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

LINDA JEWELL

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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Office Director for Policy Planning and Coordination
Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is the 14th of March 2016 with Linda Jewell. I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy.

And you go by Linda I guess?

LINDA JEWELL: I go by Linda.

Q: Let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

JEWELL: I was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, and I grew up there, happily, until I went away to college. I went to Yale. I was in the third class of women at Yale. When I told my guidance counselor in high school that I was thinking of applying there she said, "Why honey, that's a boys' school."

Q: Yes. We're going to get to that. So let's talk first about your family. What do you know about your father's side of the family? Where do they come from and all?

JEWELL: My family on both sides are pretty much English, Anglo-Saxon. I am a true WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) in the classic American sense of that word. They've been here on both sides for generations, so we could trace them back for a long time.

Q: Were there many in Arkansas or did they move?

JEWELL: No, there are many; I still have quite a bit of family. My parents have both passed away but I still have quite a bit of family in Arkansas. I go back once a year at least to see people, so I'm still very connected.

Q: So what was your father occupied with?

JEWELL: He was an accountant. He was an accountant and CFO (chief financial officer) for a chain of variety stores. He was a white collar businessman type.

Q: And centered around Little Rock?

JEWELL: Right. My parents were high school sweethearts who grew up in Hope, Arkansas. So my parents both were aware of - they were in the class around - Bill Clinton's mother.

Q: Ah ha.

JEWELL: So they knew her when they were growing up.

Q: Well then on your- What do you know about your mother's side?

JEWELL: Again, they've been in the country a very long time so I don't have recent immigrants to harken back to. My grandparents and great-grandparents were born in the United States. On my mother's side they were mostly farmers. They had farmland out from Hope so they were even more rural than Hope. And my grandfather was a county judge at one point and a schoolteacher.

Q: Well now, was your father a graduate of high school, college?

JEWELL: Yes. Both of my parents were college graduates.

Q: Where did they go to college?

JEWELL: My mother went to the University of Arkansas and my father went to a small liberal arts college called Hendrix College, which is still thriving today. A very good school.

Q: Well now, what was growing up like for you, just say really the early years in Little Rock?

JEWELL: You know, it was actually a great place to grow up for me because I had a lot of family there, cousins to play with and my grandparents - going down to my grandparents' house in the summertime was great, back down to Hope. I went to public schools. I was too young to be affected by the segregation crisis, which happened before the time that I was going into school, so I never faced that really ugly time in Little Rock during school desegregation. I was four years old when that happened. I have a vague memory of it but I wasn't part of it.

Q: How was that treated as you were growing up there, that time? I mean what was- as a history situation?

JEWELL: Well, all the people in my family were horrified by it and ashamed by it. My parents were working - my mother in particular because she had more time, she was a stay-at-home mom - on behalf of the teachers. She was very concerned that teachers who were pro-integration were getting fired and there was a movement called STOP, Stop This Outrageous Purge, and she was active in trying to keep the teachers from getting fired. So my family was pro-integration and in my upbringing the desegregation crisis was treated as a bad thing, all the violence and ugliness.

Q: Were you much, as a small kid were you much of a reader?

JEWELL: Oh I was a constant reader, yes.

Q: What did you read?

JEWELL: I went through phases. Of course like all young girls I went through the "Little House" series and I read biographies a lot. But I read fiction as well. I read pretty much everything that came across my path- I loved going to the library. We had a public library that was terrific and I spent many happy hours there.

Q: Yes. Well then this is the thing that in sort of American life the public library is such a center for kids. That's the place where you do an awful lot of educating yourself by the reading and the ability to take books out.

JEWELL: Yes and to wander around among the books themselves and choose for yourself. I remember really enjoying just being in and around the books. It was great. So actually growing up in Little Rock was pretty standard American happy.

Q: Ok, let's take elementary school. Did you find some subjects good for you but others bad for you or-?

JEWELL: I always gravitated more towards the social sciences and literature. I wasn't great at math. I didn't love math and science as much as I did reading and history. But I was a good student. I kind of breezed through. It certainly wasn't a stressful time for me, that's for sure.

Q: What was your- School's over and you're out playing; what did you kids do?

JEWELL: We just played with each other. We played outside. We played tag and all those old games that people used to play- I don't know if children still play them, you know, dodgeball and red light/green light and Mother-may-I; those kinds of games.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: I was definitely still of the generation where in the summertime I went out in the morning, I came back at some point to get lunch and then I got called in for dinner when it started to get dark.

Q: In a way it's such a difference. I had this same experience but you could say our kids were sort of feral. They were sort of turned loose and be back by 6:30 because we're going to eat then.

JEWELL: Right, right. My parents knew I was somewhere in the neighborhood and if they really wanted to they could probably call around to different houses and figure out where I was. But I didn't have to account for my presence every moment.

Q: In high school did you get involved in extracurricular activities?

JEWELL: In high school I was involved in a lot of things. I did theater for a while. I was very, very involved in Girl Scouts all the way through senior high. I had a really charismatic and fun troop leader, which kept me in, and she took us camping in the summer. We'd hike the Appalachian Trail, we went to Colorado and hiked in the mountains and so she made it really interesting and not too dorky to be in; it really was fun. It was a fun group of people to be with, so I spent a lot of time with them.

As a senior I was active in the Girl Scout Council when they invited Girl Scouts to be members of the council. In other words to have an active scout as a member of the council with adults.

Q: My wife established probably the first international Girl Scout troop in a communist country. This was in Yugoslavia. She used to take them out and they had girls wearing their- they were diplomatic children usually- wearing their native Girl Scout uniform and all.

JEWELL: Fun.

Q: It was really a delightful thing, wonderful movement.

JEWELL: Yes.

Q: Did you get involved in musical activities or-?

JEWELL: I was in the choir at my church so we'd practice on Wednesday nights and sing on Sundays. My family has been very involved in the Methodist Church for a long time. My great-grandfather was a circuit rider minister. So I was involved with music through church more than through school really.

Q: Where'd your family fall politically?

JEWELL: Oh, all Democrats, strong Democrats.

Q: I guess in Arkansas at the time this is pretty much the movement at that point, wasn't it?

JEWELL: Well in Arkansas, yes. The solid South was Democratic when I was a kid. In Arkansas the Republicans have taken over now but when I was a kid it was more common to be a Democrat than not.

Q: Did you get involved in any political things, passing out brochures or anything?

JEWELL: You know I never did too much of that in Arkansas. Somewhere in my collection I have early Bill Clinton buttons when he was running for offices in Arkansas before anybody else outside the state had ever heard of him. I tell people I voted for Bill Clinton before anybody else had ever heard of him. I also had Fulbright buttons from those campaigns so it was, again, a different political climate. But I didn't personally go out and campaign.

Q: Well you know you mention Fulbright and Clinton. Some really remarkable figures came out of Arkansas.

JEWELL: They did. The Fulbright- Hays Act was introduced by two Arkansans, Brooks Hays and William Fulbright. That's who started the whole Fulbright scholarship program.

Q: Yes. Well then, when you were at- By the way, when you were in high school did diplomacy, the Foreign Service pass by your radar or not.

JEWELL: Not really. The first time I ever focused on international things was when I was in fourth grade and my parents took a long road trip, as people did back in those days, up through New York and New England and we took a tour of the UN. I was completely fascinated by the translators and interpreters. At that point I decided that's what I wanted to do when I grew up. I was taking Spanish in elementary school, which, looking back on it, is kind of surprising.

Q: It really is.

JEWELL: Twice a week we had a Spanish teacher come in and teach us. Simple stuff, letters, numbers, colors, games, songs, whatever, but it was extremely helpful to me because I was young and I got the sound of it. My Spanish accent has always been pretty good because I started it when I was in elementary school. So I knew what speaking a foreign language was like; I knew what that meant. And so I thought the interpreters were fascinating.

Q: Oh yes.

JEWELL: I was mesmerized by that idea at the time but I didn't spend my whole high school career thinking, "I want to become a Foreign Service officer." That had not crossed my radar.

Q: Well did the Cold War, was it a major focus of things when you were a kid or not? Were you aware of it?

JEWELL: I was only vaguely aware of it, honestly. I remember in ninth grade we read the letters of Stalin's daughter, who had defected from the Soviet Union and was very anti-Soviet. I remember thinking what a terrible place the Soviet Union really must be but it wasn't weighing on my consciousness or making me fearful. I think we were just so far removed from it that it didn't impinge on my life.

Q: What about the Vietnam War? Where were you during Vietnam?

JEWELL: I graduated from high school in 1971 so I was part of protests in high school; we wore black armbands and that was considered pretty radical in Little Rock in those days. Of course I got more involved as I got older and into college but I was very anti-war in high school and had a lot of anti-war posters in my room. We were also very interested in the civil rights movement and somewhat active in that.

Q: How did you find integration working in Little Rock? I mean the school particularly.

JEWELL: The school I went to, which was not Central but one of the other high schools, Hall High School, was nominally integrated. It still was probably 90 percent white. So I wouldn't say it was especially successful. When I go back to Little Rock now it is encouraging to see changes. There are still tremendous problems but it's notable that in my lifetime I can see things that are different. Walking into restaurants now in Little Rock which are completely, fully integrated is a positive change. It gives me hope that it's possible for people to change in not that long a time.

Q: It's really a remarkable story. Still working, still a great problem but at least we're working on it.

JEWELL: Yes. There has been progress but still much to do.

Q: I remember somebody was saying that a little girl was back in the early days before integration and looking at a _____, why would they have put color in the water, you know, because it says there was a sign saying colored or white, and the girl made the logical conclusion-

JEWELL: That the water was the color?

Q: That water was the color.

Well then, when it came time for college, whither? What were you thinking about?

JEWELL: I was mostly applying to good schools in the South. I applied to Duke, I applied to Washington University in St. Louis, and then around Thanksgiving of my senior year when you're really getting down to having to fill out applications, a guy who

had been in the class ahead of me in high school came back from Yale. He came back to school just to say hello to everybody and he was talking about what a great time he was having, it was such a fabulous place, and on and on and I sat there and said, "You know what, I'm going to apply." It was almost like a whim. It was not anything that I had been burning to do. It was just that it sounded like fun; I decided to apply. My guidance counselor told me I couldn't but I informed her that in fact there were women there now. So I applied and I got in.

Q: Alright well, could you explain a little of the history of Yale regarding women and all?

JEWELL: Yes. I was in the third class that had women in it. So when I got there as a freshman the seniors had been there when there were no women so they were gradually adding women to each class. And in my class there were 200 women and 1,000 men because Kingman Brewster, who was the president of the college at the time, had promised the alumni there would always be 1,000 Yale men, which of course has gone by the boards long ago because there are many more women now. It's wonderful but amazing to go back and see so many women on campus. It was a very bonding experience, as you might imagine, for the 200 of us women, so some of my best friends in life are still my suite mates from Yale.

Q: I assume that university is learning to make adjustments and all that wasn't it?

JEWELL: Oh yes.

Q: How were they treating you?

JEWELL: They actually treated us extremely well. I really didn't feel discriminated against in any overt way. The only people who were really a problem were the alumni, called the Old Blues, who would come back for football games. There were a couple of them who would just say right out to us that we were taking a space that some guy ought to have, but that was actually kind of rare. Otherwise we were treated fine.

Our freshman year all the women lived in one dorm together because they thought if they spread us out too much it would be like we disappeared, so we lived together. But the next year we moved into our residential colleges and it was fine. It was a wonderful experience.

Q: What were some of your first courses that stuck with you?

JEWELL: Oh wow, so many. I laughingly say to people that going to Yale was my first study abroad experience because it was so different and so eye opening. In those days the course catalog was a written thing that you could go through, the Blue Book, and I would read through it and circle a million courses because I wanted to take them all. They were all so great. I was a literature major - comparative lit, Spanish, French and English - but some of the courses, interestingly, that stuck with me most were things that were completely new. I took a course on American decorative arts, which was a fabulous

course with a wonderful teacher. The Yale Museum had a great collection of silver and furniture – things like silver actually made by Paul Revere - and in the class you were allowed to handle it. That is something I never had any access to before, so I really remember that course. I remember Vincent Scully taught a class on the history of architecture which was just astonishing to me because I'd never known any of that, I had never even thought much about architecture. And he was such a wonderful teacher that I remember that course in particular as being fantastic.

Q: How did the male students treat you?

JEWELL: They were fine. You can imagine that the 200 of us women who got in were not exactly shrinking violets, so it's not as if we let them talk over us. We were the kind of people who didn't put up with being pushed into the background too much. But I don't remember having to actively fight my way into discussions or conversations.

Q: Were there orientations for women coming in, trying to tell you what you're up against and that sort of thing?

JEWELL: I don't remember anything in particular geared toward women. I don't know that the university even knew enough to understand what we were going to be up against. I don't think that they had thought that through in a very clear way. One thing I did notice was a big change from my high school where most teachers are women; most teachers at Yale were men. I did think it was strange that there were so few women professors and I'm sorry to say that to this day there are still not enough women professors at Yale or any other higher education institution.

Q: Well then were you beaming to major in something or did you start off that way?

JEWELL: Yale has very broad distributional requirements so we were kind of on our own to take whatever we wanted. I started off with literature because that's what I liked and what I was good at and what I knew from high school. Looking back on it, I probably should have been steered to try more history and political science. I stuck with my comfort zone and did literature mostly, although I took great Art History courses and other wonderful stuff. You have to take a little bit of science and a little bit of this and that but I mostly stuck to the lit classes.

Q: Did you get involved in the arts yourself or mostly looking at it?

JEWELL: Mostly looking at it. I wasn't really involved in any of the arts on campus. The other thing I did that took up a good deal of my time was being a campus tour guide. I was the head campus tour guide my junior year actually.

Q: You learned to walk backwards.

JEWELL: I learned to walk backwards while talking, exactly. Most of the tours are geared toward students and their parents but because Yale is so old we also, in the fall,

would get tour groups who were coming through New England to see the leaves and would stop by the campus. Sometimes I would get on their tour bus and drive around and give them a tour too. I did several tours a week from sophomore through senior year.

Q: Do you have any impressions of some of the people and parents who you were seeing?

JEWELL: Yes. It was very interesting. They were wanting us to be, in some ways, more serious than we were. People would say things like, "What do you talk about at the dining room table?" I think they expected that we sat around and talked about Aristotle and philosophy and what we really talked about was how much work we had and what difficult teachers we had and so on. The same kind of stuff all students talk about. No, we did not sit for long discourses on political theory. Every now and then we got into political arguments but that was about the extent of the seriousness.

Q: This is the Spinoza Table.

JEWELL: Exactly. We did not do that. At that point the war was very much impinging on people because it was the time of the draft lottery. I remember very clearly the night of the draft lotteries when they were pulling people's birthdays, because that's how they did it, by birthday. And if you had a low number you could get drafted. So that was a huge trauma for the guys about where their draft number was and a relief for those who had number 365. It was quite a tumultuous time. I graduated in '75, so April of '75, the fall of Saigon, was in the last semester of my college career.

Q: What about dating? I mean did the guys date you all or did they head off to Smith or somewhere?

JEWELL: A mix, a mix of those. I actually had a Yale boyfriend from the end of my freshman year all the way through college. He was a drama student and a lot of fun. We would go down to New York sometimes on weekends and see shows. So I dated a Yale guy, one of my classmates. That was pretty common. One of my suite mates ended up marrying her Yale boyfriend and they live in New York now. So it was kind of a mix but they dated us. I think to some extent the guys were a little bit intimidated by us sometimes.

Q: I mean, I take it that the ladies who got in there at that time were, I hate to use the term aggressive but I mean, but pushy.

JEWELL: I wouldn't use that word.

Q: No, no.

JEWELL: I just think that we were strong women.

Q: Did you run across, were there any problems with guys who really didn't like women on the campus or not?

JEWELL: You know I didn't. I entered with guys who had mostly gone to co-ed high schools and so to them it wasn't that different. It was the older generation who were more problematic.

Q: I went to a school, I went to a prep school called Kent and when I went there it was run by Episcopalian monks and we had one dance our entire four years there, one dance. I mean that's what they allowed. But by the time you were there I think Kent had gone co-ed; I think most of these schools had gone co-ed.

JEWELL: Yes, a lot of the prep schools had gone co-ed. We had mixers every weekend and sometimes women came from other schools from around the area or whatever but it wasn't a huge problem.

Q: Did you get involved in, I don't know how things were, civil rights sort of things at that time?
Or was that not as much an issue?

JEWELL: It wasn't as much of an issue at that point as the war was an issue. I think more people were focused on the war.

Q: How did the faculty, were they pretty much with you?

JEWELL: The faculty were pretty much with us, yes.

Q: Did they have ROTC?

JEWELL: They did not at that point. They had been thrown off the campus. There was a huge trial of Black Panthers in New Haven just before I got there which had caused a lot of tension around New Haven and sometimes on campus. But that had passed before I got there.

Q: So this was not a period of takeovers and-

JEWELL: No.

Q: -protests and-

JEWELL: No, '71 to '75 when I was there was not that divisive on campus.

Q: What were you getting regarding the Soviet Union and communism through courses or lectures? I mean were you getting much of a feel for it?

JEWELL: Because of the courses I took, which were mostly literature and especially comp lit courses, I did not get a lot of that. Even though there were some great historians

and international thinkers at Yale I foolishly did not take as much advantage of them as I should have. So I did not get a lot of that through the courses I was taking.

Q: Were there any opportunities to study abroad and did you take advantage of that?

JEWELL: Studying abroad was really much rarer back then than it is now. Most of us who had gotten into Yale were so thrilled to be there we didn't want to leave for a semester or a year. We wanted to be right there because it was so exciting and so amazing. There wasn't a big push to get people to study abroad, which I think is a mistake, and I'm glad now there's a much greater expectation that everybody should spend some time during their career, either in the summer or semester, abroad. And there are a lot scholarships and opportunities to do that. They really promote it now and they did not when I was there.

Q: Were you, even back to high school but through college, what about off earning money, jobs as you get involved in-?

JEWELL: I didn't really work that much during high school. I did more volunteer kind of things. The summer after I graduated from high school I was a counselor at a Girl Scout camp in Colorado for the whole summer. While I was in college I spent most of one summer traveling around in Europe with friends on the cheap. It was a great trip. Looking back on it it's kind of phenomenal that we put it all together before the age of the internet when you can go online and Google things. I remember actually writing those little thin air mail letters to people to try to reserve rooms and do that sort of logistics by mail.

Q: When did you go?

JEWELL: Summer after my junior year.

Q: Which would have been?

JEWELL: The summer of '74.

Q: Did you pick up any impressions?

JEWELL: Before this I'd been once to France and a couple of times to England, but I really hadn't seen that much of the rest of the world. We leased a car, my dad signing for us (there were four of us), and we drove from Paris down through France to San Sebastian, Spain to Madrid over to Barcelona over to Venice down to Florence and Perugia, down to Rome. Took a ferry across to Yugoslavia, went up to Zagreb, back to Vienna to Salzburg and then back up through the Black Forest to Amsterdam and then back to Paris.

Q: Wow.

JEWELL: Driving. It was kind of amazing that we did that, the four of us, juniors in college just careening around. Had a great time, no bad experiences. Found people to be welcoming and helpful.

Q: Did you ever run across an embassy or anything like that or did that interest you or not?

JEWELL: At one point yes, because in Rome one of us had her passport stolen. So we had to get the passport replaced. That was a perfectly fine experience but we didn't seek out embassies in each place, we didn't actually think about it one way or the other. It didn't occur to us.

Q: Well you graduated from Yale when?

JEWELL: '75.

Q: '75. And what were you, had you figured out what you were going to do?

JEWELL: In the fall of my senior year, when I realized that I had to really put some thought into what next, I didn't know what I wanted to do so I took the law boards, I took the GREs, I took the Foreign Service test. I took the Foreign Service test because a Foreign Service Officer named Robin Winks had come through Yale and given a talk about the Foreign Service. I went to hear him because I was interested in international things, mostly language acquisition and culture. I thought, "That sounds like fun, the test is free. I'll take that too. I'm taking all these other tests." As it turned out, I hated the law boards; I could hardly sit through it. I thought, if this is law I don't want to do it. I took the GRE, did okay but the thought of continuing in school was not that appealing; I felt I needed to get out. But I passed the Foreign Service written exam so I went to Washington in January/February for the orals, passed that, got on the register, and filled out my security form.

That process dragged on, as it does, and so I graduated from college and moved to New York City with one of my roommates and got a job at Prentice-Hall publishing company and worked there for a year before the Foreign Service called. Actually the Foreign Service called in the fall. I was getting into USIA (United States Information Agency). They called in the fall and said we're getting this class together, would you like to come? I think one of the reasons that I managed to get through the process is that I didn't really know how competitive it was. I hadn't really focused on that. I wasn't one of those people who had all my life been dying to get into the Foreign Service. So I was more relaxed, I think. But it also caused me to do this very stupid thing which could have been a disaster, which was to say you know what, I just moved to New York, I've got this apartment, I have this job, can I postpone? So I actually asked them to postpone and they were a little bit huffy on the phone. They said well, we'll keep you on the register but no promises. That was so foolish; I could have lost the whole chance.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: But I didn't, because they called again in the spring and said we have a class in May, would you like to come? And I said yes I would. So it was about a year out of college that I joined the Foreign Service.

Q: Do you recall any of the questioning you got during the oral exam?

JEWELL: I do. I remember it because I could tell what they were doing. They were asking the usual kinds of current event things, but then started questioning me about women writers in the South. They were trying to be helpful by asking a question which I should have been great on because I was a lit major, I was from the South, I was a woman, and I knew about a lot about writers like Flannery O'Connor and Eudora Welty, but I froze. At a certain point my mind went completely blank. I've always thought one of the reasons I passed the oral exam is that I had the presence of mind to say, I understand you're asking me about something that I know very well but my mind has just gone blank. Can we talk about something else and come back to this? Later on they suggested that having the presence of mind not to just try to bluff my way through it and fail but to admit I was blanking made them think okay, this person can handle stress or adversity and is flexible enough.

Q: In a way hearing you make this account I can think they might credit your Yale experience as one of the few women in there, I mean learning to handle yourself in a difficult situation.

JEWELL: Maybe. I think what Yale did for me, and I've always been eternally grateful, was to give me confidence. I went into Yale as a reasonably confident person but I wasn't 100 percent sure. I was a smart person in Little Rock, Arkansas, but was I a smart person in the world? They really imbued in me the sense that I didn't have to know every single thing in the world to be smart, so I didn't have to go around proving that all the time. It was enormously releasing to not have to fight that fight anymore.

