition, that all in all wanted the same things we wanted. Now, they all wanted a different priority of things. For the Israelis it was the Iranian missile systems. For most everybody in the neighborhood, it was Iran's influence generally; for the Europeans, it was one part refugee flows, they were horrified of a repeat of 2015, one part no more terrorist attacks by the Islamic State, and one part, calling the Assad regime to task for its horrible human rights violations. For the Turks as well, that was finding a solution to the PKK slash SDF problem. For the SDF, it was trying to find as much autonomy as possible; for the Syrian opposition, although they had not been all that successful militarily, it was to ensure a place at the table. But all these people were willing to work with us, under the overall at least official aegis of the UN. And we maintained a good relationship with the UN. That was one area where the Trump administration and the UN got along. Much of that being thanks, again, I would have to cite counterterrorism as well as Syria.

The other thing is, we didn't see Syria just as an almost innumerable number of specific problems that each required a piece of the bureaucracy to have the lead in. The CW people in the State Department on the chemical weapons problem, the refugee people on the refugee problem, the terrorism people on the various terrorist groups. There is the Turkey desk on Turkey's role, the Russia desk on Russia's role. Rather, it all was coordinated in one place, which was my office. And we didn't look at these problems as things simply to deal individually with. We saw these problems as a manifestation of a deeper problem, an effort by Iran, in this particular case, complicated by Russian support,

to overthrow a regional security order. That was the bottom line. Therefore, our position was, we would prefer to continue with a stalemate than yield. As I said, there's been very little fighting in the past two years. There's no further areas that the Syrian government, even with Russian help, would be able to easily take because they're all held by Turkish troops, or us. And as long as the pressure is on the regime, and we have crushing sanctions, what's called the Caesar Act passed by Congress a year ago, on the Assad regime that is hurting the Syrian economy, and we believed, this all, potentially, will lead to, if not Assad, then the Russians to try to find a compromise. But even if not, our feeling is, I believe, at that time in the administration, the Trump administration, was, that better a frozen conflict that denies Russia and Iran a game changing role in the Middle East, then some kind of phony resolution that would not only leave Assad sitting fat, dumb and happy, but prove to the region and beyond that you should bet on Russia and Iran as your security partners, not the United States. That is, larger geostrategic concerns fueled everything I did and everything Pompeo approved.

That's not without controversy. We're not used to this. I was raised, as I've described earlier, for twenty years in the Cold War from 1969 to 1989. This kind of diplomatic thinking was de rigueur at that time. Sure, we had a problem with those long-range missiles in Cuba, sure we had a problem with tanks around Berlin, sure we had a problem with insurgents in Vietnam. But we saw these all as a manifestation of an overall campaign. And we addressed those issues. Not just one concern at a time, but rather as an overall coordinated response. We weren't always successful, Vietnam being the biggest failure, but from Berlin to Cuba, to various way-stations all around the globe, we were pretty successful with that approach. But again, we'd lost that sense after 1989. The reason is that we weren't faced with any comprehensive threats anymore, we're faced rather with manifestations of disorder, manifestations of bad global and bad national, bad sub-national governance. We were kind of Mr. Fix it along with the international organizations and our European partners all over the world.

But by 2018, we're faced with a different world, a world of near-peer competitors, one of whom was very actively involved in trying to pull us down in Syria. And we had to deal with regional competitors. Most notably North Korea and Iran, they could destabilize, scramble if you will, the whole region, if not held in check. So Syria was the main, not the only, but the main field on which we deployed that strategy. Will the next administration follow it? I'm not very confident of that. There are different approaches to try to deal with Syria, there are different approaches to try to deal with the Middle East. But what I will say is, given President Trump's, his ideas, view of how we should deal with the Middle East, which is near peer competition is important. That means containing and deterring Iran and Russia, and endless wars need to be ended. And as much as possible, we need to work through, and then hold accountable, our allies and partners be it the Arab countries, be it Israel, be it Turkey. As I said, Turkey and Israel, and indirectly, by supporting the opposition, the Arab states are doing a great deal of the actual lifting on Syria. But the United States would back them in various ways.