Q: Absolutely.

JEWELL: And to be able to say I don't know. To be able to learn and not feel like you have to put on a front of being on top of absolutely everything every minute, which is exhausting and completely impossible.

Q: Yes.

Tell me about this job you had in New York and your impressions of New York.

JEWELL: I thought New York was great. I moved there in the summer of '75 and I first lived in the Village at the corner of Bleecker and MacDougal, which is pretty much the heart of Greenwich Village.

Q: Oh yes.

JEWELL: In a fifth floor walkup. It was a sublet for the summer. There was a group of us who had this apartment.

Q: I was thinking "My Sister Eileen," that's where the play-

JEWELL: Oh, right in the middle of the village. And so I spent the whole summer in this non-air conditioned place and thought it was great. We had a wonderful time. We went to street festivals. There's a lot you can do in New York without having to pay for it. We did not have a lot of money so we used to ride the Staten Island Ferry when it was hot or go to Coney Island.

After the summer one of my roommates and I moved uptown to a place that now there's not a prayer we could afford because it's gentrified so much. We lived on the block where the Natural History Museum is at 78th and Amsterdam, which is now super expensive. But we could afford it then. I lived there for about a year and I loved New York. I had a lot of college friends who were there with me and we had a lot of fun.

Q: Well how did you find the work? I'm watching the series "Mad Men" and it's all about Madison Avenue; it's about-

JEWELL: Yes, yes.

Q: -where the young college graduates would go and be absorbed in these-

JEWELL: I've seen "Mad Men" too. Well I was at Prentice-Hall, which is a publishing company, and I was working on social science college textbooks. So I learned to copy edit, I learned to proof read, I learned a little bit about book design. It was interesting to me. I was a lit major so it made sense for me to do that. I don't think I would have wanted to do it forever but I only ended up doing it for a year and it taught me skills that I'd use to the torture of people who worked for me for years.

Q: Well then you entered the Foreign Service when?

JEWELL: May of '76.

Q: What did you do, go into a-?

JEWELL: Into a training class.

Q: Was USIA, the junior officers included in the A-100 or-?

JEWELL: We were included in parts of it. There were about a dozen of us in the USIA entering class and there were parts of A-100 that we were incorporated into, like the off-site at Harper's Ferry, but we had a whole separate training program that didn't involve the State Department. Back then, for example, the whole consular thing wasn't part of it.

To this day I've never taken consular training, which got me out of ever having to sit on a visa line because I haven't had the training to do it. So that's very different from now; we didn't have to do a consular rotation tour.

Q: What things stick out in your mind in the training program?

JEWELL: It was very interesting to me because a lot of it was just introducing us to the kinds of programs that were available, the kinds of tools the agency was using at that point, which now looking back on it were so rudimentary compared to what's available now. I was in training from May through when we started language training in August so it was only May, June, July, about a three month training course, so they couldn't do all that much. I had a good time during training and the most important thing that happened during training was that I started dating one of my classmates, John Walsh, and ended up marrying him, and have been married to him ever since.

Q: This is a USIA classmate?

JEWELL: Yes. I married one of my USIA classmates.

Q: Well what was the procedure in those days if you got married?

JEWELL: Well it's very interesting. USIA was a much smaller agency than State and John had been a civil servant in USIA who decided to take the Foreign Service test and came in as a junior officer in our class. But in fact he had already had an excursion tour in Kenya and knew people in the agency more than I did, who'd just gotten there. When we decided to get married he was already assigned to Jakarta and I was assigned to Bogota so this was a dilemma. We met in May, we decided to get married in September and we got married in November, so that was pretty quick because we were going to be assigned to different places.

Q: I must say Jakarta and Bogota are not exactly adjacent.

JEWELL: Well yes. It was a little bit of a stretch. So we went into personnel and luckily the personnel officer was someone he knew, and we said we want to get married. We'll go either place we're assigned or someplace different if you can find a dual assignment for us. And they gave us this speech about you can't always assume that you're going to get assigned together and so on. And then they promptly switched my assignment to go to Jakarta. But we had to get married in order to do that; we had to bring the marriage certificate in and say we actually did get married.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: Because John had already been overseas he really didn't need a training slot so I could take the actual training slot in Jakarta and he could take an assistant cultural affairs officer job that was open there. It was a big post so they managed to squeeze us in.

Q: What was his background?

JEWELL: What is his background?

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: He went to Villanova, majored in sociology. He's a little older than I am and graduated in '68, a rough year for people who were getting drafted. He went for his draft physical but had childhood asthma and so was declared "unfit" for the military. He had taken the Civil Service test and started to work for the Census Bureau after graduation. At the Census Bureau he met some people who had friends at USIA and he realized that there was a research service at USIA that did basically the same kind of population research he was trained for. So he switched to USIA's research service and from there he got the excursion tour overseas, where he decided he really wanted to join the Foreign Service. At that point, in order to what they called "lateral" into the Foreign Service you had to be 30 years old and he wasn't 30 yet. So he went out and took the test and came back in as if he had no prior experience, but in fact he had experience already in USIA overseas. So he came into our class but he was more experienced than any of the rest of us.

Q: You went to Indonesia; you were in Indonesia from when to when?

JEWELL: We were in Indonesia from '77 to '81. We were there four years. At that point when you came in you were sworn in. That was it; there was no tenure system the way there is now. So you didn't have to do the short tours that they do now in order to see if you should get tenure. We were there for my training year, where I rotated through the embassy, and then I had a three year assignment. When you're a tandem and you have an assignment and you like it you stick with it because it's easier.

Q: Well let's first talk about language training. How'd you find Indonesian?

JEWELL: I found Indonesian actually easy.

Q: I'm told it's one of the easiest. It doesn't really have an awful lot of frills.

JEWELL: Yes. In fact the complicated part of it is that it doesn't have a lot of grammar. You have to wrap your mind around how to make sentences that have so little grammar in them. And the other part is that there are very few cognates.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: If you know French, if you know Spanish you're working with a lot of words that are very recognizable, but there are almost no cognates Indonesian so it's a lot of memorization. But I was young, I came into the Foreign Service when I was 22, so I was good at learning languages back then. Indonesian seemed pretty simple. I was in Spanish language training for six weeks and tested out of that, having studied it previously in

college. Then I switched to Indonesian a little bit after the class had started but I caught up with it after a while.

Q: Well let's talk about you arrived in Indonesia when?

JEWELL: June of 1977.

Q: What was the situation in Indonesia at that time?

JEWELL: Suharto was fully in charge. He had the country pretty much buttoned down. My first year there was a rotational assignment so I just moved around the whole embassy and worked in different sections for a month or so at a time, learning what an embassy does. That was actually extremely useful because a lot of people don't get that experience and they spend their whole lives never really understanding what other people do. Travel was extremely easy. There weren't any restrictions about where we could go. We were young and didn't have kids and so we traveled a lot. We both spoke Indonesian, which was really helpful in moving around and made us welcome wherever we went.

So I was not involved in any of the policy work that was going on at that point. During that tour, from '77 to '81, the most important thing, at least from my point of view, that happened was the human rights policy of President Carter that managed to get 10,000 political prisoners out of jail who had been there since the days of the communist uprising in the '60s. So from my point of view the human rights policy was very successful.

Q: Did you have likes and dislikes within this spectrum of USIA work?

JEWELL: After I did that rotational year I went into a position running all the exchanges programs. It turned out to be one of my favorite jobs of my Foreign Service career. I was involved with the Fulbright program, I was in charge of the international visitor program, I was in charge of all kinds of ad hoc exchange programs.

Q: And this is so important.

JEWELL: It was a time when there were a lot of other agencies and organizations involved in exchanges. AID (United States Agency for International Development) had some exchanges, the Rockefeller Foundation was active, the Ford Foundation was active. And I knew all those people. So we collaborated, because each of us had our own parameters for the kinds of people we were looking for but we shared good applicants. If you found a great person but they didn't really fit your program but you knew that Ford could send them, you would call your friend up at Ford and say I've got somebody so good you've got to talk to them. So it felt like you were making a real difference. And I was 100 percent sure that those we selected would never be the same, because we were sending people for master's degrees in the States and when they came back speaking English with master's degrees their trajectory in life was going to be completely different than it would have been previously. So we felt very obligated to select well since we

knew that this was consequential. It turned out that a lot of the people that we sent ended up in ministerial jobs and think tank jobs and were doing important things later on partly because they had had that experience in the States. Even people who went on IV(International Visitor) programs for a month really changed, saw a lot of things that they had not known about and returned feeling not so isolated in Indonesia. Being an island nation feels more isolated and out there on its own and after these visits they felt more connected to world currents. So all of this work seemed very meaningful to me.

Another thing I was doing was setting up an American studies program at the University of Indonesia. I collaborated with a group of Indonesian academics, many of whom were women. One thing I was very pleasantly surprised by in Indonesia at the time was that I came in contact with a lot of very well educated, professional, working women which you would not necessarily expect in a majority Muslim country. But these academic women were fantastic and they were really spearheading this American studies department. We were bringing Fulbright professors to help them set it up and I thought this was something that would have lasting benefit. It wasn't ephemeral; it actually made a difference in the long term.

Q: Were we looking for a geographic spread in our exchange students and all?

JEWELL: We were looking for geographic spread and we were also focused on a couple of different kinds of people because Indonesia's so vast. We were doing teacher training, trying to improve the educational system by improving the educators. One of the fantastic things about this job was that I got to travel all over the country to teacher training schools and give what was then called the ALIGU test, a rudimentary test of English ability. This helped us know if they could possibly get a high enough TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score to study in the U.S. I would travel with an Indonesian counterpart from the Council of Social Sciences and we would give these tests and talk to people and help select grantees. I traveled all over the country and got to see fantastic things.

Q: It's a huge country.

JEWELL: It's huge and we went everywhere. And of course since we were giving away scholarships we were treated like royalty. Put up in the university guest house and people would have dinners for us and be very welcoming. I was 25 years old. I couldn't believe I was out there doing all this and with so much authority to make these choices.

Q: How'd you find the students? I mean were they getting a good education?

JEWELL: In certain subjects they were getting a solid education. The Dutch had set up a decent educational system but it followed the extremely old fashioned European way of students sit and listen and take notes on what the teacher says and then on the test you parroted back to the teacher and then you passed. So it wasn't wildly creative or innovative.

Q: In Italy at least when I was there-

JEWELL: Yes, it's not all that different in many parts of Europe now. They didn't have very good English education. Another thing USIS (United States Information Service) was doing at the time was working on the teaching of English to try to improve the level of English more broadly. One of my big problems was finding people whose English was good enough to be able to put them into a local English program so that they could improve enough to pass the TOEFL.

We sent another group of people who were interested in communications because they didn't have enough experts to staff the Ministry of Communications. It's a huge challenge in a country made up of thousands of islands to set up telephone and now Internet connections. So we also had a program sending communications majors to the States.

Q: I assume you were getting a good balance between men and women?

JEWELL: Yes, that wasn't too much of a problem. Again, women were amazingly well represented in the teaching professions and so it wasn't a huge stretch to have a balance.

Q: What about the Chinese or part Chinese group there? I mean, they have pogroms and they had a lot of difficulty.

JEWELL: Yes. When I was rotating through the consular section pretty much all Indonesians who applied for visas got them, because everybody came back. There wasn't a big Indonesian community in the States; people mostly came back, except for the Chinese. If you were Chinese-Indonesian you got much heavier scrutiny because there was a feeling that they were trying to leave because sometimes their lives were difficult. Although in general they were wealthier than average people because they tended to be in business and very successful, but they weren't well liked. They also weren't overly represented in the populations that we were trying to target for our exchange programs so I didn't think about that quota idea too much.

Q: Was there a solid Fulbright, alumni program? So often we send Fulbright people out- this I think has changed a lot but- and then they sort of, once they came back that was that.

JEWELL: They vanish. Yes. We had a very rudimentary contact system called the Distribution and Records System, but we did try to keep up with them. It's much better now, much more effort being made to keep up with the alumni. They are such a natural set of allies for us.

Q: I know, I know.

JEWELL: We were doing some of that but not nearly enough.

Q: Were you getting much feedback from how they, their impression of how they were treated at all when they went to the States?

JEWELL: Most of their experiences were extremely positive. The things that they were most surprised by in the States were that Americans are very friendly and more religious than they expected. Most people's views of the United States were formed by television shows so they had a distorted sense of what Americans were like and they learned that we didn't all live in giant houses and drive giant cars and that sort of thing. So they were usually quite favorably impressed by the United States. I would say the returning grantees by and large had good things to say about the United States.

Q: Did they tend to move into more scientific fields or were there any particular fields that they were-?

JEWELL: There were programs for scientists but my program was more geared toward social scientists; educators, historians, political scientists, that sort of thing. So our grantees ended up in think tanks and schools and academia. Other programs, AID in particular, had more of a scientific bent - agricultural scientists and such.

Q: Who was the ambassador or ambassadors when you were there?

JEWELL: When I first got there David Newsom was the ambassador, who was a legend-

Q: Absolutely.

JEWELL: -in Foreign Service terms. He was only there for a few months with us and then Ed Masters came and was there the rest of the time that we were there.

Q: Were they interested in the work of USIA?

JEWELL: They were interested in the work of USIA and in particular Ed Masters and his wife were extremely interested. She was very interested in the arts and culture and so was very supportive of USIA exchange programs; when we had cultural presentations in town they would host things for us. They were very open to participating and viewed what we were doing as part of the continuum of the relationship with Indonesia. It's not always the case but it was then -- I give Allene Masters a lot of credit for that.

Q: Did you find you were running in competition with Mainland China or Taiwan or anywhere else or Australia?

JEWELL: Certainly not Mainland China because it was close enough to the time of the overthrow of Sukarno and the Chinese influence that there was a vast anti-communist feeling within the country. So that was no competition at all. There was a very active British Council. The Australian embassy was huge because of the geographic proximity. But honestly we were the biggest embassy so I never felt like anybody else was so-called

competition. There were other diplomats working in the same fields but we always had more resources and contacts than they did.

Q: Were there any incidents, movements or anything else like that during the time you were there that particularly stand out?

JEWELL: One thing that happened while I was there that was not specific to Indonesia but it's worth recording was in '79 during the hostage rescue attempt in Iran that went wrong, as you well remember.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: One day we came to work and in the afternoon were suddenly told to go home and stay at home until further notice. They didn't tell us why we were being sent home from the embassy, they just told us we had to go and stay there and we had no idea what was going on. It turned out that they feared that the failure of the hostage rescue attempt in Iran was going to cause protests in majority Muslim countries against the embassy and they didn't want us all concentrated at work-

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: -trapped in the embassy. If there were to be a big protest they wanted us out spread around. In the end there weren't protests in Indonesia, but it was the first time that I realized that I was a symbolic person, that there were people out there who might want to get at me who didn't even know me, knew nothing about me but what I stood for as an American diplomat. And that's the first time that message really drove home.

Q: How did you view your local staff?

JEWELL: Oh they were fabulous, they were wonderful. USIS always had lots of local staff and we depended on them so much. I had such good support in Indonesia and I'm still in touch with some of my staff. We went back a couple of years ago and one of the Foreign Service nationals organized a reunion for a dozen or so of the FSNs (Foreign Service nationals) and it was wonderful.

Q: Yes. Well this of course is sort of the unknown branch of our diplomatic outreach, Foreign Service nationals. I mean they're so good.

JEWELL: They are amazingly good. They were so knowledgeable and had vast networks of contacts. If you would listen to them they could steer you away from getting in trouble. They were a source of great creativity and were the bridge between us and the local culture. They knew us so well and yet they were of the place so they helped us be a positive in the environment rather than a negative. But you had to listen to them and a lot of people didn't pay enough attention.

Q: What about the Islamic side of Indonesia? Was that particularly noticeable or not?

JEWELL: Islam in Indonesia was at that point a much less overt part of the politics of the country than it is now. The majority of people of course were Muslim and it is one of the most populous Muslim countries in the world. But there was also an underlying level of animism coming from the old Javanese culture which was mixed into their Islam. There were very few strictures on women working; we had lots of female FSNs; I had lots of professional contacts who were women. One of the ministers of education while I was there was a woman. So it didn't feel restrictive to me in the way that it even might now. It was a conservative place and you had to be respectful of what people believed but it didn't feel oppressive or restrictive. And certainly the embassy didn't feel at odds with Islam.

Q: Well then you left there when?

JEWELL: We were there from '77 to '81.

Q:Okay then, whither?

JEWELL: From Indonesia we went back to Washington for language training for my husband and then to Mexico City. We arrived there in February of '82.

Q: And what were you doing?

JEWELL: I was what was called a program officer for economics. I was working in USIA but on economic issues, so I collaborated very closely with the economic section in the embassy bringing USIA tools and programs to bear on economic themes. I was looking for international visitor grantees in economics. I was bringing speakers from the United States on economic issues. My contacts were people at universities and economics departments and think tanks who were working on economics, the Chambers of Commerce who were interested in these issues. So I was trying to make our economic policies connect more with like-minded Mexicans and also to persuade other people that they were positive.

Q: NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) was not-?

JEWELL: No, it was well before NAFTA.

Q: Was it a vision or not?

JEWELL: At that point it wasn't clear to me that there was going to be a trade agreement. It was a rough set of years actually. I was there from '82 to '85 and it was a difficult time for U.S.-Mexican relations in part because of the Mexican economy. We arrived right before the first of two peso crises and they devalued hugely. Their economy was in dire straits. So we went through a couple of those rough years. And we also had an ambassador who was not popular.

Q: Who was that?

JEWELL: John Gavin.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: Who was a friend of Ronald Reagan's, had followed him as president of the Screen Actors Guild and been appointed ambassador to Mexico on the basis of the friendship. Obviously this was his first time being ambassador or being in an embassy. His mother was Mexican so he spoke beautiful Spanish, which was helpful and not helpful because there was no filter. Sometimes when you have an ambassador who doesn't speak the local language you can filter a little bit what they're saying. But with Ambassador Gavin he just said what he wanted to say in extremely clear but not always particularly diplomatic Spanish. So he and the foreign minister didn't get along; they publicly didn't get along. The Mexicans were unhappy with us. They blamed us for their economic troubles, which I think was probably mostly unfair. And so it was a rocky time in the relationship.

Q: Well Gavin also was renowned in the Foreign Service for having what they call temple dogs, sort of a couple of people who were sitting in his office who filtered people through. Not Foreign Service types; I mean it was uncomfortable.

JEWELL: It was. I was junior enough that I didn't have to come into contact too much with that, although I saw the ambassador more than you might expect in my position. He had two political appointee special assistants that worked with him and who were the managers of his office. They were very hard on the Foreign Service I would say. He listened to them a lot more than he did to the career service.

Q: I would imagine that the embassy's work on ties, the academic world probably had very close ties already to ones in the States and Mexico didn't they?

JEWELL: Yes. The academic system in Mexico is very good, their university system is good and they have a lot of think tanks. So the audience was sophisticated and did actually, as you say, have a lot of contacts within the American academic community. We could play a facilitator role. For example I would go to El Colegio de México and say let's have a seminar about this thing and who would you like, and they always had suggestions of whom they would like to include and we could bring them. In that regard it was a rewarding job because you felt like you were working at a high level on things of true mutual interest.

Q: Yes. Well did you get caught up in people come to you to get visas and that sort of thing?

JEWELL: Oh yes. This was back in the days before visa appointments, so you could do visa referrals but because the pressure was so great, the rules were pretty strict about your reference; people really had to meet the criteria. So you had to say no a lot to people; say

I can't really help you get a visa. It was an era when by the time we arrived in the morning the visa line already stretched double around the embassy and people would pay people to stand in line for them. There were line sitters who would show up at 4:00 in the morning to get in line and then the real person who was actually wanting the visa would show up at 7:00 or something. It was a source of a lot of ill will that it was so hard to get a visa but because so many people wanted out at that point, when the economy was so bad, the refusal rate was high.

Q: How did you find the universities? Because I've often understand that in countries, Mexico included, that sometimes the universities are the source of a lot of anti-Americanism.

JEWELL: They absolutely are and they probably still are. The big public universities like Universidad Autonóma de México, which was a gigantic, 100,000 student university, was very unreceptive to overtures from us. They didn't really host many of our speakers. Luckily Latin American universities, like a lot in Europe, are very divided faculty by faculty so the faculty of social sciences has almost nothing to do with arts and letters and so on. So you could find colleagues in a particular faculty and work with specific professors and deans rather than trying to work with the university as a whole, which tended to be quite far to the left. They were on strike a lot too, so you couldn't do programs there if you wanted to because they weren't even in session. There were also a lot of private universities springing up because the public schools tended to go on strike, and we worked quite a bit with those schools too.

Q: Well were there sort of almost no-go areas? I mean physically you didn't want to go into the campus or not?

JEWELL: I guess Autonóma was probably the most politicized in the region that I was working in and so I didn't go out there very much. But it wasn't scary at that point really and certainly security in Mexico was completely different. We were required to drive to Mexico. If you wanted to bring a car with you to post you had to drive it there. So we drove from Washington to Mexico City, which you would never do now. You're not even allowed to. People who are working now in the consulate in Monterrey can't even drive to the border because of security, but we did. So the situation of crime and violence in the country was night and day different. It was much safer then.

Q: What was your living condition, you and your husband?

JEWELL: It was a post where you found your own housing, which is a little bit rare. Usually at embassies you're assigned a house or an apartment but at that point we were given a housing allowance and went out on the market with some help from real estate agents. It was complicated because at the time we got there the peso was vastly overvalued and six months after we got there they devalued. We could have gotten a much better place if we'd arrived later because our dollars would have gone farther. We lived in a regular Mexican neighborhood. We had a couple of floors in a house in an area called Anzures, from which we were able to walk to the embassy. It was about a 15, 20

minute walk every day to the embassy, which was lovely since the climate in Mexico City is quite nice; the air was bad but the weather was good.

Q: I was going to ask about the air.

JEWELL: It was polluted. Right now it's better because it got so bad that they finally cracked down on vehicles. For example in the embassy if I left my windows open at night, (you could actually open windows) I would come back to find soot all over the papers on my desk. But you didn't notice it so much on a clear day just walking down to the embassy.

Q: What was your husband doing?

JEWELL: He was the assistant press attaché. He dealt in particular with a relatively large American press corps based in Mexico, some of whom also traveled to Central America. It was the bad old days of Central American wars so some of them traveled through the region and were based in Mexico City. He got to know the American journalists quite well and spent a lot of time with them.