But Trump didn't want us to play the leading role. That worked out well. But these policies have certain corollaries, you can't be spending all of your time bashing your

partners in this endeavor, in this case, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, and to some degree, that would be involving the Palestinians, even Israel, for what they're doing in domestic policies. This is a new way of looking at how the world turns. At this point in time, it's very significant. I can't say that this administration, Biden's administration, will follow this model, it could well revert back to the model it's comfortable with, which was the Obama model which did see problems, but not as a manifestation of major threats to the global security system. But again, as post 1989 problems to be tackled by this bureaucracy, that bureaucracy, each is sui generis. I hope they don't, I suspect they won't. But the point is, I'm absolutely convinced that in the world we are in today, we have to take a comprehensive approach. We have to place regional security and global security at the very top of the agenda, or they are going to eat our lunch, and they—a large number of different people, beginning with the Russians and Chinese, the North Koreans, Iranians and whatever new generation of Islamic terrorists we have to confront in the Middle East. I'm going to stop at this point.

Q: Our candidate, again, Trump, how engaged was he? Or was this something he left pretty much to the experts?

JEFFREY: His day in day out management of foreign policy was erratic or bizarre. That's the first thing. And therefore, you had to be attuned to that. Respectful of that, but find a way to deal with that. There were people who could do it. In her own way, Gina Haspel at the CIA, obviously Secretary Pompeo, Robert O'Brien quite significantly, as the National Security Advisor was the last and the most successful of the national security advisors. And Senator Graham, who certainly on the Middle East, saw himself as the conscience of Trump, and Trump would listen to those four. But his basic concepts were that we shouldn't be involved in every minor dispute, that once we've done the heavy lifting, such as taking down the Islamic State Caliphate, others should pitch in and do the cleanup work. But he didn't understand and thus, the friction was, that others don't even want to do cleanup work in places dangerous and as diplomatically uncertain as Syria if you don't have United States having your back, and the way you have another country's back is to have your troops on the ground. That was something he never quite understood, so thus we had some tension. But the idea of getting us out of these minor disputes, working by, with, and through partners, focusing on the major threats, the game changers: the Iranians, the Russians, and not trying to fix the internal constitutions and behavior of states, particularly our partner states that you're turning to to bear more of the burden. Those were Trump's ideas.

And those ideas led to a Middle East in December of 2020, that from everything I could see at the top levels, was sorry to see Trump go. I know of no state, or no leader with the limited exception of King Abdullah of Jordan, of course, not too happy with the Abraham accords, who did not have a good relationship with Trump, and did not find that Trump's policies enhanced their security. This was not the case in December 2016 of course when President Obama left. There, throughout the region, at least among partners and allies, he was seen as not a particularly effective president in maintaining security. So you do have that, and the new administration is going to have to tackle this because it is committed to maintaining our alliance system partners, and includes those in the Middle East. But on

the other hand, it wants a very different approach than President Trump, how it's going to work its way through this, I don't know. But again, I didn't have a hard time following Trump's overall strategic guidance. And it was strategic guidance. I talked to the person who did the national security strategy in 2017. And she assured me she spent many hours working through this line by line with Trump. So that was his contribution to foreign policy. And I don't think it was a bad contribution.