Q: Did you in your looking at things with the press, find the Mexican press rather hostile?

JEWELL: The Mexican press was pretty hostile but once again we had great FSNs who had long-term contacts with them, so we were able to at least get our side of the story out there. But they became quite particularly hostile to the ambassador and would go out of their way to blow up anything that he said.

Q: Well was there concern, I think the ambassador went through a number of DCMs (deputy chiefs of mission).

JEWELL: Oh yes.

Q: And in fact I think he was told, I heard somewhere he was told by personnel back here in Washington you can't do that anymore. You've got to get along with these people. We can't keep supplying you with new DCMs.

JEWELL: When we arrived John Ferch was there and he was succeeded by Morris Busby. It was a rough job. Because of the two staff assistants it was hard to be the DCM there. It's a huge embassy, it takes a lot of work to keep that many people moving in the same direction. And then trying to advise an ambassador who didn't really want to listen to what the DCM had to say.

The Ambassador was very interested in his image, especially in the U.S., which meant he was very interested in the U.S. media, so my husband dealt with him quite a bit. I did too because at one point he was making a speech to the Chamber of Commerce and I got assigned to write it because I was doing economic work. To my great dismay he loved

the speech and then wanted me to become a speechwriter, so I had to work with my boss to keep from being pulled up to the ambassador's office as another staff aide/speechwriter. I didn't want to do that.

Q: Yes, there's a lot of, I mean he would require maybe not hand holding but fan bearers or something, I mean an entourage around the ambassador.

JEWELL: Yes, when he traveled around the country my husband often had to travel with him. Sometimes I went, sometimes I didn't. Because there was a lot of controversy surrounding him, he would sometimes be besieged by journalists and needed somebody to keep order or call on people or say I'm sorry we're not making a statement here or whatever.

There was also a lot of looking at photos and picking out the right photo and air brushing out things that didn't look right and that kind of detail. So yes, there was a lot of hand holding. And for somebody who didn't mind dishing out complaints and criticism he could be extremely thin skinned when it was dished back at him, especially by the media. So there was a certain amount of desire on his part to retaliate and a lot of people, the career service at least, trying to restrain that urge because it was only going to make things worse. Things like saying we're not going to invite this newspaper to our press conferences anymore, even if it was one of the most important papers. It was a tough working environment.

Q: How did you find life in Mexico City, you and your husband?

JEWELL: Mexico as a whole is a delightful place and in some ways we should have loved it a lot more than we did, but because the Embassy atmosphere was so bad, it colored our experience there. However, we traveled all over and it's such a wonderful country; you can do anything in Mexico. If you want to go to Mayan ruins, if you want to go to a beautiful beach, if you want a colonial hill town, if you want an indigenous city, I mean everything is there. The food is wonderful and plentiful and fresh and so it was a delight to be in Mexico but working in Mexico as an official American was kind of a rough go.

Q: Did you get involved in any state visits?

JEWELL: Oh gosh, they had presidential visits every year.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: This was the Reagan era and he came a couple of times. Once I remember we went up to La Paz in Baja, California for a presidential visit.

Q: What did you do?

JEWELL: The usual, staffing the advance, working with the press advance, being site officers, whatever you needed to do. It takes a village to do a presidential visit. We did a lot of senior visits.

There was also, while we were there, a huge UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) conference. UNESCO was very much on the outs with the Republican administration and a bunch of people came to that conference, some of whom actually hated UNESCO. But I was happily assigned to be the control officer for Billy Taylor, who was a fantastic jazz pianist and so I got to go to jazz clubs with him and host concerts, while other people were struggling with Jim Buckley and people who hated UNESCO who were out at the actual conference.

Q: Did you get involved in issues dealing with the problems in Central America, El Salvador and Nicaragua?

JEWELL: I did not, in my job as economics program officer. It was not really part of my portfolio. However, many of the journalists who covered that region were based in Mexico City and so my husband did get involved with them and sometimes they wanted to talk to the ambassador about it. Mostly we tried to discourage that because he wasn't directly involved in that policy so wasn't really an appropriate spokesman for Central America policy. We tried to get him to stick just to Mexico policy.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: But anyway, we knew a lot of the journalists socially and so we heard quite a bit about the situation and took a certain amount of grief for it in private, off-the-record ways.

Q: Did you get involved on the economic side in water or in immigration? I mean you've got economic aspects from the States.

JEWELL: Water not so much at that time. Later on, when I was DAS (deputy assistant secretary) for Mexico and Canada, water was a huge issue, dealing with the Boundary Waters Commission. But when I was there, water was not one that I dealt with. Certainly immigration is a perennial thorn in the side. Immigration issues with Mexico are always a sore spot and that certainly was the case when I was there.

We had some surprising, positive things going on too. One of the biggest and most unknown entities in Mexico that was part of the U.S. mission was the screwworm commission. We had a huge agricultural entity there trying to eradicate the screwworm, which was very detrimental to U.S. and Mexican livestock. We were trying to eradicate it in Mexico to keep it out of the United States. It was something that was good for Mexico, it was good for us, we spent a lot of money on it. But almost no one knew it was going on. We tried to play it up because it was a positive in this very touchy and prickly relationship.

Q: Narcotics weren't as big an issue?

JEWELL: Not as big an issue. But we were there when the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) agent was killed.

Q: Oh yes.

JEWELL: Which was a huge, huge problem. So the DEA was very active, but narcotics had not engulfed the whole country in such a violent and pervasive way as it has now.

Q: Well did you move up the promotion ladder and all that?

JEWELL: Yes. I've forgotten what I was when I came in, an eight or a seven or something really unheard of low because I was one year out of university with no master's degree.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: So by the time I got to Mexico I was a two and out of Mexico when I got back to the States I made one out of Mexico. So yes, I was moving up the ladder. It wasn't my obsession getting promoted every year; I was more intent on enjoying myself and doing a good job but yes I was also moving up.

Q: How did you find USIA fitted into the embassy atmosphere?

JEWELL: In that particular embassy we had very good public affairs officers. People I worked for, Stan Zuckerman, Bob Chatten, people who were very well known and had lots of experience so that they had the ear, to the extent that anybody had the ear, of the ambassador. And he certainly was interested in our media programs if not always our cultural programs. We had a big library in Mexico City which is still open, so it was a very active USIS post. And because some of us had thematic jobs we had a lot of contact with other parts of the embassy. I worked closely with the economic section, for example. I felt we were relatively well integrated into the mission at that point.

Q: Well when you left where did you go?

JEWELL: We went back to Washington.

Q: -21st of March 2016 with Linda Jewell. And Linda, you've left Mexico; when did you leave Mexico.

JEWELL: In February of 1985.

Q: And you're off to Washington.

JEWELL: I'm off to Washington.

Q: What were you doing and how long were you there?

JEWELL: I was on the Central America desk at USIA for two years and that was exceptionally busy because it was during the wars in Central America. In addition to trying to support the posts and all the things that they were doing, there was a lot of money being channeled towards Central America. As you know, when there's a lot of money channeling towards something all the beltway bandits come out with projects and things that they want to do. So there were a lot of people with bright ideas about how to fix one thing or another in the region.

Q: I want to stop right here because people are going to be reading this in a different era. What was the situation in Central America and why were we concerned?

JEWELL: There were civil wars going on in El Salvador and Guatemala. The Sandinistas had taken over in Nicaragua and we were trying to get them out. We were covertly and not so covertly supporting a force against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and so that whole region was in upheaval. It was during the Reagan Administration and they saw this as a stand against communism. In a way one of the last throes of the containment policy, trying to contain the power in the region of the Soviet Union. So we were concerned about it and when we're concerned about something lots of money flows to it.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: So I spent a lot of time trying to sort out good from bad and trying to protect the people on the ground so that they could get their jobs done and not be pestered to death by people from Washington forcing them to respond to this, that and the other proposal.

Q: What was USIA doing in Central America at the time?

JEWELL: We were doing a lot of exchanges, which was I think a great thing. And I believe that one of the best things that I saw in my whole career perhaps was a program called the CAMPUS Program, which sent groups of Central Americans to the United States for study, undergraduate study. We sent them in groups so that they would not feel so isolated and we were particularly looking for underrepresented groups, meaning indigenous peoples in particular. It was extraordinarily successful. These students were sponges for the opportunity and for the education and you could still go back to Central America today and find them in important places because that program made such an enormous difference. It completely changed the trajectory of their lives so that they were able to come back and take government jobs and be policymakers and play a political role. It was very worthwhile.

But then there was also a lot of messaging that we were pushed to do. For example our director at the time, Charlie Wick, was convinced that the Europeans didn't like our Central America policy because they didn't understand it. And if they just understood it

they would really start to approve of it. So we had this program of sending European influence makers, journalists and government people and so on, to Central America to see the situation on the ground. Of course once they got there they looked at it and said yes, this is exactly what we thought and it's not a good idea. So I thought it was a gigantic waste of time and I still think it was just a fool's errand. But our poor posts in the region had tons of their time taken up planning programs for and escorting these groups of visiting firemen around their countries.

Q: Well now how did you feel about our work in Central America? I mean we've had supporting the suppression of the leftists in El Salvador and trying to defeat the government in Nicaragua and all and in Honduras we were messing around. I mean-.

JEWELL: Right. It was a very troubled time. It was also the time of some fantastic leaders, like Jose Napoleón Duarte in El Salvador, who was a genuine patriot in that country and was trying to do the right thing. But it was a very troublesome policy, I have to say. I felt very, very conflicted about what we were doing, meaning is there any way that the path that we're on is going to get us where we really want to go, which is to have stable, prosperous, non-communist at that time governments in these countries. And I wasn't fully believing that that was going to be the case.

Q: You say the student program exchanges, group exchange program was successful. Do we have any particular universities or colleges we were sending them to?

JEWELL: There was a competition with every round that allowed American universities to bid on accepting one of these cohorts and training them. They had to provide examples of how they would support them and how they would orient them and maintain contact with them so that they wouldn't get completely overwhelmed in an American setting. We generally tended to go for not such big cities, not such big schools but schools that had some Latin American studies influence, that would know the people they were getting and would have people on campus who would understand the context from which these students came and would be able to really help them bridge that pretty enormous gap between where they came from and where they were. So I remember Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, was a university that was exceptionally successful in taking these groups and really helping them get the most out of their experience.

Q: Did you find yourself going out to the university and talking about what the program was and what they-?

JEWELL: We didn't do as much of that as we should have. Most of the selection processes were just done of the basis of the proposals they sent in in response to the request for proposals. So we sat as a committee and read them all. Some of the people from the educational bureau went out to visit them from time to time but I did not. But I must say the government at that point, and I think it's better now, was not as good on assessment and tracking how are we doing. We had so much money at that point, at least by our standards; we were just kind of churning through it rather than really stepping back to see what difference it was making.

Q: Well you mentioned how there's a lot of money going into Central America and how the sort of lobbyists all came up with proposals; what sort of thing were you being faced with?

JEWELL: Some of them were extreme - I'm wracking my brain to think of an exact example but a lot of them were very ideologically based and extremely ignorant is the only word I can think of, of the real situation on the ground. So they were vastly ambitious; they assumed too much infrastructure on the ground. They had ideas of going down to teach things like democracy to people; some of it was extremely arrogant and the white man's burden kind of stuff, going down and teaching the natives how to do things. They were extremely simplistic from the American side in many cases.

Q: Well now Nicaragua came under your authority.

JEWELL: It did.

Q: What were we doing there? What could we do there?

JEWELL: We couldn't do a whole lot because we were so heavily monitored. I visited the post during that time and it was a very hard place to be an American diplomat. We had a very rundown embassy; it was a set of temporary buildings that we had moved into after one of the big earthquakes and never gotten a new embassy built. So it was a very unpleasant physical surrounding and then there was a lot of harassment from the local government and security forces. Regular people were in some degree afraid to deal with us. We stuck to things like English teaching that we could all agree would be an okay thing to do. And we tried to keep in touch with people and still had some exchange programs; we sent some journalists, some brave souls who were willing to go on our programs. We tried to maintain contact without hurting the people, like the Chamorro family who were fighting against the Sandinista regime with their newspaper, and support the dissidents and that sort of thing. Although you had to be really careful that your touch did not become a negative for them.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: There was the same problem in a lot of repressive countries but it was a small place and so it was harder to hide in Nicaragua.

Q: Well with the English training program you've put an awful lot of ideology in there if you're not careful. How was that treated?

JEWELL: Well I don't think that we set it up to be too ideological because we knew that if we did it would probably be shut down because somebody would report it. But just the very notion of teaching people English, and this is true worldwide, is in itself quite subversive because it opens them up to a whole range of thought and ideas and information that they couldn't get before.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: Everything at a certain level is ideological I suppose if it's offering a view of a different world. But I don't think we set out to be specifically ideological in English teaching because they would have just shut it down.

Q: Yes. Well did you get involved with supporting the contras?

JEWELL: No. I had absolutely nothing to do with the contras. At USIA we were happily not expected to deal with them. So we were really just dealing with local NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and journalists and that sort of thing.

Q: Did you have any contact with Charlie Wick?

JEWELL: Yes. Everybody in the agency tried to have as little contact with Charlie Wick as humanly possible because every time that you came anywhere within his range you were almost automatically tasked with something and sometimes it was really outrageous and sometimes it was just a little bit off track. But he was an extraordinarily energetic director and certainly had a very close personal relationship with Ronald Reagan, so in that we had a lot of resources to work with during the Reagan Administration he was good for USIA. But he also caused us to spend a lot of time on things like those European leader tours to Central America that were not a good use of our money or our time. So yes, I saw him every now and then but didn't seek time with the master.

Q: Did you have much contact with your comparable people in the State Department dealing with Latin America?

JEWELL: I had a fair amount of contact with the Central America office. They were very easy to work with. I think we all felt we were trying to make sure that the people on the ground had what they needed and that their voices were being heard. Because when there is a foreign policy issue on which very, very senior people and especially senior people not necessarily at State are involved, then sometimes they don't want to hear what people from the post are saying especially if it's contradictory to what they want to do.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: You are unwelcome if you've given the impression you are not with the program.

Q: Was it sort of a difference between night and day and evening with our embassy in Nicaragua and the one in El Salvador?

JEWELL: Yes it was except at that point it wasn't any easier for the embassy people in El Salvador to work. They were more in line with the government but the security situation was bad. I remember driving to the PAO's (public affairs officer) house with a

guy with a submachine gun in the passenger seat in the front as we rode through the streets. And before we got to his house they called ahead and the gates opened and we drove in without stopping and the gates shut behind us. This in a so-called friendly country. It was a very difficult security situation so in terms of physical operation it wasn't that easy in El Salvador either.

Q: During the time you were dealing with El Salvador did any major things happen and how did you respond?

JEWELL: Well one major thing that happened was a gigantic earthquake and the embassy became mostly unusable; they had to replace the embassy eventually. When it first happened I remember being on the phone with the PAO for long hours at a time, almost like therapy sessions. He was dealing with so much logistical catastrophe and journalists were pouring in from all over the world and they were trying to help the government and they were trying to help their own people and he was working a million hours a day in very temporary shelters and it was really a bad situation. I remember trying to figure out what they needed and what I could do from such a distance to try to help the people on the ground.

Q: There are a lot of congressmen, women who were hostile to what we were doing in Central America. Did you have much dealings with Congress?

JEWELL: Yes, we got a lot of congressional inquiries about our programs. Answering them was a lot of work but since I was somewhat sympathetic to those people I didn't feel overly burdened by it. I thought most of the questioning was reasonable and I thought we had pretty good answers for most of what we were doing. I didn't feel like I was having to say things that weren't true in order to make our programs look good.

Q: How were relations in the Central America desk and your co-workers dealing with Latin America in USIA?

JEWELL: It was fine, it was good. In our area office we had a very experienced leader whom I've admired for a long time and is a good friend of mine now, Donna Oglesby. She was our area director and she provided good leadership and helped me and my colleagues. People were pretty sympathetic actually because my workload was more than the average desk officer. And actually there were two of us on that desk which is unusual for USIA.

Q: Now what about you have to deal with the representatives of the Central American powers, don't you? I mean the political officers at the embassy and all?
JEWELL: I did but not as much as you might think. The State Department did most of that. They were in contact more with the local embassies than I was. We were just operating with the posts. So we actually didn't deal with the embassies as much.

Q: Well I mean we had a very strong opposition to what we were doing in Central America, not only in Europe but also in our country. Did we have people coming to you and saying what the hell are we doing and why are you doing this and all?

JEWELL: Not so much, because they would go to the State Department. USIA was set up in a way that restricted us from dealing with the American public. We were not to be messaging to the American population. None of our materials could be distributed in the United States. If they asked about a specific USIA program we would answer them but if they had a more general attack on the policy we would probably just send it to State.

Q: Well what about say the French, Germans, British and all, I mean they were very strong opposition to what we were doing.

JEWELL: Right.

Q: Did we get involved with that? Did you get involved with that?

JEWELL: I only got involved in that to the extent that the people who were in USIS posts in those countries needed information or needed background or needed questions answered. Like, I've been asked about this thing that's happening in El Salvador, what shall I say? So we had to generate answers for them; State did a lot of this too but we had to certainly if it was about any of our programs or anything that our posts could provide context for.

Q: Well was there a sort of a central place? You've got State and USIA dealing with the same problem abroad. I mean coordinating-.

JEWELL: I would go to the State Department's Central America office staff meetings. That was how we coordinated at the Central America office level. And most of that coordination would be done at those embassies. We did try to speak with one voice as much as possible. We all knew what the talking points were, those of us who were working on it.

Q: Well did any member of Congress or any members stand out as being particularly annoying from your point of view? I mean in all fairness I mean people who attacked the policy.

JEWELL: I don't remember specific ones. I was sheltered enough from that. We had a congressional liaison office so I didn't have to deal with them as directly.

Q: How about after duty hours with friends and all? Did you find yourself defending our policy?

JEWELL: Yes to some extent. But a lot of my friends would give me a break knowing that I spent my whole day job dealing with it. Certainly my Foreign Service friends did not bother me about it and then other friends and family were not too harsh on it.

Q: Yes. Well Central America and before that Vietnam were two policies that really stirred up the American populace and all. Vietnam much more so because we were sending our young men there.

JEWELL: Right.

Q: Well what were your ties in Mexico, say, about all this?

JEWELL: Well almost all the Latin American countries were opposed to it. They're just opposed to American intervention as a general principle; many of them have been subject to our intervention at one point or another and not always in helpful ways. So in Latin America this was not a popular policy. I certainly didn't think it was the way to solve the problem. But I knew enough in reality about who the guerillas were and who the so-called freedom fighters were to realize that they were not the answer either. I think a lot of Americans had more illusions about what great and glorious things would happen in these countries if the left won. And I never believed that.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: We were involved in civil wars over age-old grievances that we poorly understood and therefore our policy was not even geared to achieve the goal that we said we wanted to achieve. We seem to do this with some regularity.

Q: Did Cuba cross your desk at all? I mean their support.

JEWELL: No, Cuba was not part of my particular desk although it was included in the area office. We had an officer in Cuba; there was a USIA officer in Cuba so we were aware of it. But I wasn't working on it.

Q: Well then where did you go after that? I mean this must have been exhausting.

JEWELL: It was exhausting. I did that for two years and then I was rewarded with a year at SAIS (School of Advanced International Studies). I went to Johns Hopkins for a year and got a master's in international public policy. USIA paid for me to go for a year to Johns Hopkins which was fantastic.

Q: This is sort of the blessing of Charlie Wick. He might have been handing out all sorts of little assignments but he was getting money.

JEWELL: He was getting money, yes. So the agency did have money.

Q: Okay, well let's talk. Did you have an area of concentration?

JEWELL: I did not. I was allowed to take whatever I wanted so I chose to make up some of the deficits in my college education which had been focused more on literature than

political science, history and international affairs. So I took a political economy course which was fantastic and really helped me connect those two things better than I had in the past. I took a really, really good class on Islam because I was hoping for my next tour in India and I realized how little I really knew about it, despite my years in Indonesia. I took an American foreign policy course. And another Latin America course. So it was filling in gaps in the political science way of looking at the world.

Q; Did you find that the class of professors or all of that I take extensive experience so I mean it was in a way more rich in the real world than maybe at the university before?

JEWELL: I was slightly older than most of the rest of the master's students who hadn't had a lot of real world experience. So they liked having me in class because I offered a connection to how theory hits reality when you're overseas. And most of the professors were like that too. Sometimes when I was politely saying that this is all fine in theory but it doesn't actually happen this way when you're dealing with foreign publics, people found that a little disconcerting, that their grand academic theories did not always bear out in reality.

Q: Well the connection between sort of the Foreign Service and the academic world is not great. I mean it certainly, I mean I speak as a Foreign Service officer for many years myself and doing these interviews I don't find people waiting for the latest policy proposals or what have you coming out of the academic world. They're not avidly reading them; they don't read them.

JEWELL: They don't read them and that's a huge loss both ways I think. When you're on a desk or when you're in a country you often don't have time to read academic papers and often they're not practical. They're not specifically relevant to the question that you're dealing with. They are very, very helpful when you're preparing to go somewhere; they help you learn the context and history. Throughout my career when I found academics who were working on modern day Mexico or Indonesia or whatever, they were very helpful because they know a lot of people in a way that Foreign Service officers won't know them. They go into villages and live there. We don't do that. So if you listen to them you can really learn more about the place where you're serving. Those kinds of academics have been very, very helpful to me over the years. And I think we were helpful to them too because they were hopping in and out. They didn't live there full time the way we did. They would go back to their universities and then would come in and use us for a catch-up on what had happened since they were here last. So we tried to make it both ways but I think there's not nearly enough back and forth, as you say.

Q: How about Islam? You took a course in Islam; this was when?

JEWELL: This was in 1987-'88, that academic year '87 to '88.

Q: So you might say the Islamic upheaval that we're experiencing these days hadn't yet happened.

JEWELL: Hadn't happened yet, right. That's why it was useful for me to have studied it back then.

Q: Were the professors talking about what was out there, what was, sort of the preparation for the upheaval?

JEWELL: The course started with basics because so few of us knew even the basic tenets of where it came from, where did it start, why are there Shia, why are there Sunnis, what's the difference, what is the ummah; all those questions that are basic to understanding Islam we didn't know. I didn't know. So it started with basics like that and only became political later when talking about the different countries and things like the Shia-Sunni split and the Wahhabis and their motivations and how that impacted the countries where they were in charge. So it became more of a historical and political explanation of what was going on in the region. But it was more a fundamentals course which I needed, it was very good.