But yeah, the execution of it, of course, was catastrophic, in many respects, and created all kinds of problems. But this is the interesting thing, like there was probably no single, more naive and potentially counterproductive step that Trump would have done in his entire time with foreign leaders than sending President Erdogan this letter from Mazloun Kobani, this PKK official. But Trump got away with it. And within a week, he had an agreement that pretty much met his needs. The reason is that most places in the world realize that they are dealing with existential security problems. And at the end of the day, America is a 9-1-1. With Trump, the 9-1-1 would come with some baggage, like things like that. But at the end of the day, the question was, were we supporting Turkey in many different endeavors? We certainly were, we certainly were supporting it dramatically in the northwest, where they were cheek to jowl with Russian forces. We supported them to some degree, again, against the Russians in Tripoli last year, and this is what really matters. I know because I spent a lot of time in Germany, Trump is universally hated in Germany, because of his values, because of his worldview and everything. Germany isn't really a frontline state. People in Poland, people in the Baltics, people, even in Scandinavia, certainly in the Middle East, in Korea, Japan, Philippines, and Vietnam, and India all have a different attitude. This isn't a pitch for Trump's foreign policy. It could have been done a lot better. But the idea of standing up against these threats to the global security system is very important, even though it was done by a guy who really didn't understand the global security system. He didn't appreciate its music or its magic, if you will, and that particularly irritated Western European elites. But at the end of the day, you know, the Ukrainians knew that they would come with a lot of baggage, but those anti-tank rockets that they couldn't get from the Obama administration came with Donald Trump, as I said with an awful lot of baggage that led to his first impeachment. The point is, if you're somebody who's facing an existential threat from a huge neighbor with nuclear weapons, Russia, you're happy to get the anti tank-missiles, period.

Q: Oh, that's a fascinating view of that particular part of the world, by God. Do you see any solution?

JEFFREY: The Middle East keeps on sucking us back in, militarily and diplomatically. Because it is essential for many reasons. One third of internationally traded hydrocarbons, which even if we don't need them anymore, the rest of the world does, including our trading partners and the overall world economy that we are dependent upon, the threat of global terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, partners and allies, and the fact that it is geographically a big part of Eurasia, and Eurasia in the end is critical to us, as it has been since 1917. So we have to be there, what we have not been able to do, and they tried their best, both Bush and Obama, to be transformational. Obama made this clear in his speech in Cairo in 2009, where he basically said, "Everything that's past is

gone. I want to start a new beginning, by being your partner." And he went on and on on that theme, it didn't work out. The American response to the Arab Spring made everything worse. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) got us a limited nuclear deal, which was good, but at the cost of an assumption that this would transform the Iranian state; it didn't. The difference between where Iran was in 2013, when we did the first interim agreement, and 2018, when Trump walked out of the agreement, was a massive, dramatic shift in Iranian influence, Iranian power, Iranian military forces and allies in four countries, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen. Nobody will dispute that, people will dispute what we could have done about it, or whether it was inevitable, or even a few people in Washington would dispute whether it's not such a bad thing. But the reality is it hurt and it happened. And that's what the new administration is going to have to focus on the region. As I said, Obama could not get to the roots of the problems in the Middle East. Bush couldn't, he hoped that by sparking a democratic revolution in Iraq, this would lead to the whole region changing. Again, that didn't work either. Or Trump didn't even try any transformational policies. And frankly, I think most people in the region were happy he didn't, because that got both Bush and Obama into big trouble.

Q: So what are you going to be up to now?

JEFFREY: While I'm at the Wilson Center as the head of the Middle East, as a chair of the Middle East program, I have to get my title right. And some consulting. And as best I can try to work with the new administration, and kind of a repeat of what I started doing in 2012 all over again.

Q: Oh, how do you view the new administration? I mean, what do you think there? Do they have some of the right ideas or where are they going?

JEFFREY: I would give them high marks across the board. In particular, they understand the problem of Russia and the problem of China, and the priority they project, they reflect very much where Trump was minus Trump's fondness for Putin. In the Middle East, that's complicated. I don't want to comment at this time because they're still forming their policies. That's the area where they've come under the most criticism for some of their personnel picks, for some of their initial policies, especially in the general willingness, I would say, in Washington to go back to the nuclear accord with Tehran. The thing I like best about doing that is it removes an immediate, perpetual crisis with Iran just a few weeks away from having enough physical material for a bomb. Israel is really constantly threatening to bomb, thus our military is on a hair trigger, either to act itself if they go for a weapon, or respond if somebody else that, you know, attacks them. This all will draw our attention away from the most important issues, two issues: climate and China, as well as the third, Russia, but beyond that, they need a policy in the Middle East that maintains the basic stability of the region, you cannot walk away. Both Trump and Obama tried to pivot out of the region, you saw what happened to both of them, the same will happen with Biden, the region will suck you back in, what you need to do is to have a set of policies that will meet the minimum security needs of the US, of our European partners, and the people in the region, and reduce dramatically our commitment of forces and money by putting the burden on these other countries. The problem is you can't