Q: Of course everybody who's dealing with it really needs this to understand-

JEWELL: Right.

Q: -what the hell this is all about.

JEWELL: Right.

Q: I served in Yugoslavia for five years and if you didn't know the, and I'm getting my dates up of 1583 or something, the battle of Kosovo or something like that and the defeat of the Serbs by the Turks and all you don't understand Yugoslavia.

JEWELL: Right. And Americans I think are peculiarly, it's one of the things that allows us to be such a heterogeneous country and to move forward, is that we are remarkably ahistorical.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: We forget things and put them behind us faster than almost any other country I've ever run into. So that we can now be trading with Vietnam and have Japan as one of our best allies where only a few years ago we were at war. So we do that but other people don't do that and we don't realize they don't do it.

Q: Well I can recall sort of it happened after I had retired from the Foreign Service but my wife and I were walking a country lane in England, I think Devon, and there was a small church there that said please come and help us plan for our millennial founding. And I suddenly realized that these are people who have been living together in a place for 1,000 years or more.

JEWELL: Yes, right.

Q: And that's plenty of time to grow up to, I mean if you hate the people in the next town, I mean your grandparents, your great-grandparents, they all hated the people in the next town. I mean they had time to develop these ways of thought about their role and other groups that are challenging them.

JEWELL: Right.

Q: And we don't.

JEWELL: We don't do that, yes. We're too young and we generally don't have that outlook. We move forward. We look forward all the time and not back.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: But so, so many countries in the world spend a lot of time looking back; they can't get over it.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: So it's a gift in a way that we are this way, but it also makes us completely blind in a lot of spots because we don't factor that in enough, that people are still holding on to ancient grudges.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: Deep seated ancient grudges that we can't figure out why they can't get over.

Q: Yes. When you think about the Civil War, when I was a kid, I'm 88 now, and when I was a kid I lived in Annapolis and the Civil War was very much with us. When they talked about "the war" that's the war, it was the Civil War.

JEWELL: Right.

Q: And now that whole South has gone very Republican.

JEWELL: Yes. I know. Things change here in a way that they don't move that quickly elsewhere.

So anyway I spent that lovely year at Johns Hopkins.

Q: And then whither?

JEWELL: After that I went to India.

Q: Alright. You were in India from when to when and where?

JEWELL: I was in New Delhi from 1988 to ’92. I was there four years.

Q: Okay. And who was the ambassador?

JEWELL: When I got there and for just two or three months John Gunther Dean was still the ambassador. I’m not sure that I ever laid eyes on him. He was in the midst of a battle royal with Washington. They wanted him out, he was refusing to leave. It was a huge controversy that I was not directly involved with. After they finally did roust him out Jack Hubbard, the former president of USC (University of Southern California), came to be ambassador and he was lovely. He had spent a lot of time in India, he knew a lot about India so he was a very good ambassador, a nice guy to work for. It’s a huge mission; it’s absolutely an enormous mission.

Q: Alright, what was your job?

JEWELL: I had two jobs while I was there. My first job was called branch public affairs officer for North India. India is such a gigantic place that within the capital city organization we had a subset of people who just thought about programming in North India. And part of that programming was of course with the media so I covered both sides of USIA meaning the culture side as well as the information side. I had working for me three different sets of foreign nationals; one who read the Urdu media, one who read the Hindi media and one who read the English language media. Since I didn’t speak or read Urdu and Hindi I was very beholden to these wonderful people to help me figure out what was going on in those different groups. Sometimes you would get the reports from them and you would think you were working in three different countries because the things they had on the front pages of their newspapers each day were really often quite different because their take on things was very different. It was a fascinating place to be and I traveled around North India quite a bit. We had a lot of academics visiting, we would bring a lot of speakers, it was a time when we were trying to establish better trade relations. I remember Carla Hills came once as U.S. trade representative when I was there.

So I did that job for two years and then as governments are wont to do they decided to reorganize the whole post and do away with that special branch office. So I became the information officer for the whole country and the cultural side of the North India branch went over to the office where my husband was working because he was the cultural affairs officer.

Q: Alright. What was, when you got there it was-?

JEWELL: ’88.

Q: ’88. When you got there how would you describe first one, the political situation in India itself and two Indian relations with the United States?

JEWELL: India's relations with the United States have always been a little testy because of the tilt toward Pakistan. In the realpolitik era of Henry Kissinger we favored Pakistan as an ally against the Soviet Union and so the Indians have always mistrusted us because they think that we are too friendly to Pakistan. That is improving somewhat now as our relations with Pakistan deteriorate. But at the time they were I would say wary of Americans.

Q: Who was the prime minister?

JEWELL: Rajiv Gandhi. He was killed while I was there.

Q: Okay.

JEWELL: He was murdered during that tour - I remember that night extremely well.

Q: How did you find the Indians that you were dealing with particularly in New Delhi and you might say political academic class?

JEWELL: I loved India. It was one of my favorite tours. We had a great time there partly because both of our children were born during that tour so it was a very happy personal time. And we were doing good work. We'd get out and move around a lot, people were interested in the things that we were doing. We had a magazine, a one-country magazine called "Span" that we edited and sent around. We had a big library that was constantly chockablock with students and people coming in. So I found the interaction with Indians, they could be argumentative that's for sure, but it was always very interesting. They were very opinionated and quite smart; they weren't afraid to call us out on things. So I really enjoyed the time there and found a lot of the people very welcoming, people interested in the United States, people willing to tell us why they thought we were doing wrong things, again mostly having to do with Pakistan. They're obsessively focused on that relationship and almost everything can be somehow pushed back to that relationship. But I found it to be an absolutely fascinating place and loved my time there.

Q: Well what was your impression of the education of Indians, particularly at the you might say the upper level, universities and that sort of thing?

JEWELL: Oh the universities are excellent. Nehru University, which is in New Delhi, is an outstanding university and there are many schools that are good. For those who can afford to get it, the education is excellent. It is still the old European style which is teachers talk and students write down. It's not like the sort of freer thinking education of American students.

Q: Indians as you say, my experience too, they were very argumentative and quite willing to tell you what you've done wrong.

JEWELL: Right.

Q: Where do they get this if the universities are sort of keep the students quiet while they're told what they should know and all?

JEWELL: Well the universities are good and they cause the students to read quite broadly, so the students are smart and they figure these things out. But I think in general the sort of argumentative and self-possessed nature of Indian culture is partly just due to living in such an overcrowded place. You just have to be assertive to make your way in the world if you're part of a billion people. Things are crowded. You can't just sit back and expect things to happen. You've got to make things happen. And so I think that there's, at every level of society, a need to be in a certain way self-absorbed in order just to survive.

Q: Was the digital age starting when you were there?

JEWELL: Really that is the first place, during the second half of my tour in India, where I had a computer on my desk and I could actually send emails back to Washington. But it was so, so new. And it was those old Wang computers which worked but were not sophisticated; that was my only real connection to the digital age. Everything else we were doing was still the old fashioned way.

Q: What about the media there? Was the media- you were saying you were divided it into language groups.

JEWELL: Right.

Q: But was the media willing to accept things from us or-?

JEWELL: Yes they were. It's a very free, open, media environment although at that point they only had one national television channel, so that television was more controlled. But the press, the written press, was very rambunctious I would say. And they were willing to take things from us. But you had to, it was one of those places, and this was particularly true of the Urdu press, where you had to establish relationships with them. I went to visit the editors; I had to cultivate people so that they trust you and would take things and believe that what you gave them was both true and worth including in their newspaper.

Q: Well did you find that you would get things sort of like let's push this particular point of view or something like that? And you realized it wouldn't fly in the society, the Indian society?

JEWELL: Well you always get the general talking points of whatever is happening in the world at the time and those are very much geared in most cases to an American audience. So you're always in the business of trying to figure out how in the world can I make this relevant or even understandable to my local audience. But honestly in my experience almost every country is really interested in its bilateral issues with America. And much more so that's what they want to talk to you about. In India they wanted to talk to us

about our Pakistan policy but they didn't really want to talk about the Middle East too much.

Q: Well how did you deal with the Pakistan relationship?

JEWELL: At that point we were making efforts to improve the relationship with India. So I would always try to switch back to the positive of here's what we're doing, this is now, that was then and we are making an effort to improve relations with India.

Q: Well while he was still alive Rajiv Gandhi must have been sort of a breath of fresh air because his mother really reflected the old London school of economics, British disdain of the United States.

JEWELL: Right. He did not have such a strong feeling about that. People would complain about the United States or feel free to tell you what was wrong but they actually were extremely interested in it and had a lot of questions. India's a big heterogeneous democracy just like we are and so there were lots of points at which you could draw comparisons.

Q: What about Islam in India, which is of course enormous?

JEWELL: Enormous.

Q: I mean it's next to Indonesia and Pakistan as the third largest Muslim country.

JEWELL: Exactly.

Q: Did we have problems dealing with it?

JEWELL: No not back in that time that I was there. That was really before the strong rise of political Islam. The Muslims have always felt that they're oppressed in India. They've always felt that they're not given equal status and not taken as seriously as they should be. So we had to be very, very careful not to accidentally tread on any of those sensitivities in our big blundering way. Or play into the Hindu nationalism that was just beginning then and which is now in power in India.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: You had to constantly be aware of the extreme Muslim sensitivities in India.

Q: How'd you deal with this? I mean, did you say okay, today's a Muslim day; tomorrow's a Hindu day or what?

JEWELL: No, I didn't break it down that way. One of the powers of being an American diplomat is often the power of convening, to bring together groups of people who

wouldn't necessarily meet otherwise. If each of them invited the other to their house they might not go but they will come to your house together.

Q: Yes. Because often this is- during apartheid in South Africa it's the one place that we got sort of the blacks and the whites together.

JEWELL: Right. So I tried not to be all Hindus, all Muslims in any event. It wouldn't work anyway because if I was having an event for editors than I would invite all of them.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: They sort of knew each other. And they liked coming to these events because it was an opportunity to talk to people that they didn't normally run into in the course of their day. So I tried to deal with people even handedly and not be insensitive to the extent that I could, leaning heavily on my national staff to guide me.

Q: How did the national staff get together? I mean they were obviously of a mixed background.

JEWELL: They were of mixed background and even though we were in Delhi they were from all over India. So we had South Indians, we had North Indians; it was a very mixed group. But they all worked for the Americans so we set the tone that everybody's going to get along here and mostly they did. There weren't big religious or sectarian differences among the staff on a day to day basis; it was fine. Another thing about India at that point was that it was a huge embassy and we still had excess currency, so we had very large staffs and we could do a lot of very interesting things. The Indian government was gradually getting more control over those rupees but we still had very large staffs. That has been cut back now.

Q: Well could you talk about some of the cultural things that were done?

JEWELL: Yes. We brought performers like the Merce Cunningham and Alwin Nikolais dance companies; we brought Mstislav Rostropovich; the great cellist; we brought big art exhibits and things that made a difference on the Indian cultural scene. Indians care a lot about culture and art and the humanities so you have to bring high quality presentations and we were able to do that. There's a huge audience for these things in India and it was taken both as intellectually interesting to them but also as a sign that we knew we had to bring our best to them.

Q: Well what about Indian culture? Were they doing much as far as exporting stuff to the States?

JEWELL: At that point not so much. It was after the era when the west had discovered Ravi Shankar and the sitar but the real spread of Bollywood and films out of the Bombay (Mumbai) film industry had not really taken off the way it has now. After "Slumdog Millionaire" it became very popular but it was not so much back then.

Q: How about some of the Muslim, Hindi but I mean were the Sikhs different? I mean was this, and there are some other, down in the Tamils, I mean-?

JEWELL: There are Sikhs, there are Jains, there are thousands of different castes and clans and languages and ethnic groups. And they were fascinating to learn about but they were also kind of overwhelming. At a certain point you just had to treat everybody the same because you couldn't figure it all out. And I think a lot of Indians actually appreciated that from Americans.

Q: What would you do say with the untouchables? I mean were they hired and have to use the same washroom? I mean were these problems?

JEWELL: All those kinds of problems had been worked out, within the office, before I got there. At home you have a lot of household help because people have caste-designated jobs. So rather than hire a maid who also did our laundry there was a man who came twice a week who did our laundry because he was the laundry man; that was his job and his father had been a laundry man and so on. So we had a lot of different people who were helping us and one of the people was the sweeper who was a Dalit, an untouchable, who came and picked up the garbage and swept the walk and did that kind of thing. But interestingly enough the rest of our servants were extremely nice to her. I remember they called her Mataji and would offer her tea. The whole situation was hard for us in part because we didn't grow up with it; I couldn't even see it, I had no idea who was a Dalit and who wasn't.

Q: This is one of the cultural veins that run very deep.

JEWELL: Yes, it still runs very deep and it's still a source of extraordinary prejudice and oppression within India. But it's not always visible to us; those signals that tell Indians who's who are opaque to us, we don't see them. Which is mostly a good thing.

Q: When you were entertaining did you have to sit down and have maybe one of your local staff help you figure out how to entertain?

JEWELL: Actually the easiest thing to do, the thing we always did was to have a buffet, have all kinds of food and you label everything. Then people can go down the buffet line and take what they eat. Then everybody was happy.

Q: How was liquor?

JEWELL: We would serve liquor and they knew that in American houses you could get liquor but we also always had lots of soft drinks and juices available because there were many people who didn't drink. Of course some people drank a lot so you couldn't not have it either. Again, make everything available and then everybody chooses what they are comfortable with. That's the easiest thing to do.

Q: Well you were faced, there were two major things that I can think of happened. One, you want to talk about the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi and its impact on the embassy?

JEWELL: Yes.

Q: You might explain what happened for the historical record so we really-.

JEWELL: Right. The Prime Minister was visiting a site in southern India; I think was on a campaign tour actually. And a woman with a suicide vest came up to greet him and blew herself up and him as well. It was shocking. Nobody was expecting that. It was an evening event so I heard about it by a phone call that I received about 10:00 at night from my boss saying I needed to come to the embassy because Rajiv had been killed and people didn't know what was going to happen. After his mother was assassinated there had been riots all over India and no one knew whether that was going to happen again or not. So I remember getting in my car late at night and driving through the relatively deserted streets of New Delhi to the diplomatic area of town and wondering is this place going to blow up? I was trying to help the embassy find out from my journalist sources what was going on, what they were learning, keeping up and feeding back to Washington the media reaction and the media reporting. I also got a couple of my local staff in to help us just keep in touch with people. And luckily, happily it did not happen; it did not result in riots or unrest throughout the country.

Q: And also I guess there was always the menace of maybe the Pakistanis might try to take advantage of this.

JEWELL: It was a time of extraordinary uncertainty. And then we had to get ready for the visit of the vice president, Dan Quayle, who came to represent the U.S. at the funeral, which happens very quickly in Hindu society. So only a day or two later we had to be ready for a vice presidential visit so I worked non-stop there for a few days.

Q: What did you do for Dan Quayle?

JEWELL: We had to figure out the usual things like how many people is he bringing with him, and keep in touch with the Indian government. In this case the schedule was relatively straightforward because he was there to attend the ceremonies. But we had to find out what the details were for the ceremonies, we had to find out what the security would be, which was extraordinary as you can imagine. Given the circumstances the Secret Service were even for them unusually demanding about needing to know where was he going to go, who was going to be in the room, how long was it going to take, how was he going to get there, and a lot of this is a complicated negotiation. It's always a negotiation in this kind of visit because there were lots of other world leaders there so he was not the most senior person and yet we were asking in some cases for special treatment because of the Secret Service. There's always that tension of how not to offend your host while getting the result you need. In particular I had to find out how many journalists are traveling with him, we had to get rooms for them, we had to get a bus for them and we had to make sure that they had the access and the passes that they needed,

all that kind of detail. And this had to happen really quickly because we were asking questions that sometimes the Indians didn't have an answer to yet because they hadn't figured that out. Sometimes our questions prompted them to realize oh, we're going to have to do this. So it was very, very hectic during that time but as I say the best news was that there was not civil unrest after his death.

Q: Well the other event happened elsewhere with the fall of, well I mean the collapse of the Soviet Union. I mean let's say before it happened we were always keeping an eye on sort of the thinking that when the chips are down India really is looking towards the Soviet Union and not towards the United States. I mean did this have a factor and did this change? You want to talk about that?

JEWELL: I think overall was positive for us in India although we had to be very, very careful not to appear triumphalist.

Q: I have to say that the president and Secretary of State Baker and others were very good at this.

JEWELL: They did a good job so that we had good material to work with rather than trying to explain away bad comments. We were saying now we can put the Cold War behind us and we can have a new era of our relationship and so on. It was an exciting time, and it was I think generally perceived to be a time of opportunity in India for the United States.

Q: Where did the press come from? I mean sort of the education and the outlook and all that?

JEWELL: Well it's a really mixed bag. It's a huge country with a huge media scene so there was a little bit of everything. They had some very respectable papers like the "Hindustan Times" with well trained and broadly educated journalists who had a big world outlook. And then you had small papers who were pushing either a Hindu nationalist line or a Muslim separatist line, so there was a wide spectrum of media just like in the United States.

Q: I'm in the midst of an interview with Tom Krajeski who was India desk officer around that time saying he took the desk officer tour of India-

JEWELL: Yes.

Q: -and he met sort of the communist party people. And he said it was sort of out of this world because he sat there, they were on a dais, he was sitting below the dais so he had to look up at them. And there was a picture of the head of the communist party but also a big picture of Stalin and they were saying they were unhappy with the United States and with Russia at the time because they weren't treating the memory of Stalin with due deference.

JEWELL: Yes, some of those people were living in a fantasy world.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: But again it's just so big there's some of everything. It's like the United States in that way. You can probably find people who think that same thing in the United States somewhere.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: So yes, there's a wide range of political views held throughout the media and each speaks to its own constituency but it is a range from the very most professional and upstanding journalists down to the most scurrilous kind of rag sheets.

Q: Well did you have, I'm probably making the wrong definition, but sort of a circle of journalists who were really very responsible people that you would go to for not only to just say well we wanted to say but here what they have to say?

JEWELL: At every post if you're working with the media you try to have as varied a set of contacts as you can but limit it to people that have some journalistic integrity and that you can, I was going to say that you can trust. You can never totally, totally trust, however; you never really assume that off the record is off the record anywhere overseas in my experience.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: At least in the countries I worked in. But there are certainly plenty of journalists from all different political or ethnic outlooks that you can count on to give you, at least from their point of view, the story of what they're seeing as well as to listen to what you have to say within their same context.

Q: Where stood TV, Indian TV in this time you were there?

JEWELL: Indian TV was only Doordarshan, which is their national television, sort of their BBC (British Broadcasting Company) except it wasn't nearly as sophisticated. It was remarkably unsophisticated, in fact. One of my staff members was an American who came out of a TV background and he had local people working for him who knew TV so he really had more of the contacts over at Doordarshan than I did. While I was there Doordarshan ran a show that came on every Sunday telling the story of the Mahabharata. It went on for months because the ancient-

Q: This is the great, great epic of-

JEWELL: -epic poem or story of India. The whole country would come to like a halt during the time this was on even though the production values were very low. My husband and I didn't speak Hindi but we kind of knew the story and would watch it

because it was such a topic of conversation among even our very sophisticated contacts. So many people were watching this thing that if you went out on the streets while it was on they would be deserted. It had enormous reach all over the country, television did, but it wasn't very sophisticated at the time.

Q: Were they picking up things from American TV? You know, I think there's Swedish TV that took great delight in publishing, putting out films of the downtrodden and oppressed in the United States and all.

JEWELL: Actually they didn't run nearly as many American shows as in other countries. That was not really a factor in what we had to do. In contrast everywhere in my time in Latin America all kinds of American television were broadcast and they got horrible views of us through watching "The Love Boat" and really dumb American television. But that was not so much the case in India and I don't know whether that was because the shows were too expensive or they thought people wouldn't be interested but for whatever reason there weren't that many American things on Doordarshan. We were trying to work with the news parts of the operation and give them film clips, not necessarily on current events because they wouldn't take that but a little bit more about American life. Feature stuff; they would occasionally use that. We developed a good relationship and they would use our things if they were not too political. And that was useful to us because it did counter to some extent some of the views that were quite distorted about the United States.

Q: About this time I know from reports when I was in Kyrgyzstan at one point where Russia, at that point it had just turned Russia, they were running Mexican soap operas.

JEWELL: Oh yes.

Q: I was wondering- I would think, I mean for a populace like India I think this would usually a country girl comes in and gets caught up in rich society and all, you know rags to riches and all stories really touches the mid India I would think.

JEWELL: Yes. But they weren't doing that either. Some of those telenovelas, at least the ones I saw in Latin America, would have been too risqué for Doordarshan to have run them.

Q: That's right, they don't kiss do they?

JEWELL: They don't touch, it's really quite conservative; certainly it was then. Then you go into these Bollywood films where they have all this suggestive dancing but they don't touch or have sex scenes as in the west. So they weren't running telenovelas either. Actually Doordarshan to a large degree was really boring. They had a lot of talk shows and panel discussions and just really boring stuff. They did run some local dramas and they would run some Indian films.

Q: Well did you have a- at that time you still had money, didn't you?

JEWELL: Yes.

Q: So you could put out an Urdu edition and a Tamil edition and a-

JEWELL: Right. We could work in various languages. We had branch posts in Mumbai, Bombay at that point, and it was still Madras, which is Chennai now, and in Calcutta and in Delhi. Those were big offices and we would work in several languages. Each of them would use two or three languages like Gujarati in Bombay and Malayalam and Tamil in Madras and Bengali in Calcutta. The major language groups have hundreds of millions of people that speak these languages so these are gigantic audiences.

Q: Did you find yourself doing much briefing of Americans to the complexities of Indian life? I mean I'm talking about either journalists or visitors or academics or anything like that?

JEWELL: To some extent, but actually there was shockingly little American interest in India at the time. And the academics who were following it already knew about Indian life.

Q: They knew.

JEWELL: We had very few congressional delegations come through; every now and then we would have one but it wasn't a constant flow of senior level visitors by even a remote stretch of the imagination.

Q: Was the Indian migration to the United States and the Indian enclaves there at all a factor in what you were doing or was this still early days?

JEWELL: There were quite a few migrants so it factored in a little bit. Overseas Indians were a factor electorally to some extent but more so with things that people aspired to. They definitely saw overseas Indians as living well and they were admired.

Q: And do they think they were probably one of the richest groups of ethnic groups in our country?

JEWELL: Oh yes. They've been very successful.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: And are well educated and quite wealthy. Indians have been enormously successful not only in the United States but in many countries. There are lots of Indians that migrated to Australia as well and they are very successful.

Q: What about the digital revolution? What was happening in India at this point?

JEWELL: Not much. Really very little. We had computers on our desks at the end of the tour but nobody had anything else digital that we were working on.

Q: I'm told one of the top universities in the world is, and I'm not going to get it right, is Indian Institute-

JEWELL: Indian Institute of Technology, IITs.

Q: IIT.

JEWELL: Correct.

Q: How much of a factor was that when you were there?

JEWELL: IITs are among the top institutions of higher education in the country. They produce fantastic graduates, mostly in science and engineering.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: Which is why we're now in the United States importing Indian software engineers and computer engineers because we don't have enough of them and we're getting them from China and from India. They're highly trained, very skilled and IITs, all the IITs were certainly a place where we as a USIS post were trying to make contacts and have programs because it was an elite, it was absolutely elite.

Q: How would you go about approaching something like that?

JEWELL: Well depending on the school and what their departments were we would find common topics and bring American academics that they might be interested in hearing. Even though they were science schools they also taught other subjects including history. In the sciences we would try to bring people who were innovators from the United States because Indians were very interested in keeping up with the latest thing.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: So you would establish contacts the way we always do by finding common ground.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: What are you interested in that we have that we can talk to you about and then you build a relationship from that. Then sometimes later you can start thinking well, maybe we can suggest some things that are a little more controversial or a little bit harder to talk about. So it's the same process that diplomats use all the time.

Q: Let me just stop for one second.

How was family life? You have two children.

JEWELL: We have two children who were both born during our tour in India. We actually came back to the United States about five or six weeks before each one was born and stayed in Washington. They were both born at Georgetown Hospital and then when they were four weeks old we took them back to India. So those were memorable trips, that second journey especially, when we had a newborn and a two-and-a-half year old that we traveling with. We clocked it one time, the Washington to India route was 27 hours door to door.

Q: Oh boy.

JEWELL: So those were long trips. But it was wonderful. Having such small children in India was fantastic.

Q: I would think this would be the ideal place.

JEWELL: It was ideal. We had so many people to help us and they are so welcoming to children. We never went anywhere in India that we weren't more welcome because we had the kids with us. Indians love children, so it was an entrée to talking to people. My daughter, who was born first, had very, very blonde hair when she was a baby and they were fascinated by that and wanted to have their picture taken with Susanna. She got very accustomed early on to being held by strangers and looking around. It was a very pleasant time because you could take the kids everywhere, no restaurant, nowhere would they be unwelcome.

Q: Yes. Well how was social life there?

JEWELL: For us, social life started to revolve around the kids, even within the community. Before they were born we socialized a good bit and there are lots of things to do if you're interested in Indian culture. You could go to sitar concerts and dance concerts, wonderful Indian dance concerts. And then the usual diplomatic social life. But once they were born it started revolving around the embassy club and the pool because that's where we would find other little kids to play with.

Q: Well then you left in?

JEWELL: June of '92.

Q: Okay, where'd you go?

JEWELL: Where did we go from India? We went back to language training for Polish. So we came back to the United States for a year.

Q: What a difficult language too.

JEWELL: An exceptionally, extraordinarily difficult language it was.

Q: I was speaking to somebody who went through Serbian which was a delight compared to Polish.

JEWELL: Polish is really, really hard, by far the hardest language I ever attempted to learn. So we came back to Washington for a year.

Q: Today is the 30th of March 2016 with Linda Jewell.

And Linda, you're off taking Polish. How long did the Polish course last?

JEWELL: Eleven months.

Q: Polish has a reputation; I've studied Russian and Serbian but Polish is on the top of the list as far as-.

JEWELL: Yes. A Slavic language, it's really a hard language to learn. I'm pretty good at languages but Polish was a challenge for sure.

Q: Well the spelling is enough to turn me off.

JEWELL: Actually that part once you learn it is pretty easy, you know.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: CZ is a CH for us so it corresponded to something we knew. That part's not hard. It's because it's a Slavic language. Words decline and so the nouns and adjectives have seven different cases and each verb has two different forms depending on whether it's a completed action or an ongoing action.

Q: Russian does the same thing yet it's sort of whether you're going or coming back or just going.

JEWELL: Yes. It's very complicated and there are a lot of exceptions. I gather Russian is more orderly but in Polish there are a lot of exceptions to the rules. So yes, I spent 11 months and I got my 3/3 but I never really felt comfortable speaking it the way I did with Spanish.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: -or even Indonesian. Indonesian was great because it was simple grammatically. The Poles were enormously forgiving because they were delighted that anyone had taken the trouble to try and so they were really, really generous and easy to talk to because they didn't mind if you made 1,000 mistakes.

Q: You got there and you were in what, Warsaw?

JEWELL: We were in Warsaw.

Q: You were there from when to when?

JEWELL: We were there from ’93 to ’96.

Q: Alright. What was your job or jobs?

JEWELL: I was the press officer; the information officer. My husband was the cultural affairs officer.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

JEWELL: A wonderful man named Nick Rey.

Q: Who had a long history with Poland anyway.

JEWELL: Had a long history with Poland.

Q: I interviewed him.

JEWELL: He was a wonderful man. He’s passed away now but he was an absolutely delightful guy and a good example of a very, very successful political appointee ambassador. It was a joy to work for him.

Q: Well when you got there in-

JEWELL: ’93.

Q: -’93, how would you say- Well first, what was the political situation in Poland at the time?

JEWELL: When we got there everything was really upbeat. It was a very exciting time to be there because it was soon enough after they had gotten their freedom that everybody was involved in redefining who they are. They weren’t part of the Soviet Union anymore, what did it mean to be Polish and unfortunately that debate does on today in a less positive way in my opinion. But it was a very dramatic and exciting time to be there.

Q: And how stood Polish-American relations?

JEWELL: They were excellent. The Poles gave us lots of credit whether we deserved it or not for the downfall of the Soviet Union and their liberation from the Bloc so it was a very, very positive time to be there. Nick Rey had an investment banking background and

he was very good on the economic side, which was important. The other thing that made him so good to work for was that on the things that he didn't know as much about, he was willing to say I don't know anything about that. You guys tell me what I should do. He really used the senior staff in a very collaborative way.

Q: Well he also, I did a background; his family-

JEWELL: His family was very prominent -

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: -and he had left Poland with his parents right after the beginning of World War II.

Q: Oh boy.

JEWELL: So he spoke Polish because he'd spoken it at home and his name was very famous in Poland. So all that helped him be successful.

Q: Okay, let's talk about, well in the first place how was the media in Poland at the time?

JEWELL: The media was really interesting. It made my job fantastic because all the old communist journalists had basically been thrown out as completely non-credible, no one would deal with them, and so there were all these new young journalists. One of the things I helped organize was a lot of journalist training. We'd bring over American journalists to discuss how do you do investigative journalism; how do you do economic journalism, the kinds of things that just weren't allowed under the communist regime. So I had contact with a lot of very young and energetic and excited people who were fun to work with and who were interested in working with us.

Q: As you were looking at these how did you view not the political but the educational system? I mean did they have a good background?

JEWELL: Oh yes they had an excellent background. They were very well trained, well educated. Poland is a very sophisticated country, has a great culture, lots of great music, art.

Q: They've got Germany to the west and Russia to the east.

JEWELL: Yes, a flat place between Germany and Russia is a very bad place to be geographically.

Q: Good tank ground but-.

JEWELL: Yes, exactly. Poland disappeared off the map for a very long time in its history so its neighbors are problematic.

Q: Do you want to talk about your job, some of the issues, areas you had to deal with?

JEWELL: Yes. In addition to working with the journalists, which was a lot of fun, we were in the process of trying to figure out what to do with these countries in terms of NATO. They weren't in NATO, we weren't sure what Russia was going to do if we brought them into NATO but we created this entity called the Partnership for Peace. We were very interested in bringing them clearly to our side and making sure that their military was connected with ours. So there were loads of visits. Lots and lots of high level visits. President Clinton came, Vice President Mondale came a couple of times, Madeleine Albright came several times and then a lot of military visits. General Shalikashvili who was head of the joint chiefs at that point came several times. So there was a constant VIP (very important person) motion through town which always involves the press office.

Q: So let's talk about it, when Shalikashvili came; what would you do?

JEWELL: First of all through our military in the mission I would find out who was my contact on his staff for media and find out what he wanted to do. Did he want to make public statements; did he want to have a press conference? Usually he did because we were busy publicly proclaiming our support for Poland and how great it was and so on.

Q: Shalikashvili was Georgian, wasn't he?

JEWELL: He was Georgian and his-

Q: Family was a major Georgian family.

JEWELL: Right, although he was born in Poland.

Q: This showed that, I mean he represented one of the subjugated minorities within the Soviet Union.

JEWELL: Right. Although it later came out that his father played not such a great role in the war. But that wasn't a factor in his reception in Warsaw and he was very well received and everybody was glad to have all these visitors.

Q: Speaking of being received how did you find being a woman in Poland which is from looking at the figures over the years has been pretty damn male.

JEWELL: Yes it is but I'd already worked in Indonesia and Mexico and India so I found that generally if you were an American and you were a diplomat you were kind of in a separate category and they were fine. You had to stand up for yourself but they were always extremely polite. They had beautiful manners and they're really in the old school of kissing your hand and that sort of thing. But I didn't find it to be an impediment to doing my job there.

Q: When I was in Korea and we had woman officials come out, because normally the Korean state would- the party, the geisha parties, it was _____ the _____ parties.

JEWELL: Yes.

Q: And it was a little _____ but they said oh you're an honorary male.

JEWELL: Yes, that's kind of it.

Q: So some sort of male.

JEWELL: That's how they treated me I think, so I didn't find it overly difficult to do my job because of that.

Q: How would you describe the press? Was it broken up into various factions and political parties or-?

JEWELL: Yes. Some were more conservative than others. There was one very liberal paper that had been an underground paper during the Solidarity days. But I think it was generally the same array that we have in the States of different political stripes within the media. And they had private television stations as well and the media was very free so they could do whatever they wanted.

Q: I would have thought that when you had an intelligent country full of eager people and all of a sudden you- and they've been suppressed for god knows how long but certainly 100 years or more and all of a sudden say you can do whatever you want, that you have investigative journalists running all over the place. I mean you're getting kind of irresponsible because they're just having a lot of fun.

JEWELL: They weren't though. They were trained enough that their editors kept the younger ones in line so I think they all did a good job. They were energetic and they were doing what they should be doing. It was a very exciting time to be there.

Q: Did you find yourself having to do a certain amount of _____ seeing yourself or some of the investigations and all that? I mean in other words not let them take-?

JEWELL: Yes. We took the middle road in any of the things that they were looking into. We were just giving them tools and let them go on their way doing it.

Q: How stood Solidarity at the time?

JEWELL: It was still extremely popular. People were still grateful to the movement for helping them liberate themselves.

Q: You know it's happened the last couple of years. Did you, at the time you were there did you see that there was that very strong, _____ best thing call it a nationalist movement?

JEWELL: It was really clear at the time that there were all these young people who were liberated and excited and ready to change the country and redefine it and so on. Then there was another set of people who were completely bewildered by the freedom and felt left behind and weren't accustomed to having to compete, they didn't particularly want to compete and so they were disgruntled. In the great first flush of enthusiasm I think it was assumed that the disgruntled group would fade away but unfortunately that hasn't really happened. The ranks of the very nationalist and right wing movement come to some extent from people who haven't really adjusted to the post-communist reality.

Q: Given particularly visitors from outside coming to Poland how were the horrors of the concentration camps, Auschwitz and all that, dealt with?

JEWELL: Very openly. The Poles were extremely focused on making it clear that these were not their concentration camps. They were located in Poland but it was the Germans who did this. They drove that home constantly with visitors. One of the reasons, for example, that Vice President Mondale came was the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. And visitors would routinely visit Auschwitz to lay a wreath or show some kind of commemoration at the site. So it was very openly talked about.

Q: Were we looking at how these things were treated in schools, particularly the destruction of the ghetto? I mean the whole Jewish situation.

JEWELL: I don't know that that was something we were taking up at that time. Certainly it was a time of great introspection for the Poles. And one of the most interesting things that was going on along this line was that the Lauder Foundation was funding a rabbi to return to Warsaw and reestablish a Jewish community. He was trying to restore the Jewish cemetery and look into and revive what was there before, to the extent that he could, or at least to make known what was there before the war. He lived in Warsaw but he also worked in Krakow; they had a huge Jewish community before the war and still have a small one.

Q: How did the Catholic Church fit in with the media?

JEWELL: How did the Catholic Church fit in with the media?

Q: In other words-

JEWELL: The Catholic Church was omnipresent in its commentary on just about everything but they didn't interfere and had no way to really interfere with the media.

Q: They had their own papers?

JEWELL: Yes. And they had their own line.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: They were extremely powerful in a general sense - it's a very Catholic country.

Q: How about TV?

JEWELL: Poland had a lively TV scene but it was not influenced by the church. They had private channels and it was a fun medium to work with.

Q: Did they expend a certain effort to denigrate the Russians, the Germans?

JEWELL: They didn't spend too much time on that. They really tried to move forward and not live in the past which I really admired. They never forgot it but they were not obsessed with it. They're certainly concerned about Russia, don't get me wrong. They were worried about it but they didn't spend a lot of time doing historical reviews of all the ills done to them over the years, which would take a very long time.

Q: Well while you were there how did things, how were things developing regarding NATO?

JEWELL: We were setting up this partnership and having joint exercises and really getting to know the Polish military so it was a very active time. A lot of military people at our embassy were liaisons to various parts of their military and it was a very cordial and cooperative atmosphere. So it was as far as we were concerned all good. It made the Russians nervous which was, I think, part of the point. But we didn't make them so nervous that they would overreact.

Q: Had all the Soviet troops left by this time?

JEWELL: Yes. By that time they were all gone. And the Polish military has a long history.

Q: Oh yes.

JEWELL: And a very positive history.

Q: Yes, very much. They got involved in the Napoleonic wars and certainly World War I and II.

JEWELL: Yes. They fought the invasion of the Germans; they were just completely outgunned.

Q: The Polish divisions in Italy-

JEWELL: Yes.

Q: -during our group taking Monte Cassino.

JEWELL: Exactly. So they had a long tradition to fall back on.

Q: What was your husband doing?

JEWELL: He was the cultural affairs officer. The Embassy had a cultural center downtown when he got there that had not been open too many years; it opened right after the fall of the Wall. But the sad thing was that during our stay in Poland the money for all these things started dwindling. It was that "end of history" idea; now we've won and so we no longer have to spend money on academics and culture and exchanges and all that sort of thing. So he was forced to close the center, which was absolutely ridiculous and in my view a complete mistake which we're paying for still. The Poles were horrified. They would say to him the US liked us better, you gave us more, you worked with us more when we were communists, which was perfectly true. So for him it was quite a discouraging time. There were all these wonderfully trained academics who wanted to have connections with the West and do joint research and co-teach classes and so on and it was really hard to find money to support those things which we all thought were a great thing to do.

Q: Yes. How about English? How prevalent was English?

JEWELL: English was, I would say, moderately prevalent. In Warsaw you could almost always find somebody who spoke some English but not necessarily outside of town. But people did learn English; they just had to. When you speak a language that's as difficult and unique as Polish, people have to learn. Lots of people spoke Russian of course but plenty of people had also learned English. So it was not a huge problem. And we spoke enough Polish that we could get around; we just didn't sit and chat constantly in Polish because it was too hard. And that was limiting. I was accustomed to places where I could talk to anybody at any level about anything in Indonesian and Spanish. And so it was frustrating to me sometimes that my Polish was not as fluent.

Q: And talk about when Clinton came. What happened?

JEWELL: Clinton came and it was very exciting. He was extremely well received; people were thrilled to have him there. As with any presidential visit it's a tremendous amount of work and they bring hundreds and hundreds of people and the preparations take forever. I did get caught in one very awkward moment; it's one of the things that stands out for me looking back on nervous moments of my career. I was in charge of the White House press pool. I was to take them in to this big room in the palace and the two presidents were going to make their speeches and whatever. Then Polish security, whom I had gotten to know through all the advance visits, suddenly got very nervous. They weren't used to the White House press corps, which doesn't always do what security tells it to do

exactly when they ask. Anyway, one of the Polish security guys got into a tussle with one of the photographers in the White House press pool and took away his camera. Then the rest of the press pool freaked out and started complaining and making a huge fuss and I had to go negotiate with the security guy and he wasn't going to give it back. We were literally ready to go live on national television. I just kept standing there and the security guy and all the people running the thing kept saying you have to move, you have to move. I said I'm not moving. I'm not moving until you give the camera back. And I won. But it was horrible. I was nervous. I thought maybe I was going to be arrested or suddenly dragged out, which was going to be a huge diplomatic incident if that happened.

Q: On live TV, you know, it doesn't matter what they say as long as they spell your name correctly.

JEWELL: Yes, right. But anyway it was a terrible moment for me but the press corps was really pleased. They were very grateful that I had done that but looking back on it I think where did I get the nerve? Later the Polish foreign minister came to the press corps and apologized to them for not being received as guests the way we should have been. I was impressed by that gesture.

Q: Was Mrs. Clinton there?

JEWELL: Mrs. Clinton was there. Mrs. Clinton came on her own twice while I was there as well and it was very fun to have her.

Q: She looks like she's got a significant chance of becoming president. How did her visits go?

JEWELL: Really well. She always wanted to do an interesting variety of things. I remember one program of hers in particular. She asked to meet with women leaders in Poland in various fields. You know journalists or teachers, whatever; it was our choice but she wanted to have a round table discussion. It was held at this very fancy palace in one of the big parks in Warsaw. She sat at this table with a group of probably 15, 20 women, really super interesting women each in her own right. And it was the most interesting discussion, even though some of it took place through translators and so on. She had this ability to really be there in the moment and listen to them and talk to them and I think everybody felt like they'd been heard and she was grasping what they were saying and being really genuinely interested in them, not just doing the uh-huh, that's fine, thank you. It was an inspiring program. I remember it very well. I was there handling the media; I wasn't there working on the event itself, but I was captured by the spirit.

Q: I find in my interviews she comes off extremely well as being somebody who knows her brief.

JEWELL: Oh yes.

Q: And-

JEWELL: Really smart, asked good questions.

Q: -very smart.

JEWELL: Very interested in what people say; responds appropriately; has enough background to know how to respond. And took a real interest; very genuine. And her staff was not particularly hard to deal with. She didn't make a lot of crazy demands as some people do.

Q: I know sometimes these high level visits are a nightmare.

JEWELL: Yes, like the camera story. I also remember an advance team, when Vice President Gore was there, who wanted to cut down a tree along one of the streets because it was in the way of the camera angle. And I said no we can't. We had to get into a knockdown drag out with them about not cutting down a big tree because it was in their way. So sometimes the staffers get out of line but I never found Mrs. Clinton's staff hard to deal with.

Q: With Clinton himself, did that cause any positive, negative things or?

JEWELL: Everything was positive. He only came once; she came twice, once with him and once on her own. Everything about it was positive; big crowds, well received. The relationship between the U.S. and Poland at the time was very positive overall.

Q: Did you find that every time you met a Pole it talked about a cousin in Chicago?

JEWELL: They do have a lot of stories of people in the States and a lot of them were in Chicago, that's true.

Q: I remember when I was in Senior Seminar I did my paper on foreign consuls in the United States. I talked with the Polish consul in Chicago and he said you know, I've got a constituency only next to that of the mayor of Warsaw. It's huge.

JEWELL: Yes, I know, the Polish-American community especially around Chicago is huge. So Poles knew a lot about the States and were very interested; we didn't have to go out looking for people who were interested in our programs or wanted to deal with us.

Q: How about Mondale?

JEWELL: Mondale? He was fine. His visits were well received. All of the visitors that came through were a lot of work but it was always a positive in the relationship. So you didn't mind the work if you felt like it was keeping the momentum going and making things happen.

One thing I remember about those visits is that it was the very first time I had what might even remotely be called a cell phone. It was a big box that I had to put over my shoulder like a shoulder bag with a phone receiver on top. I thought at the time, well this is going to be great but it turned out to be more a nuisance because my boss could track me down to ask what are you doing, how's it going, because I would be out with the advance team looking at a site and talking about how we were going to stage it and whatever. Then I had to stop and take this call and explain to him what I was doing right at the time. So it turned out to be a little bit more of a nuisance than I had expected but that was the first time that I ever had a so-called cell phone.

Q: Yes, I know those bricks are-

JEWELL: Yes, it was huge.

Q: What was you and your husband's social life like there?

JEWELL: There was a lot of entertainment and it was really inexpensive and very high quality. You could go to the opera for $15. I remember we bought a series of operetta tickets and would go on Sunday afternoons to this beautiful little theater and listen to really high quality music at a very low price. The arts had been state subsidized and were still I assume to some extent. So there were lots of well-trained musicians and lots of things to do.

Since we had little kids we also spent time in the parks; there's a big one, Łazienki Park, right in the middle of Warsaw where we spent lots of time running around. A certain amount of our social life centered around kids' birthday parties and parents of other kids in the school and that sort of thing. But it was easy to get around in Warsaw and there were things to do.

Q: I know in some places that had been under the Soviet rule and also up pretty high on the globe it gets sort of dismal, I mean quite a bit of drinking. Was this a problem there?

JEWELL: Poles drink a lot of vodka, that's for sure. But there wasn't the pressure to drink as I understand there is sometimes like in Russia, where everybody has to drink all at the same time. That was one area where being a woman saved me. No one expected me to do that and I didn't.

Q: Were you able to- I realize money was being cut but sponsor trips to the United States for newsmen?

JEWELL: Yes. We still had the international visitor program and we sent journalists on projects like that. And we still sent a few Fulbrighters ; it's just that we previously had this big program and it was gradually being cut down. But there was a lot of exchange back and forth and again lots of Poles interested.

Q: Did you have much contact with the universities?

JEWELL: Yes, my husband did, especially with American studies departments. Lots of people were interested in reaching out, they were free; they were able to talk to the West. They wanted to catch up, to exchange academic research. It was fun. It was a very easy atmosphere, one of the easiest working environments we ever had because it was so positive and they weren't suspicious of us.

Q: And you got the gist of the, at the time the full blossoming, didn't you?

JEWELL: Exactly. We arrived at the time when they were going back up. Right after they left the Soviet Union they very wisely imposed some pretty severe economic adjustments which made it difficult in the short term but much better in the long term for them. And that had already happened so they were on the upswing by the time we got there.