simultaneously put the burden on Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Israel, and Egypt, for example, and also expect them to dramatically reform their internal political processes to look more like America, in the case of the first three or three of the four. And in the case of Israel, adopt a very different policy towards the Palestinians. If the administration wants to simultaneously do both, they'll succeed in neither.

Q: So I take a certain amount of pleasure in the fact that I am within a few days of being 93 years old. And that's somebody else's problem.

JEFFREY: Well, no, but it isn't. As long as you're doing this stuff. It's your problem, too. It's all about problem solving as citizens.

Q: Yeah. Okay, well, I really appreciate your views here. It's enlightening and I hope we can pump this into people who are dealing with the problems.

JEFFREY: They're still in a listening mode, both here in Washington and Congress, to the informed outside community, the think tanks and such. And they're very much in listening mode with our partners and allies in Europe and the Middle East. And thus, I was reluctant to give any final judgment on where they're going to come down on the Middle East, simply to say, that's the one where the arguments are most clearly drawn within the administration and with people outside of it. And where there's more debate about where they're going to go. In terms of the grand strategy, there's general agreement on China, there's general agreement on Russia, the devil is in the details, particularly with the Europeans on China. But I think, for example, you saw no real opposition to the renewal of the START agreement that was done in a couple of days, without a whole lot of noise. The Middle East will generate most of the noise I predict in the next nine months.

Q: Well, with the Bible, call it the Holy Land and something might catch the Middle East, really has turned out to be the cockpit, the fuse that's always burning.

JEFFREY: It's no accident that two of our last three Secretaries of Defense, and four of our last five chairmen have been ground combat commanders fighting in the Middle East. When you consider the main military threat is not there, but from China and from Russia? That says a lot, doesn't it?

Q: Yeah. Well, I thank you very much and I'm here. If you have any queries, please let me know.

JEFFREY: One of the reasons I left is I thought it was ridiculous to be a 75 year old Foreign Service officer.

Q: Yeah, well, that experience counts. I mean, that's one thing. Sure. We don't have to carry a heavy pack and run for shelter.

JEFFREY: Thanks for raising that I was afraid to because I don't want to do age, gender,

sexual preference or anything else in my views of the world and who does it, but experience is important. It's not an accident that while this new administration has been marvelous, in empowering Foreign Service officers to take senior positions, the fact is that many of them are coming in from retirement. This isn't because they all fled Trump, it's because in most cases it was time for them to retire. But our UN Ambassador or Under Secretary of State, and I believe soon we will have other announcements of people who are retired Foreign Service officers. And this shows the worth of people experienced, I won't say age, I'll say experience.

Q: Well, hey, I mean, you've got to have age in order to get experience.

JEFFREY: Yeah, that's true. But you can have age without experience, put it the other way. These people, I think we know them all. I know them all. They're just terrific. And how could I have forgotten Bill Burns as CIA director? So it's a good day for retired Foreign Service officers, a good day for me, because, you know, I waited my whole Foreign Service career to get a job as good as the Syria one. And I didn't get it and I retired and then I was reborn.

Q: Well, anyway, okay.

JEFFREY: It was good to hear you. I'm glad I got you as the interviewer for this last round.

Q: Well, I find this enlightening, but the main thing is, I feel that we are building the beacon, which will, I hope, attract foreign policy. People who are active duty on foreign service.

JEFFREY: That's my hope too, it's why I'm so happy to have participated in this and I'm looking forward to reviewing the volumes and stuff I gave you before and cleaning it up as best I can. Just before I went back into government, I had no time.

Q: Okay, well, I thank you so much. Bye bye.

End of interview