Q: Poland was remarkable in that it did do what should have been done and so many of these countries which got out from under the Soviet yoke.

JEWELL: They had some very good economists and leaders at the time who were willing to bite the bullet and do it and the country benefited from that in the long term. Poland was always a very reluctant member of the Soviet Union, that's for sure. They always were fighting back and the Church played a big role in that. So they were never a comfortable fit in the USSR (United Soviet Socialist Republic).

Q: I'm not an authority on it but looking at this the Soviet army had to go through Poland to attack the West but you really weren't sure which way the Polish army would go when the chips go down.

JEWELL: They were always I think a troublesome country for the Soviets.

Q: Did you get any feel about the German-Polish relationship.

JEWELL: Yes. The German-Polish relationship by that point had more or less reconstructed itself and they hated the Russians a lot more than they hated the Germans because the Russians were more recent and the Germans were farther in the past.

Q: And went way back, too.

JEWELL: Yes. Poland is a country where history goes very, very far back so for Americans it's hard to imagine some of these ancient grievances that are very much ingrained in people's memories.

Q: But you think of all the rest, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its problems and Poland or Russia or Germany _____.

JEWELL: Yes. Old and complicated grievances.

Q: I've run out of questions. Things are-.

JEWELL: Yes, I know, it's all too good, right?

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: I'll just say one more thing about that tour that amazed me and it happened often, just sitting at a dinner party talking to Poles of various ages. They would start out just chatting and it would turn into truly amazing stories of things that they had done during either World War II or during the Solidarity days. They just considered this to be conversation and I considered it amazing heroics. It's fascinating to have these people who are sitting at your dinner table who really were exceptionally brave, heroes, and you'd stop to wonder would I do that, would I be that brave? People were really brave fighting their occupiers.

Q: Did you get any feel for the loss of the Jews in Poland? I mean they had a considerable Jewish population of youth and they were basically gone by this time.

JEWELL: Yes. And that's why the Lauder Foundation effort to reawaken the Jewish community and to honor what was there before was so interesting. There are reminders. You can see the outline where the Warsaw Ghetto was and there's a monument at the spot where the trains took people from the Ghetto to concentration camps. The Jewish cemetery, which is absolutely beautiful but in poor repair when we were there, I think has been cleaned up a bit. So they're making an effort to not let it disappear, to not just erase it from people's minds.

Q: Well again, as you see, this work on the transcript if you can think of anything that I didn't ask about-

JEWELL: Okay. It was a good tour. The only thing not good about it was that it is so dark in Northern Europe in the winter. It wasn't that it was so cold; it was cold but it wasn't Siberia or anything. And it snowed but it wasn't mountains of snow, but boy, that sun coming up at 8:30 in the morning and going down at 3:00 really gets to you after a while. The last winter we were there by February we said okay, where could we go to see the sun? And we found it; we had friends in the embassy in Tunis and so we took a charter flight there with a bunch of Poles who were doing the same thing we were, getting out of there for a week. We went to Tunisia just to get away and find the sun. Of course in the summer you have to have blackout curtains because it's so bright. But that seems short compared to the long, cold winters.

Q: So when you left whither?

JEWELL: We came back to the United States; it was time for a tour in USIA headquarters. We came back in '96 and I went to work in the Latin America area office, which was the USIA equivalent of the regional bureaus at the State Department. I was the

deputy director of the area office and then a year later I moved up to be the director of the Latin America area office.

Q: Okay. In the first place, this whole idea of dismantling USIA was going on, wasn't it?

JEWELL: That was happening at the end of that tour, yes. I was part of the negotiating team for our office. It was a very, very stressful time.

Q: It must have been very ____. I mean to my mind there was no reason for it other than political.

JEWELL: No. None of us thought there was any good reason for it either and we were furious with the politicians and the political appointees who had caused this to happen. We blamed Joe Duffy who was director of the agency at the time and Madeleine Albright who had sold us out to Jesse Helms.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: She traded us for a vote that she wanted. So we were all extremely discouraged and angry about the situation. It was essentially a hostile takeover.

Q: I've had many people talk about Joe Duffy. Could you describe your impressions of him and his operation?

JEWELL: He just really didn't want to rock the boat. What Jesse Helms really wanted was to get rid of was AID (United States Agency for International Development) but they had a very outspoken and energetic director who fought like crazy and managed to avoid having AID be dismantled or merged into the State Department, he managed to keep it separate. But Duffy just wasn't that kind of a person; he was more of a political animal and wanted to go along and just didn't fight enough. I never thought that he tried hard enough to keep us separate.

Q: I've had people say he really wasn't interested in the agency.

JEWELL: Hard to tell.

Q: He didn't try very much.

JEWELL: Yes. He wasn't absentee exactly but he was just a low key sort of guy and didn't really make his mark. We'd had some of these very flamboyant leaders in the past like Charlie Wick during the Reagan years.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: But Duffy wasn't that way so we felt like he'd sold us down the river. People are still mad about it.

Q: How did this change affect our efforts in Latin America?

JEWELL: The change has affected our efforts everywhere. What happened when we merged is that they tore the agency apart and sprinkled it around the State Department so that the cohesiveness that we had all felt of being engaged in a public diplomacy mission was lost. There is not the sense of community that we felt under USIA in the sense of really being on a mission together. All that kind of spirit was really lost.

The one thing I will say that we managed to do is to save the money. I give credit to Stan Silverman who was the controller of USIA at the time. He managed to wall off the money so that the appropriations come separately for public diplomacy. We knew that if our money got sprinkled into State it would disappear. They would have absolutely raided it for other things and Stan managed to save the money. That was a huge fight and it was a necessary fight and we won that one.

In these negotiations, in which our office was going to be merged into the regional bureau which is now WHA (Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs) I was dealing a lot with admin people who made it perfectly clear without even meaning to that they had no idea what we really did or what was valuable about what we did. They were just interested in numbers of people and desks and budget structures and who reported to whom. That's all they really wanted to talk about. So it was a very demoralizing time. I tried to both keep morale up but also to get people to recognize reality. It became clear at a certain point that this was over, we had lost, and we needed to get on with preserving what we could instead of continuing to charge up hills that weren't going to be conquered. So it was a complicated time to try to run the office, because it was still functioning as an office up until the time of the merger. When I finished my tour, the agency merged in '99, I was ready to go to the field again and I was offered wider choices of things to do because of the merger. So in some ironic way I benefited personally by this merger but I would gladly have traded that for having kept the agency separate because I think we did better work and were more effective when we were separate.

Q: Well I think this is a real tragedy in our foreign affairs status because this is such an effective tool and to dismantle them and put it together in half-assed, not quite a- it's just not as effective.

JEWELL: Yes. It just hasn't been as effective. The undersecretaries for public diplomacy have turned over pretty rapidly. They have all been political appointees. Many of them come from advertising or from places where they don't have a deep understanding of the entirety of the goals and possibilities. After a year or so they understand better but the way things have gone, a year and a half or two years later they're gone. So it hasn't helped to keep a coherent message and vision going forward.

Q: What sort of tools did we have at the beginning, before the dissolution, in Latin America in public diplomacy?

JEWELL: Latin America has always been a little unusual in that we had so many binational centers in the region. In the past years, a lot of those were spun off as independent entities, slightly connected to the embassy. Here's an example: during the Karen Hughes era, which would have been the George W. Bush presidency, she rediscovered the binational centers and said oh, these things are great, wow. We should be working more with them. To all of us who had a long history with them and knew how valuable they were this seemed ironic. We were glad that she figured it out but it was a bit late. There's been a lot of reinventing history like that: the rediscovery of the benefits of teaching English and how many different things you can achieve with those programs and the kinds of connections we make through our cultural centers and so on. Of course since that time social media have come up. We didn't have those at the time; Facebook had not been invented in '99 so we didn't have those tools.

Q: Could you explain for somebody reading this what a binational center did?

JEWELL: Yes. They were run by a binational board, and received varying amounts of funding from the Embassy, but a lot of them had their own funding because they taught English, which generated income that they could plow into keeping up the building and that kind of thing. And they created a venue. They often had libraries, theaters and places for people to gather so that we were able to run programs out of them and attract audiences, especially young people, to learn about the United States. We would have film festivals and all kinds of activities at the centers.

Q: Yes. Well one of the things, I don't know how it was in Latin America but I know in Italy I was in Naples, my wife taught English at one of the binational centers. But we also had these libraries and most universities, particularly non-English speaking, didn't really have a good library system. The books were sort of held at the universities.

JEWELL: Almost no one else in the world had circulating libraries for students, at least back in that day.

Q: Carnegie has libraries in England too and it goes about the Tube.

JEWELL: You're right that we had libraries and people could come in and pick stuff off the shelves and sit down and read and check out books. Mostly they returned them and sometimes they didn't and sometimes we felt like, if you want it that much we'll just buy a new one, thanks, we're glad you like it so much. We also gave away a lot of books. At the time people were hungry for that sort of material and in many places they still are.

Q: When I was in Saudi Arabia the libraries were supposed to distribute a lot of books on democracy and all. I mean although they were being printed in Beirut and Arabic and all. But I was vice consul but I worked on USIA things. And I'd leave these books in my unlocked car and somehow the number disappeared.

JEWELL: We gave away a lot of material. We were happy people wanted it. Because people didn't have access to libraries and a lot of them didn't have money to buy books,

they were eager. We printed lots of things in Spanish because it's such a widely spoken language and we could afford to run a lot of copies and it was always really well received.

Q: Well then you left there when?

JEWELL: '99.

Q: What did you do?

JEWELL: I became DCM (deputy chief of mission) in Costa Rica. During the merger negotiation with the regional bureau I had gotten to know people at the bureau, obviously, especially the PDAS (principal deputy assistant secretary) John Hamilton, who was shepherding personnel assignments for the bureau. And so I went in and said I want to be a DCM somewhere. He thought about that and I think realized that it would be politic if State were seen to be accepting some USIA people into State jobs.

Q: Oh yes.

JEWELL: Or so-called State jobs. And I think even then they were figuring out that they probably needed more women in these jobs. It was looking bad and it still looks horrible, the number of women they have in these jobs.

Q: You were a twofer.

JEWELL: I was a twofer. He also had a situation in Costa Rica where the ambassador was not that happy with his DCM. The Ambassador was Tom Dodd, an academic from Georgetown, the brother of Chris Dodd, then Senator Chris Dodd. An absolutely charming, delightful man. Very fun to work for but his brother took a very serious interest in Tom's embassies and had a chief of staff who was interested in who was going to get these jobs. So I think the bureau thought well, maybe I could do this job, be acceptable, so I interviewed and he chose me. I think that it was partly because he was a political appointee. It's easier for USIA people or PD (public diplomacy) people to get jobs like that, at least at the time, with political appointees because they don't have preconceived notions about what a PD officer does.

JEWELL: So I was chosen to be DCM in San Jose and we went there in '99.

Q: And you were there how long?

JEWELL: Three years.

Q: What was your husband doing there?

JEWELL: My husband retired in '99. He never went into the State Department for a variety of reasons. One, he didn't want to work at State and he was mad about the merger

and didn't think that he would be a good fit in the State Department. And it was getting harder and harder for us to get jobs together because of the tandem situation.

Q: Yes. You're moving up.

JEWELL: Yes, as we were moving up it was harder and harder. So he retired and went to a course that the State Department had helped set up at George Mason to turn himself into an elementary school teacher. He took a set of courses at George Mason to get his teaching certificate and became an elementary school teacher. So he was working in San Jose at the Country Day School that our kids were attending.

Q: Okay, alright. When you got there what would you say was the political situation in Costa Rica?

JEWELL: It's a place that has a positive atmosphere for the United States. It was not a tense or difficult environment. I worked with the same president, Miguel Angel Rodriguez, for almost my entire tour. A new president was elected at the very, very end of my time there. So I didn't have to keep switching like in places where there's an election in the middle of your tour and you've got to learn a whole new cast of characters. I was able to carry through with the people that I knew.

It was also a good tour in that the ambassador and I worked well together. He let me run the embassy and do some political things that he didn't care as much about. We were able to find a good balance on who was doing what. Our preferences and skills meshed well. He was absolutely delightful, spoke wonderful Spanish, traveled around, loved to travel in the country and was always very well received and made such a good impression. People were thrilled to have the American ambassador there and he was really, really good at that and that's what he liked to do. He wasn't particularly interested in running the embassy so he let me.

Q: Well Costa Rica has the distinction of being the one state in Central America that we haven't had a crisis in.

JEWELL: Right. We've never invaded them. And they're also the only place that doesn't have a standing army.

Q: Yes. I interviewed one man early in this program who'd been ambassador in Costa Rica, Curtin Winsor.

JEWELL: Oh yes.

Q: And he said the highest ranking official in the government to come while he was ambassador was the lieutenant governor of Mississippi who seemed to be a bit bewildered why he was there.

JEWELL: Yes, that was a real contrast to Poland where we had high level visitors constantly. People didn't much come to Costa Rica. But that was okay. We didn't really need them to.

One of the things we were working on was drug interdiction. They do have a small coast guard and we were encouraging them to do more patrolling off their coast, giving them ships and equipment and training. They were very effective. There was a willingness on their part to engage, it made sense to them. In general they're very suspicious of U.S. military involvement like in the days of the civil wars in Central America.

Q: Yes and we were very much involved.

JEWELL: We were very much involved and trying to involve them more than they wanted to be, I think. That was before my time. But anyway, it was a very positive relationship and we got a lot done.

The main thing that happened when I was there of course was 9/11 and I was chargé at that time.

Q: How'd you hear the news and what was our reaction at the embassy?

JEWELL: By complete coincidence I was getting ready for work because they're an hour or two behind Eastern Time. We had "The Today Show" turned on and I was watching as I was getting dressed. I actually saw the second plane hit because as I was listening to the show they said there's something funny going on at the World Trade Center. They panned down there and all of a sudden there was an additional burst of flame on camera. I watched it happen but they didn't understand what was going on. I thought this is really bad, this is really bad. So we went to the office and could not get through to Washington because by that point the Pentagon had been hit and circuits were overwhelmed. We couldn't get through to anybody and we were hearing on the news that it was an attack, a deliberate terrorist attack.

The Costa Ricans were wonderful. The minister of public security called me and said what can we do, what should we do? There was a little airport not far from the embassy. I said if you could, until we figure out what's going on, if you could just stop the traffic at that airport? Because I didn't know. We would be a very soft target if you were looking for targets because we weren't heavily fortified down there, not being a high threat environment by any stretch of the imagination. So they were wonderful and they did that. And then finally we did get through to Washington and found out the building had been evacuated and people had been sent home. The Costa Rican people were just wonderful. There were outpourings of sympathy. We had memorial services. All the firefighters' union came to the Embassy and brought a wreath and I went out and shook hands with all the people. It was a very moving reaction from them.

Q: Was there any sort of terrorist type group in Costa Rica?

JEWELL: No. There really wasn't any local threat of that kind at all. I never thought it would be any homegrown group. We quickly realized it had nothing to do with us. But there were a few weeks where almost all we did was receive this outpouring from the Costa Rican community. It was really kind of remarkable.

Q: Costa Rica's got two neighbors that there have been problems with, Panama and Nicaragua. How did this play into not just 9/11 but in general during the time you were there?

JEWELL: They have more trouble with Nicaragua than they do with Panama. Panama's not a bad neighbor to them; they're fine with Panama. But Nicaragua's a constant problem. They have border disputes on the river with Nicaragua. And they have a huge Nicaraguan population in Costa Rica. In the same way that immigrants in the United States do a lot of work in lawn care, golf courses, maids in houses, that sort of thing, Nicaraguans do these jobs in Costa Rica. So there were huge populations of Nicaraguans working in Costa Rica, which causes some of the same kinds of stresses and pulls in Costa Rica as immigrants here do. Some people are for, some are against it. People say what would we do without them? Nobody's going to want to do this work. The Nicaraguan government also complains that they are being mistreated. It's an ongoing issue which we honestly try to stay out of because we just would muddy the waters and it is not directly relevant to us.

Q: Well was there any reflection of our- the Panama Canal was already turned over by this time?

JEWELL: Yes.

Q: And the military was no longer there. I mean did that have any affect that you could see or what?

JEWELL: People in general in Costa Rica certainly were happy to have the canal back in local hands. So that was viewed as a positive move; the return of the canal was positively viewed in the country.

There was a lot of focus on trade ties while I was there. I was very active with the trade ministry, starting the negotiations for what became the Central America Free Trade Agreement. Costa Rica is a tiny country so they are dependent on trade to continue to grow economically and they're trying to diversify their trading partners. They had a big Intel plant when I was there. That had been a very positive investment. They were doing back office work for a number of U.S. companies. Proctor & Gamble for example had a back office operation in Costa Rica at the time. So there were quite a few Americans; there were loads of American tourists of course.

One of the things the embassy spent huge amounts of time on was American Citizen Services of various kinds, some of them sad because people would get hurt, people getting hurt on zip lines and that kind of thing.

Q: And also you assume the diving accidents.

JEWELL: I remember when an American student got swept out on a riptide.

There were also little airlines, mostly charter planes. People would come in and charter these planes for tourism and with some regularity they crashed. So we also had plane crashes. We had a wonderful consular section with Janet Weber in charge and she managed all these sad events really well. And occasionally there were cruise ships that would dock in Costa Rican ports and people would die on those cruise boats and we would have to go down and repatriate remains. It happened more than once when I was there.

One plane crash was particularly notable because the former director of the CIA, Stansfield Turner, was on the flight; his wife was killed and he was very badly injured. I remember going with the ambassador to the hospital to check on him so that we could personally see how he was doing and report back. He was unconscious and they were taking good care of him. Eventually they sent a medical evacuation plane and took him out. Those were always really grim times when there was a plane crash.

Q: Yes. Was there much in the way of tourism there?

JEWELL: Oh lots of tourism. Loads of American retirees too. The tourism part mostly was fine but there's always people losing their passports and having things stolen. They would come to this place that you think of as paradise and it is extremely beautiful. But they would go in for lunch and leave their cars unlocked and they would be shocked when all their stuff got stolen. Things they would never do in the United States. They would somehow lose their good sense when they came to a foreign country and so we had a lot of that kind of problem too. But we had a staff to handle it and people did very well. The Costa Rican authorities were always really cooperative and easy to reach and accessible so we were able to work with them but it was always frustrating that some people did such dumb things.

Q: How about on the sort of information media side? Anything going on there?

JEWELL: Yes. We had a big binational center so we did a lot of English teaching and a lot of programming. I remember having a big election night party-

Q: Oh god.

JEWELL: - one of those election evenings.

Q: I assume with the chads and-?

JEWELL: Yes, when Bush was elected.

Q: Yes, this was what we used to display what a wonderful system we have.

JEWELL: Yes, right, exactly.

Q: Here's one that completely broke down.

JEWELL: Right. Usually you know the result pretty early but this was going on and on and on into the night. Kind of a nightmare. But in any case we had a lot of cultural contacts and the center was quite big so we did different kinds of concerts and used it for Costa Rican events too. It was a very big plus in the relationship.

Q: I wouldn't imagine there would be an awful lot of migration from Costa Rica to the States.

JEWELL: No, actually there's not because Costa Rican people live quite well by and large.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: As opposed to other countries not so far away. For example the refusal rate on visas was very low because people came back. People really were going for business or pleasure or studies or whatever they said they were by and large. Obviously there's always some fraud but it was not a huge issue. We didn't have vast numbers of people lining up to try to get visas to get out of there. People didn't want necessarily to get out of there. They were relatively content. It was nice to deal with a population that liked their own country and were happy to stay there and had opportunities there. They were trying, through trade and investment, to grow employment and education.

Q: Did you feel- were you kind of left alone? I mean I'm sure the State Department has normal communications but there are no particular issues that you had to deal with?

JEWELL: No and it was great actually. We were sort of left alone. I thought that was just fine. Washington was interested in the economic and trade issues but those were going well and the Costa Ricans were very responsive and onboard. We did have a few cabinet level visits related to trade issues. We had some negative trade issues from time to time but they were pretty small. There was a big competition for foreign investment in their telecommunications system and we thought it was fixed. The French won it, as the French don't mind paying under the table. Our companies can't do that because of the foreign corrupt practices act, so we were lobbying for the American companies who were bidding on this tender but that didn't go particularly well. But that was a rare occurrence. Mostly things were good and the trade relationship was positive; we both wanted the same things more or less.

Q: Was corruption a major problem?

JEWELL: No it wasn't a major problem. Although sadly enough the man who was president most of the time I was there and later became secretary general of the OAS (Organization of American States) for a very short time was accused and convicted of taking an illegal payment.
He had to leave the OAS and was eventually put under house arrest and was tried and convicted. It was sad because he had been a pretty good president and it was not that common, corruption. More common perhaps than in the United States but it's certainly not unknown here and it's not unknown in Costa Rica as well.

Q: I mean some places-

JEWELL: Oh it's endemic, it's terrible. It really wasn't that bad in Costa Rica. I have crusading Costa Rican friends who correct me and say oh, no, there's all kinds of dirty dealing but it's not on the same scale as other countries.

Q: How, for you and your husband, how was social life?

JEWELL: Social life was great. It is an absolutely gorgeous country and has a lot of American tourism for good reason. And it is very small so you could go up to the cloud forest or you could drive down to the beach and go places easily. Our kids were elementary school age so it was a great time to have a lot of outdoor activities. The climate is lovely and it was a perfect time in our lives to have things to do that the whole family liked to do and that we could all enjoy together. Costa Ricans are unbelievably gracious and inviting and the country is easy to get around. It's a very easy place to live.

Q: How did you find the local staff at the embassy?

JEWELL: Outstanding. And a lot of them had been there a very long time and were great. In those small countries the thing you need to know is the stuff that everybody else takes for granted. In a small place like this everybody's connected and everybody knows each other, especially at that elite level. There are all these back stories that you don't know. You don't know whose grandfathers had a fight 50 years ago and whose families don't speak anymore.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: I wouldn't know that in a million years so you've really got to listen to your local staff and ask is there anything I need to know about these people? It's just common knowledge to them so they never tell you unless you ask and certainly other Costa Ricans wouldn't tell you because it's just part of the framework for them. But it can make a big difference if you don't know some of this almost gossipy back story of who's who and who gets along and who doesn't get along and who works together and whose father cheated whom at the Ford dealership 100 years ago. So the local staff was unbelievably helpful in filling us in on things we needed to know.

Q: How were you served by the American staff?

JEWELL: I had a really fine American staff. Several of them I asked to come to work for me again later on in Ecuador because it was such a good group across the board. I'm not talking just State Department. Because we were dealing with the Costa Rican coast guard we had a Military Cooperation Group who were American army and coast guard and they were outstanding. They really, really knew how to manage a low key approach and I had the same from the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration).

Q: The Drug Enforcement-.

JEWELL: The Drug Enforcement Administration had a reasonably sized contingent there because Costa Rica was a transit country, especially maritime transit. I had a fantastic head of the DEA who had actually spent some time as a kid in Costa Rica, spoke very, very good Spanish and really knew how to be low key about these things; not just the hard charging Americans coming in and bossing people around. Costa Ricans would not have reacted well at all to that. I had people who really understood that and I didn't have to keep reining in or listen to complaints about them; they got it. If anything they taught me how to manage the cross-cultural relationship.

Q: Where did you go afterwards?

JEWELL: I came back to Washington and became office director for policy planning in WHA (Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs).

Q: [to interns] Do you have any questions?

INTERN #1: Oh yes. When you were in Costa Rica how close was your relationship with OAS? Were they cooperative? Or did you engage in any programs with them?

JEWELL: The Inter-American Court for Human Rights is based in San Jose and we knew a lot of people who worked there, both Costa Ricans and from other countries. So that was a particularly close relationship because we were all on the same side; we were pushing for accountability especially from some of the regimes around the neighborhood. So there was a real closeness on the human rights front with OAS people. We worked well together.

INTERN #1: Did you feel like since you had more, I guess a sophisticated grasp of Spanish and a higher level Spanish were you able to engage more with just the everyday person?

JEWELL: Yes. My Spanish at that point was good, because I'd been in Mexico and I started Spanish as a kid so I could talk to anybody. I spoke only Spanish to officials even though some of them spoke perfect English. And occasionally they would switch back; it would be back and forth. But certainly in official dealings we always spoke in Spanish just to be polite. In fact the foreign minister at the time, Roberto Rojas, was a West Point graduate. I could go into the countryside and talk to anybody and that really helps you

integrate into the society and figure out what's going on. If you're driving down to the coast and you stop to get some coconuts and you talk to people about how they're doing, how are the crops this year you just learn more if you can ask average people what's going on and how they feel.

Q: Well was there an indigenous group like the Mesquite Indians or something like that?

JEWELL: A very, very small group up on the Caribbean coast. And there's also a community of Afro-Costa Ricans on the Caribbean coast who had been brought to work in banana plantations and sugar plantations many, many years ago. One of the reasons that Costa Rica has fared better over time than other Central American countries is that they didn't have a lot of natural resources. They didn't have gold. They didn't have things that the conquerors wanted. So it was settled by a much more middle class agricultural people who didn't have those high inequities of income and power that existed in a place like Guatemala for example.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: Nor did they have such an advanced or a large indigenous population. It worked to their benefit.

Q: Today is the 4th of April 2016 with Linda Jewell.

And Linda where are we now?

JEWELL: I came back to Washington in 2002 and was working in WHA. I was director of Policy Planning and Coordination, PPC.

Q: Alright. You were there for how long?

JEWELL: I was in that job for a year and then I became a DAS, a deputy assistant secretary, for two years.

Q: Well let's talk about your policy coordination first. This is the first year?

JEWELL: Yes.

Q: What were you doing?

JEWELL: In a way that office acts like the executive secretariat for the bureau because any kind of area wide issue or anything that crosses office boundaries ends up in PPC for either a clearance or an opinion or whatever is needed. It was interesting because we got involved in wide variety of issues, including putting forth a proposal for how we should divide the economic support funds that came to the bureau and working very closely with the assistant secretary.

Q: Okay. Who was the assistant secretary at the time?

JEWELL: When I first got there in late August-early September Otto Reich was in charge but he had a recess appointment and so he was suddenly, at the end of November-early December, he was gone. Then there was the election and eventually Roger Noriega came in to be assistant secretary.

Q: How did you find him?

JEWELL: Otto is a well-known conservative in Washington circles and a prominent Cuban-American. He's a perfectly pleasant person and he wasn't hard to work for because you knew where he stood and what he was doing. I personally tried to stay away from Cuba policy because I didn't really agree with what we were doing, but that was easy to do because there's a whole office devoted to it.

Q: Well just to get a feel, was the Cuban office at that time treated as sort of oh, these people down in Florida got this and it's their personal property and we just almost ignored it or-? I mean not ignored it but bypassed it at all or not?

JEWELL: No the Cuba office was pretty active. Otto worked with them a lot. And of course he did work with the Miami Cuban community a lot too because that was his support base.

Q: Well what could we do? I know there was TV Marti which was a complete bust.

JEWELL: They were trying to fix TV Marti so that somebody could actually see it, which I don't think ever actually worked. Also finding ways to support the dissidents on the island to the extent that we could. And somebody had to coordinate; we did have immigration talks with Cuba all through even the bad years. We worked with them a little on drug interdiction, that kind of thing. Tried to find ways to pry open the regime a little bit or the country a little bit. But again it wasn't what I was working on.

Q: Okay. Let's take some of the issues you were working on. I assume drugs was a big one.

JEWELL: Yes, here was a lot of coordination with INL (Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement), the bureau that handles international narcotics issues.

Q: What sort of things did you get involved with?

JEWELL: We were working with various bureaus like Political/Military, sometimes international organizations, coordinating a lot with INL. This was the heyday of Plan Colombia so a lot of money was being pumped into Colombia. The Colombia desk handled a lot of that but PPC handled some of that too.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: It was an interesting office for the variety of the things that we had on our plate. When I first got there the bureau was being inspected just routinely; you know every now and then everybody gets inspected and it was our turn. I was brand new but had to work on the Bureau's preparations so I was going around interviewing people, asking what's happening about this, kind of like the inspector. It was a little strange but it was a good position to be in because I hadn't had anything to do with any of the issues they were looking at.

Q: Your hands were clean.

JEWELL: My hands were clean. But the bureau came out fine in the inspection. It wasn't a problem. But they make recommendations and you have to answer back so I had to coordinate all that too.

Q: I'm just seeing some of the issues. Chavez was riding high at that time wasn't he?

JEWELL: Right.

Q: What was you might say your impression and you might say the bureau's view of Chavez at the time you were there?

JEWELL: Everybody was exceptionally concerned about him at that point and nobody quite knew how to handle it. There was a lot of frustration in the bureau about how scattered the opposition was and how easily they had been overcome and they couldn't unite.

Q: Was there concern that Chavez would turn into the new Castro?

JEWELL: Yes. Everybody saw him that way.

Q: He had a lot of money at that time.

JEWELL: Yes, at that time he had a lot of money. The price of oil was high. He was giving a lot away to other countries, especially in cheap oil concessions to bring them onboard with his new vision of the hemisphere. So he was seen as a substantial challenge.

Q: I would imagine that the economic side of your bureau must have been doing a lot of hard looking at Chavez and his policy. Were they predicting that this thing is going to collapse or what?

JEWELL: They weren't predicting the downfall at that point necessarily. They knew it was unsustainable but it really depended on the price of oil and that proved hard to predict.

Q: Oil prices were high, weren't they?

JEWELL: They were high at that point and headed upward so no one foresaw the extent to which oil prices would suddenly collapse as they did. So back then it looked like we were going to have higher oil forever so he was going to have a lot of resources for a very long time. What people were watching was the damage he was doing internally to the oil company. He was putting in a lot of his henchmen who didn't really know as much about running an oil company so there was a lot of looking at how long they're going to be able to keep pumping at the rate they're pumping; is their production going to go down therefore their money goes down?

Q: Well there was sort of a- is there remembered or perceived because that peculiar relationship with-. He's pumping all this oil but the only refineries that could really deal with the oil-

JEWELL: Were in the United States.

Q: -were in Louisiana.

JEWELL: Right. And we continue to buy Venezuelan oil up until this day.

Q: Yes. But at the same time there was, you know, I mean implicit was the fact that we could shut down a refinery.

JEWELL: Well we couldn't really, the U.S. Government couldn't because we don't own it. All the United States' oil industry is in private hands and so there was no way the U.S. Government could shut this off without declaring an embargo, which clearly the oil companies did not want.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: So there was a lot of resistance to that.

Q: Was there talk of that though?

JEWELL: Not that I heard. People bemoaned the fact that we were funding him by allowing him to refine and sell oil in the United States. But the Venezuela desk was more involved in it than I was. I never heard a serious conversation about the thought of really shutting him out.

Q: Well were we doing anything that would maybe bring him down or did we feel there was any point in this?

JEWELL: At that point people were trying to both maintain some kind of decent or at least civil communication with the government partly just for information's sake, at the same time trying to work very hard with people who would be in the opposition to see if we couldn't help them get organized. But as I say that never really came to fruition.

Q: Did you talk to any of the opposition?

JEWELL: I did not. The desks handled that more than I did. And I was only in PPC for a year.

Q: Yes. How about in Colombia, where stood the drug war which I guess was a big thing, wasn't it?

JEWELL: At that time it was still a very hot war and we were giving a lot of money through Plan Colombia. There was progress being made but it took a long time. The government was little by little regaining control of areas that it had essentially ceded during the worst of the times in Colombia. We were heavily involved and had a very big embassy in Bogota.

Q: How stood the Ecuador-Peru conflict over-?

JEWELL: Well that had been settled. The war was over and Ecuador to everyone's surprise had won. So we, the United States, were one of the guarantors of that peace agreement.

Q: Well we had problems with Ecuador didn't we though? I mean at that time there was a populist president or-?

JEWELL: This was a very tumultuous time because Ecuador had financially gone bust in '99 and adopted the U.S. currency and was having a succession of leaders because people were so unhappy with their finances and so on. But that was not the time that Correa was elected.

Q: But anyway, it wasn't high on your-?

JEWELL: Not as PPC. PPC was more an internal coordination mechanism for the bureau for things that would go between two DASs or regions. We wrote speeches for the assistant secretaries and represented the bureau in a million meetings around the building.

Q: How did you find the various areas within W, was it-?

JEWELL: WHA?

Q: WHA I mean. Did you find it was harder to deal with certain regions? I mean our ambassadors and offices there or did you have any problems sort of inter-office?

JEWELL: No, everybody minded their own territory pretty well and we had a separate econ office that dealt with a lot of the economic issues. There was an office devoted just to Mexico because it is such a big relationship. We were the secretariat for the Bureau and the Assistant Secretary so it was very interesting. A little bit of everything. But after I

was there for almost exactly a year Roger Noriega asked me to become the DAS for Mexico and Canada. So I moved up and took that job.

Q: Obviously those two had such close relation. I mean the relationship was so close. I think when you say Mexico and Canada sounds like to me a sardine peanut butter sandwich or something.

JEWELL: No, no. They have lots of issues in common. We spent so much time dealing with border issues for example. The situation may be a little bit different but the problems of where to put new border crossings or how to make the one that's there work better are similar. We had water issues with Mexico and we had water issues with Canada. So the topics themselves were very similar but how those played out were somewhat different. And they're put together obviously for the whole NAFTA thing. A lot of the economic issues are similar; for instance, one of the big industries, the automobile trade, moves parts back and forth across both borders, so getting those things moving smoothly and not holding up production is very important. I went into the job knowing very little about Canada. I knew a lot about Mexico; I knew almost nothing about Canada. So I learned and also realized how little most Americans know about Canada.

Q: I mean you're talking about those two have constituted the major trade in the world for us.

JEWELL: Right. Canada is our largest trading partner, our largest supplier of oil. People don't know that. And Mexico is really the second biggest trading partner when you discount China because it's all one way with China, we buy so much from them but we don't sell very much to China comparatively. So Mexico is bigger in terms of our sales. These are huge trade relationships. We would have trilateral meetings to working on improving NAFTA, trying to make it more of a real economic zone.

Q: Well today we're talking about an election year of 2016. One of the potential Republican candidates, Donald Trump, is talking and there's been talk about for a long time about how many jobs have been transferred down to Mexico and other places. With NAFTA did you ever get the feel about how is this as a job producing, job eliminating situation?

JEWELL: It's extremely difficult. I would say that the vast majority of economists who look at the relationship believe that NAFTA has been beneficial. It's been hugely beneficial to Mexico but also beneficial to the United States because trade between us has grown so much. The problem about jobs is it's easier to measure the ones that go. When a factory closes down it's very clear but when a factory starts exporting more to Mexico and adds 100 more people you don't see them as clearly because they're added on to what's already there. I read an estimate the other day that six million jobs in the United States depend directly on trade with Mexico. So if we build this big wall and stop everything going back and forth it could cost the jobs of six million Americans.

Q: How about on the other side with Canada?

JEWELL: I don't have the statistics for that because people aren't so worried about Canadians taking jobs. Their economy is so similar to ours that people don't worry about outsourcing. People have integrated the economies along that border to a remarkable degree. A lot of American jobs that got outsourced of course got outsourced to China and actually a lot of jobs from Mexico at one point got outsourced to China because China became cheaper than Mexico. But that's reversing itself now and as China gets more prosperous and their wages rise companies are now relocating back to Mexico because of the obvious improvement in location and transportation costs. Trade has enormously increased between Mexico and the United States and between Mexico and Canada. All three of us are trading much more than we used to.

Q: Was this, the trade workings make things work smoother at all? Does this fall mainly with the State Department or Department of Commerce or Treasury?

JEWELL: It's all of the above. We would have big bilateral commission meetings to talk about these issues precisely because they involved so many parts of the federal government and they involved to a certain extent states. We had to get some of the states involved because if you're talking about a border crossing in their state clearly the governor wants to know what's going on. They're not necessarily part of the negotiating team but they're certainly represented in the room. The State Department always has the lead when dealing with a foreign country but Commerce was also very, very involved; U.S. Trade Representative, USTR, was very involved in a lot of these negotiations. Transportation was involved because of trucks entering. When I started the job I said blithely that I knew a lot about Mexico but the more I worked on it the more I realized how complicated the relationship is and how many different domestic departments get involved with Mexico because they are next door. Obviously, Homeland Security gets involved with them. It was phenomenal, the coordination effort to make sure that you had all the right people in the room that you needed to make decisions and move forward. And so somebody didn't come up later and throw a monkey wrench into whatever you're doing because they hadn't been included.

Q: I've talked to people that have dealt with this at other times and saying that you had, in say the states, I mean the governors of states in Mexico and the United States would be calling each other-

JEWELL: Oh yes.

Q: -down to the local deputy sheriffs.

JEWELL: And the mayors. Yes, exactly.

Q: I mean they're back and forth all the time on every issue you could think of. Plus the fact that many congress people have their own connections through their states really.

JEWELL: Right. Through their states and districts. That's absolutely true. And issues that were of concern to their constituents suddenly become of concern to the senator and then to the State Department because they were on our case about whatever the issue is.

Q: Well I imagine water was, particularly with Mexico but also with Canada but let's talk about Mexico and American water. What sort of things did you have to deal with?

JEWELL: Well there is a binational commission, the International Boundary Water Commission, which really is the body that regulates or actually just implements agreements that we have made over time with Mexico especially about the use of water in the Rio Grande and Colorado rivers, which are the two biggest issues. It is phenomenally complex. We both have reservoirs, we have to release water at certain times of the year as we promised, we have to know who has how many cubic feet and who can release it and when you do it. And if there's a drought then we have to talk about who's going to get how much and when. It's enormously, enormously complicated. The head of the IBWC is always a political appointee and we got a new political appointee who was sponsored by one of the senators in Texas who turned out to be a disaster. He was a poor manager; he was offensive to the Mexicans and internally he was bad for morale. He was also disrespectful of the law and the treaties, with an attitude like I'll just do this the way I want to do it. Anyway, it became such an issue that the Mexico desk and then at my level, the DAS, had to get involved quite a bit. We eventually called the inspectors in because the situation was so bad. He was eventually thrown out. But it took about a year and a half to get the inspection, to get him out. In the meantime he did a lot of relationship damage that we had to spend a lot of time repairing. Normally these things worked very well because most of the people who were running them are technocrats who have been doing it forever, they know each other, they have a good relationship, they're not so politically involved. It's so much better if nothing rises to the level of the political people because then there are issues of sovereignty and nationalism and getting what we deserve rather than just saying okay, the resource is lower right now, how can we split it and not get too worked up about it. But any time there were problems about water it got attention. And of course this is enormously important to local farmers and businesses. And so that was another one of those issues where there's a lot of congressional interest in what was going on.

Q: Also I've heard that cross border shopping; particularly Mexicans coming to the United States just to go to K-Mart or something like that has really increased.

JEWELL: Oh yes, it's huge.

Q: That's huge business, isn't it?

JEWELL: A lot of businesses on the border would close if they lost their Mexican clientele.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: And it's actually true in the reverse as well. A lot of people on the border go to Mexico, for example, for pharmaceuticals. It's so much cheaper in Mexico so people go across the border and fill their prescriptions and come back.

Q: Oh god.

JEWELL: It is a very complicated relationship and people who live far away from the border have really no idea how intertwined the countries are in so many ways. Mostly to the good. The border people will work it out usually if we just leave them alone. They manage mostly to do the right thing.

On the Canadian side there was one really weird issue about a lake in North Dakota called Devil's Lake that was overflowing and which drained into Canada, which thought it was potentially sending invasive species to them. It went back and forth and the senator from North Dakota got very involved. It was one of those things that you couldn't believe that you were talking about at the prime minister level but you were because people got so worked up about it. It was one of those things that seems unimportant but took on a much greater importance because people got riled up.

Q: Well you know for a long time the Canadians were accusing us of polluting the air and all with trees and all.

JEWELL: And there are Great Lakes commissions to work on bodies like that, big bodies that we both use and touch. And those usually went pretty well because as long as you leave them at the technical level then people can come to agreement and find cooperative ways to manage the resource. But every now and then the Canadians were worried that we were not enforcing or making environmental laws as strictly as we should.

Q: And emissions from electric plants and things like this, coal-fed electric plants and all at one time.

JEWELL: Yes, there were always cross border issues like that. And so it was a very interesting couple of years doing a huge variety of things from immigration and border crossings to pollution and water and trade.

Q: Did you find that you developed good relations both in Canada and Mexico with the equivalent to your counterparts?

JEWELL: Oh yes. I knew my counterparts very well; we had excellent relations with their embassies here in Washington. I knew all the people who worked on the issues that we were dealing with. It was generally extremely cordial with both sides honestly involved in trying to find a solution to whatever the issue was.

Q: I would think that you would have a problem with some of the congressional delegates and particular staffs and all. Like a local issue that gets their constituents riled up.

JEWELL: Every now and then you'd get one of those but if you have an ongoing relationship with your colleagues and your counterparts you have the context to put it into, saying this is happening in a given congressperson's district, he or she's very upset about it. Because sometimes the same things happen on the other side.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: They knew that these things were touchy. I don't envy my colleagues now who are trying to explain Donald Trump to the Mexicans because Mexicans are deeply offended by the statements that he's been making. And up to and including the president have been fighting back, pushing back on his comments.

Q: I hope it will just be a hiccup in our political thing but I refer anybody looking at this go to Donald Trump as a Republican contender for the Republican nomination and his talk about rapists and no good Mexicans streaming across our border and he's going to make the Mexicans pay for and built a huge fence all along our border.

JEWELL: It's both preposterous and insulting. Certainly we've had a lot of back and forth about immigration with the Mexicans but it was not on such a disrespectful level.

Q: Well did you have a problem with Mexico or maybe it didn't come at your level but it was kind of dangerous to drive around Mexico coming from or going down to Mexico City.

JEWELL: That was a constant source of tension with the Mexican government. We would put out travel warnings about various parts of the country and say don't drive here, we recommend Americans not do this, that and the other thing. And the Mexicans always thought we were being too negative and hurting their tourism industry. So they would come back and complain about the wording and we would take another look at it. Sometimes we would modify the language slightly and sometimes we would say I'm sorry, we've had eight reports of robberies on the road in that place in the last two months and we're going to put it on the list. Sorry, that's just it. So that was a constant source of conversation, I'll say, between us and the Mexicans.

Q: Did you have any particular trouble policing or anything else with Canada?

JEWELL: No, we had a good relationship with the RCMP, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. They were cooperative with us and vice versa because criminals often fled across the Canadian-U.S. border. So the law enforcement people, often on the local level, managed that. We didn't have to get too involved because mechanisms had been negotiated and set up to manage it. Response could happen quickly on the scene and not have to involve us.

Q: Well did our growing concern with illegal immigration, particularly terrorism and all, cause problems during the time you were there?

JEWELL: It's always an issue; how to make the border more secure. How do we make it move faster for commerce but catch the people we don't want coming in? Those two things in some ways are contradictory. So trying to figure out ways to make more border crossings, make them move more easily and what kind of passes could we get for the people whom we trusted and could let through quickly so we could spend more time on the people we weren't so sure about. It was a source of ongoing conversation constantly. Because of the increasing volumes of trade there was huge pressure from the business community to make the border work in both directions.

Q: Well certainly in these assignments you got exposed to the neighborliness of our relationships with these two major countries.

JEWELL: Right. And understanding how interconnected we are in ways that most Americans have absolutely no idea about. People on the border know it obviously but people far away from the border haven't the faintest idea. I read somewhere the other day that there are 26 states whose largest trading partner is Mexico. They sell more goods and buy more goods. So we're quite linked whether people want to believe that or not but it's quite true.

Q: Did you get involved particularly with Mexicans getting arrested, local authorities not informing?

JEWELL: Oh my gosh yes.

Q: I'm a consular officer by background and one of the keystones of the consular work is when an American gets arrested abroad we're informed.

JEWELL: Right.

Q: And-

JEWELL: Local jurisdictions were not doing that in the United States. They were not informing Mexican consulates or the embassy that they had arrested a Mexican citizen. These cases were going up to the Supreme Court. There was constant tension about that. The Mexicans were perfectly right. We were on the side of Mexico on this. We were doing amicus briefs for court cases because we had treaties which we were not abiding by. Mostly local people had no idea that they had the responsibility to do that.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: The problem was that people would be tried and convicted without anyone knowing it and then the consul would find out and try to get a retrial. Now that they had representation and consular access they would try to help their countrymen. Anybody would do this. We certainly would do it overseas. And sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't, depending on the judge. It was one of those issues that was awkward because Americans were wrong.

Q: Yes. I say as a consular officer they are flaunting the rules that kept us in business.

JEWELL: Right, exactly. That was one among the many things we had to deal with on a constant basis.

Q: It must have been a fascinating period.

JEWELL: It was. Those two years were very, very interesting. I traveled a lot; I went to almost all of our consulates in Canada. At that point I was looking at going overseas again so I threw my hat in the ring to get an ambassadorship and I was lucky enough that Roger Noriega put my name forward for Ecuador. People ask me sometimes why Ecuador and I said honestly I needed a high school. I had kids who were going to be in high school and I had to have a post that had an international high school for them. The bureau was kind enough to sort out the nominees for these various ambassadorships and put me in one that had a school, so they put me forward for Ecuador.

Q: Okay. Well let's talk about this. So you were in Ecuador from when to when?

JEWELL: August 2005 to July 2008.

Q: So what did you have to do to get ready for it?

JEWELL: Getting through the ambassadorial process in and of itself is pretty time consuming but the protocol people walk you through that so it's manageable. You have to fill out fantastic amounts of paperwork; the same thing over and over. They do a recheck of all your finances and every place you're ever lived. It goes for a long time. But once you get through I just did a lot of consultations in Washington, not just in State, but in a variety of different agencies including the Coast Guard because of the drug issue. I was all over town doing consultations and that was good, I learned a lot. But you never know it all until you get there.

Q: Had fishing been settled by that time?

JEWELL: Fishing had been settled by that time. I was not there in the era when the Ecuadorians were seizing our fishing boats. The biggest issue when I first got there was the threatened nationalization of Occidental Petroleum Company. It had been going on for quite a while and they had been accused of breaking some really very minor contractual agreements with the Ecuadorian government, nothing that in our view rose to the level of requiring them to be nationalized.

Q: Well they were out to nationalize, weren't they?

JEWELL: Yes. It became a sovereignty issue.

Q: When you say "they"?

JEWELL: The Ecuadorian government. It had become a very big public issue of national control and sovereignty. I came in August. The prior April there had been an irregular change of government in which the former president had been thrown out and his vice president had become president. So Alfredo Palacio was in charge, who had been the vice president and who was a cardiologist from Guayaquil; not a particularly skilled politician, a little bit in over his head. He did not have the political skill or courage, frankly, to withstand the popular demand for nationalization. I worked really hard at avoiding it. At one point I had the president of the country and the head of Occidental Petroleum in the residence living room trying to talk this out and figure out a settlement that would appease the masses. But the Ecuadorians saw dollar signs and were asking for fantastic amounts of money, far beyond the actual worth of the Occidental investment in Ecuador, in settlement. So it was completely out of hand and at a certain point the government took over Occidental. The case went into arbitration and since has been settled in Occidental's favor and Ecuador says they're going to pay. So these wheels take a long time to grind but eventually Occidental's going to get some money back from its investment.

Q: First, did you have any problems getting confirmed? Or what sorts of questions were asked?

JEWELL: I didn't have any trouble getting confirmed. I was with a group of career nominees and I was asked maybe one or two pro forma questions at my hearing but it was very easy.

Q: Well you've mentioned a little but when you got there what was the political situation in Ecuador?

JEWELL: Palacio had been president for just a few months. He was very cordial and very interested in having a good relationship with the United States. He was not interested in causing trouble. His predecessor, who was thrown out, had been very close to my predecessor and so there was a certain amount of popular suspicion of American ambassadors. They wanted to be clear that I wasn't meddling in their domestic affairs which I had no intention of doing.

So I drew on my public diplomacy background and sized up the situation about feelings toward the United States, a lot of ambivalence. I decided that one of the things we needed to do was to try to move the needle on the general context and attitude towards the United States and remind the Ecuadorians how much we had in common. Then I turned everybody in the embassy on to that project; I traveled a lot and made a rule that we were not going to turn down any invitations to speak. If anybody invited the U.S. embassy to appear we were going to go because we had a large enough staff that we could do this and we needed to get out and show our face and be present. This threw some people in the embassy into a tizzy because not everyone is geared for public speaking. But we managed to find things for people to do that they were comfortable with. I also made it clear that these appearances did not all require complicated explanations of U.S. foreign policy. I said you can go and talk about Thanksgiving for all I care. I just want you out

there in places where people hadn't seen Americans and so had this vision of us as people with two horns. This policy had the unexpected good result of improving morale at the embassy. They liked getting out. Once they started doing it people liked it and it connected them with the country in ways that they might never have otherwise.

For example, we got a request from one of the high schools not too far away from the embassy, we were downtown at that point, that was instituting an international baccalaureate program and one of the courses that they taught was English. They really needed native speakers to come to their English class so we asked for volunteers. Our budget and fiscal officer, who didn't speak fluent Spanish, said I'll go because I can do that; I can speak English. So he went once a week, on office time since he was doing work on behalf of the embassy. He sat in on this class and he loved it because there's not a way in the world that he would ever have met a group of high school aged Ecuadorians. But they were really interested in him and interested in the States. So we had many of those kinds of connections that worked out really well.

By the end of my tour I had visited every province of Ecuador. I noticed about halfway through that I had visited quite a number of them and so decided to make a project of it. People loved this, that I took the time to see the country. Most Ecuadorians haven't been all over their own country.

Q: It's a beautiful country.

JEWELL: It's absolutely gorgeous. It's like "National Geographic" around every turn.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: So I traveled a lot, I did a lot of media interviews and it wasn't all just hard policy stuff. I visited Peace Corps volunteers. We have a big Peace Corps contingent in Ecuador. I visited AID projects. We did things like starting alumni clubs. There are a lot of Ecuadorians who studied in the States so we started a Notre Dame club and a Georgetown club and they all got to meet each other. I had a lunch for them at the residence and it was all about reminding them how many ties, trade ties, education ties, tourism ties and of course there are lots of Ecuadorian families in the U.S., legal or not; there are a lot of connections between the two countries that are very, very positive. This effort was really pretty successful because Ecuadorians were not deeply anti-American at all. So these things took up a reasonable amount of my time on top of other serious issues like trade and drug interdiction. Ecuador is not a drug producing country but it's a transit country because it's next to Peru and Colombia.

Q: I've talked with a woman who was working, a Foreign Service officer but she ended up somehow dealing with riverine interdiction. I'm not quite sure what her job was but she went on a lot of these riverboats cutting off a lot of the traders coming up.

JEWELL: When I got to Ecuador the United States had a 10 year lease on part of an airbase on the coast of Ecuador out of which we were flying surveillance aircraft to find

drug boats in the Eastern Pacific, which was very successful but it was also very controversial as you can imagine.

Q: Yes.

JEWELL: Having a so-called American base down in Manta, which was the city it was located in. So when I arrived that was a source of a certain amount of controversy.

In order to reduce suspicion about the installation we started giving tours, letting people come in, especially journalists. We brought school groups onto the base and tried to dispel some of the mystery about what was going on. The Ecuadorian air force base was right across the tarmac from the civilian airport; they used the same runways. So you could see the big AWACS planes when you got off your flight. You couldn't hide it and we didn't try; it was right there.

Other big issues: I was there three years and I had a year and a half with Alfredo Palacio, the hapless former vice president, and then Rafael Correa was elected. During the campaign I was assiduously trying to avoid looking like I was playing favorites, although of course we were following the campaign closely. So I invited all the major candidates, of which there were probably at the time I was doing it six or seven, all of them to the residence for one plus one lunches or breakfasts or dinners. Just me and the DCM or me and my political chief, plus the candidate and one person that he, they were all he's, wanted to bring along.

I included Correa in this invitation because he was obviously a serious candidate. He had a lot of charisma and was getting a lot of attention. I think he was quite surprised to be invited to the American ambassador's residence. We had a good conversation. He came for breakfast and I remember the conversation because it was so lively. These meetings were a good chance for me to size people up; who were they really, what were they like, what were their policies, what did they believe, where did they come from. I tried to keep it partly social too, talking about your family if you get elected and so on, in the way that you do with Latin Americans. You don't just talk business, it's not culturally appropriate just to stick to your talking points. So it was very interesting and set up a channel of communication that was useful.

When he got into the runoff against the richest man in Ecuador, Álvaro Noboa, who has become kind of a perennial candidate now for president, I asked to call on each of the two candidates and Correa immediately accepted. Noboa refused to meet with me because he was angry that I was meeting with Correa too. He thought that I should take sides and not meet with Correa.

Q: Well what was Correa's background and what was he trying to do?

JEWELL: His background was a lower middle class kid from Guayaquil who had been a scholarship student at a Catholic school where he was treated badly by the elites who went there. I think at school he became convinced that there needed to be a change and

that the elites of Ecuador needed to share more with the rest of the country. He became an economist; studied in Belgium at Louvain and then got his PhD at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and came back as an economics professor. He was teaching at the university in Quito even though he came from Guayaquil because he had married a Belgian woman who didn't particularly like Guayaquil, which is on the coast and kind of hot. And so they moved to Quito partly because she wanted to get out of the heat.

He was teaching at one of the universities in Quito and just decided to run for president. He had a very populist message but very positive: he was going to improve healthcare, he was going to improve education for the poor people, he was going to share more of the oil resources of the country with those who needed it, he was going to improve what was essentially the social security or the welfare payments. For a long time none of the establishment politicians took him seriously. I was watching this tidal wave grow and grow and kept asking people about it and they would say oh, no, no, he won't win. I thought it sure looks to me like he's getting pretty popular, those crowds are pretty big. He's a gifted politician, very charismatic, very energetic, really able to mesmerize a crowd. Voting is mandatory in Ecuador so all those people who felt the establishment hadn't done that much for them said why not, I'm voting for him. And he won. It didn't surprise me at all that some of the establishment were completely bowled over by this. They did not see it coming.

Q: What effect did this have on us?

JEWELL: I was very fortunate to be working for Tom Shannon, who was assistant secretary for WHA. He's now the undersecretary for political affairs, was counselor of the department and has been ambassador to Brazil, etc. He backed me up on the strategy of trying to engage with the Correa government on issues that we shared. A lot of Correa's platform was common sense. Of course we're for better education and better healthcare and all those things that he was advocating. So at the beginning we had a pretty good relationship because he was surrounded by a lot of technocrats, other people who had studied in the States and who really did want to make realistic and needed changes in the country. His administration also included a group of very far left ideological people but there was a decent balance in the original cabinet among people who were more technocrats versus ideologues.

So we all set about trying to find ways to work with this new government. And while they were somewhat wary of us in the beginning and somewhat suspicious and some of them never got over that suspicion, by and large it worked. Even though Correa would go on his weekly radio shows and sometimes denounce the past of the empire (the U.S.) meddling in Ecuador in a very similar vein to Chavez, he didn't do it as often or as strongly and I think the relationship we had kept it toned down a little bit. The show was his weekly report to the people of his activities and so if I had met with him he would say I met with the U.S. ambassador who's trying to help us do whatever. So it was usually pretty positive and people in his government knew that he had this civil, constructive relationship with me and I think that was a big help in keeping everybody else on that wave length too. During the time I was there I never called him that I didn't get a call

back the same day. I never asked to see him that I didn't get an appointment within the next day or two. I was not at all shut out. I had good relationships with the foreign ministers; I could get through to them. I saw them with some frequency. So it helped smooth over any kind of misunderstandings or problems that came up or things they were concerned about. There were channels for things to be talked about.

Unfortunately, since that time a lot of those technocrats have left the government, a lot of them in protest. And some of them are actually working in opposition to him now out of disappointment, I would say, with the way things have worked out. But he has delivered on a lot of the things he said he would do. He came into office and did what he said he was going to do. The infrastructure of Ecuador has improved. He's built new roads, the new airport opened, which was already underway when he was elected but the roads are better, more kids are getting an education. He's taken on the teachers' union and is trying to get better organization in the education system. Healthcare has improved at the village level. He's also done a lot of things that the indigenous community doesn't like and environmentalists don't like. His record on freedom of the press and human rights is questionable to say the least. So he's becoming more controversial and he was thinking of running for another term but has decided not to run. We'll see how that goes. But when I was there we had I would say a decent relationship. We were able to communicate and we were able to find ways to work and he kept the anti-Americanism somewhat in check.

Q: Was Chavez from Venezuela trying to stir up things there?

JEWELL: Well yes and there was a lot of back and forth communication with Venezuela and Venezuelan advisors of various kinds appearing. Correa was friendly with Hugo Chavez but he and many in his government were very well educated and knew exactly what they wanted to do and didn't feel like they needed the help of the Venezuelans to figure out how to run their country or make the changes that they needed. They would love to get cut rate help with construction or some of that money that was flowing from Venezuela, because Ecuador doesn't have as much oil as Venezuela does by a long shot, but they didn't feel that they needed assistance from Venezuela in implementing their political policies.

Q: Were you able in working on these relations to deal with the alumni of American universities and all that?

JEWELL: I remember one meeting at the beginning of his administration when I realized that I was sitting in a room with the foreign minister, the president and the minister of the interior who had respectively gone to Rutgers, Urbana-Champaign and MIT. I was dealing with people who knew us and that was much easier than for my colleagues in Bolivia who were dealing with Evo Morales who really didn't know the United States at all. So at a certain point if the president was complaining to me about something that somebody had told him we were doing, I was able to say you know that's not true, you know that's not the way we work. I was able to talk to him one on one. It was always

really respectful but I was able to talk to him on a more personal basis and that background in the U.S. really helped.

Q: Do you want to talk about the oil situation? First place I really don't think of Ecuador as being an oil country.

JEWELL: It's an OPEC (Organization of the Oil Producing Countries) country.

Q: It just doesn't sort of rise up to that-.

JEWELL: Well it's not big but it does produce oil. There were a lot of foreign oil companies operating in Ecuador when I got there. Occidental had been nationalized before he was elected but there were other smaller U.S. companies and plenty of French, Spanish, Chinese and Brazilian oil companies there. President Correa started rewriting contracts and demanding higher percentages of revenue from these companies. Some of them left and some of them stayed and some of them put up with it because apparently they were making enough and were in for the long haul. The Chinese of course had the deepest pockets and they were more interested in the resource than the money at that point. That's probably changed a bit now but they were all over Latin America looking for sources of raw materials that they needed to fuel their big growth engine. So they got involved in a lot of infrastructure projects and he got a lot of loans from the Chinese to build dams and other projects. Sometimes the payback was in oil; we'll do this for you or we'll loan you money and you give us back oil as repayment. So a fair portion of the oil is mortgaged to agreements with the Chinese. Ecuador's cutting its budget now because of the drop in oil prices but they had quite a varied export market. They were in a much better position than Venezuela which really has no other exports to speak of except oil.

Q: Panama hats?

JEWELL: They do export Panama hats as a matter of fact. But they export flowers; they grow roses, so fresh flowers. Bananas, they're the world's largest exporter of bananas, a lot to Europe. They have a lot of raw materials, shrimp, crops, commodity kind of exports and they're working on more of the value added kinds of things. Instead of just exporting coffee beans, turning it into ground coffee; chocolate, making food not just exporting the raw material. Our AID programs were working on that, trying to improve the amount of processing that went on in Ecuador so they got more of the high value out of the commodity. So they had a much wider range of exports to build on.

Q: A broad spectrum.

JEWELL: A broad spectrum of exports so that it wasn't as catastrophic when oil went down. It's bad but people are not left destitute with nothing else. But President Correa was very wary of the business community and he was putting in a lot of regulations. He thought that the business community had been living too well and not sharing, not paying enough taxes. So he brought in a really tough tax collector and started collecting more

money and raising taxes on certain things and trying to get more taxes out of the oil companies. So the business community was afraid of him.

Q: Well how stood things between Peru and Ecuador?

JEWELL: They were best friends then. The war was forgotten. It was amazing the amount of cross border trade and road building that was going on between Peru and Ecuador while I was there. It was amazing that the conflict had been put so far behind them.

Colombia was a little bit more of a problem because there was a point in the drug war when, in the northern part of Ecuador, this terribly remote part of the country, there was a FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) base. It was an R&R (rest and recreation) spot for them.

Q: FARC is a Colombian rebel group.

JEWELL: Colombian rebel group and narco trafficking ring. So the Colombian military came across the border and bombed the camp and killed the guy they were trying to kill, Raúl Reyes, who was number two in the FARC at that point. So they were successful in their mission but obviously then were left with the problem of having invaded a neighboring country. Because the United States was helping Colombia so much, at first they blamed us, there was one rumor going around that it had been our planes from Manta who had done this bombing. No, no, no. It was not even the same kinds of planes; it's just completely not true. But it was a serious thing that we had to deal with and go through all kinds of explanations about what aircraft we have, showing photos of what was on the ground at what time, we don't have that kind of plane. It was a very tense moment.

Q: Was there thought about well what are these foreigners doing, these Colombian rebels doing on our soil?

JEWELL: Yes there was thought about that but the Ecuadorians thought if Colombia knew they were there why didn't they tell us and we'd go get them rather than bombing our country. And the worst part of it was that Colombian President Uribe phoned President Correa and lied. There's really no other good way to say it. Told him it was a fast pursuit, a hot pursuit and they had been chasing this guy across the border. This became demonstrably not true within 24 hours given the kind of aircraft and whatever. It just became a complete lie. So Correa was upset about the bombing naturally but he was more upset that Uribe lied to him about it. I don't even know honestly why Uribe did that. Correa said to me Linda, he stabbed me in the back. Correa had repeated this lie to the public as an explanation and then had to walk it back so he looked foolish and he was livid and relations with Uribe never recovered. Once Santos got elected he made a big point of trying to repair the relationship because there's a lot of back and forth trade and movement of people between Ecuador and Colombia. For a while they broke diplomatic relations; the Colombia ambassador was packed off and sent home and it was a very

tense moment. We managed to extricate ourselves from the middle of that really bilateral problem but it was a very rough patch for a while.

Q: Were there any sort of terrorist groups, Islamic terrorist groups running around? Because there is a rather significant Palestinian presence in Latin America, the traders and that sort.

JEWELL: There were really none in Ecuador. One of the irritating things that Correa did was try to, just like Chavez, improve relations with Iran. So he invited the president of Iran to his inauguration and he came. So Ahmadinejad actually came to the first inauguration of Correa, which was to poke us in the eye more than anything, to show his independence. But we didn't comment on it; I remember sitting there in the palace watching the inauguration, watching Ahmadinejad sit up on the dais. So the Iranians set up a little trade mission, which obviously we paid some attention to but weren't terribly concerned about. It didn't seem like there was any real content there; it was just something done for show because there weren't any real products or relationships that would have made any sense. They're both oil producing countries, they're not going to trade oil. They're too far away to really be a good trade partner.

Q: How about on the fishing side? You said it's been settled. What was going on over there? Were there well-regulated American fishing ships in the area?

JEWELL: Well yes. We were abiding by all the rules and so they were out there but it wasn't a problem.

We interdicted drug ships that were identified by the planes from Manta. We had Navy and Coast Guard ships out in the Eastern Pacific and when they located one of these drug ships they would go after it. If we were entering Ecuadorian waters we would have to get their permission first so we had a very quick system set up with our military group who knew whom to call and say our ship is needs to go here and ask permission. But we were all very clear about asking permission to enter Ecuadorian waters. Then we had to get permission if we wanted to bring the ship into an Ecuadorian port. If we did, we would have to be received by Ecuadorian law enforcement and the Coast Guard would turn the ship and crew over to the Ecuadorians. We would save out a certain amount of evidence, for trials later on. But that had all been worked out in advance. It was complicated and everybody had to be really good about following the protocols but that agreement basically remained while I was there.

The one thing that Correa did do is say he wasn't going to renew the lease on the Manta base; it was just too big a sovereignty issue for him. He just wasn't going to do it. I thought at one point, I feared he was actually going to throw us out before the 10 years were up but he chose, I hope because of some persuasion from me, just to let the lease run out and not renew it. We would have liked to renew it but I could see he wasn't going to do it. We asked, we tried to figure out if there some kind of rent or whatever that we could pay that would make it possible but it was really a sovereignty issue at the end of the day and I could see it wasn't going to happen. So we tried to go quietly and not make

a big fuss about it, which would have helped him. The actual closure happened after I left.

Q: How was life there for you all?

JEWELL: Oh life was lovely. Living in Quito is like living in paradise. It's a beautiful climate. We had a fantastic residence. I had a great staff. As I say I traveled all over. It's a little weird traveling with security; I really didn't like having a security detail. You feel trapped by it sometimes and it seemed very conspicuous and ugly Americanish. The main reason for it was the FARC because if they had been able to kidnap an American ambassador that would have been a huge feather in their cap. And certainly they were still very much in the business of taking hostages of various kinds in Colombia. So it wasn't a joke that I had a security detail.

Q: Time has gone on; things have changed so much but how stood you as a woman ambassador in a Latin American context?

JEWELL: Happily I was not the only woman in the diplomatic corps in Quito and I had been preceded in my own post by a woman. So I was not the only woman ambassador and the Ecuadorians were more or less used to us. And when Correa was elected their foreign minister was a woman. So he was very positive about appointing women and I had women to work with in very key positions. In general, once you're the American ambassador you're the American ambassador. I got along with people so it wasn't a problem.

Q: And I must say that the public diplomacy background helps.

JEWELL: Absolutely helps in knowing how to fit in and be part of the community. Also traveling around and actually appearing to have a good time and enjoy Ecuador, which I think we forget to do - give the impression that we are happy where we are and not just there to run down a checklist of our annual planned goals that we have to accomplish. I think we do ourselves a big disservice when we don't concentrate enough on the relationships and spend all our time on the specific tasks.

Q: Yes. And I think particularly you'd had this experience in other parts of Latin America where-I mean a hard charging American unused to Latin America has a hard time I think.

JEWELL: Yes. You just don't get as much done. It may seem slower but you actually accomplish a lot more if you just take it a little slower and step back and do things more their way.

Q: Ask about the family.

JEWELL: Yes. A little bit more in the culturally appropriate way. I was very used to that from previous posts. I knew what needed to be done and tried to keep the public focus on

the positive and handle the negative stuff behind the scenes. I tried not to look sneaky but any time anybody asked me about problems I would try to spin it toward the positive.

Q: So then you left when?

JEWELL: I left in July of 2008.

Q: Then what?

JEWELL: I retired.

Q: Okay.

JEWELL: I joined the retirement seminar in the fall of 2008. I wanted a full-time job but not connected to the State Department and still in international affairs so I looked around and was kind of picky and ended up with a job at International Student Exchange Programs, a student exchange organization. I worked there for six years as executive vice president until April of 2015 when I retired fully and am just enjoying life. I found the work there very satisfying because the experiences were so transformative for the students, especially for the American students. I felt like were opening the world to them and changing their perspectives for life.

Q: Well Linda thank you very much.

JEWELL: You are most welcome.

End of interview