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

PART II
AMBASSADOR A. ELIZABETH JONES

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

JONES: So there were lots of projects underway that I was able to turn over to Frank, to take on aggressively. He traveled a lot to Jordan, he traveled wherever he needed to meet with the opposition leaders, Turkey, et cetera. He'd been DCM in Ankara and he'd been involved in all of this, so it was a good appointment.

Q: What were you getting from Pakistan and Kuwait and Jordan?

JONES: The Kuwaitis were very supportive of the U.S. use of their airport for the flights patrolling the southern no fly zone and were exceedingly anti-Saddam. They were probably less effective diplomatically. They didn't cut a big swath in diplomatic circles in pushing for greater opposition to Saddam Hussein. To a degree, their credibility wasn't so great, because they were considered to be only out for themselves and their wealth. But they were certainly very supportive of the U.S.

The Jordanians were no longer apologists for Saddam, but they were very, very nervous about Saddam. This was particularly because so much of their livelihood depended on the Oil for Food contract goods coming through the port of Aqaba, being driven by truck up through Jordan and across into Iraq. So they weren't big allies of the U.S. at the time. We also didn't press them on it, because we needed King Hussein to be with us to help on the peace process issues. All of that going on at the same time. The Wye conference was going on then, plus King Hussein was extremely ill with cancer at the time and died during the period of time that I was in NEA. So we were easy on the Jordanians, in policy terms, to be honest.

Q: It's interesting, because I've interviewed Roger Harrison, who was our ambassador to Jordan during the Gulf War and they were telling Harrison to press King Hussein, which could have even cost him his throne. But this is often the State Department in times of crisis, you've got to be with us. So this time we had a sane policy, in a way, we understood his precarious situation?

JONES: The precariousness of the situation, but even more, we appreciated what he might be able to do for us on the peace process. For example, he came to the Wye Plantation negotiations about the time I started. King Hussein came, looking quite ill, towards the end of the Wye negotiations. He really made the case and made some statements that were very helpful to us in the negotiations, to the mediating side, I guess I should say. That may be one of the last times he appeared before he died.

Q: Did Pakistan play a role at all?

JONES: I don't recall that Pakistan played a role on Iraq. I ended up doing quite a bit of work with Dick Clarke, who was at the NSC at the time doing counterterrorism, on putting together talking points for us to use in Pakistan and the Gulf about Pakistani flights and other flights going to Pakistan with money, a lot of cash and other support items that were going through Pakistan to the Taliban and to al Qaeda. So that was the Pakistan involvement that I had from NEA. That was really the extent of it.

Q: One last question on Iraq, we may come back to it: what was your feeling at this time about Saddam? Was there a nuclear program and was he getting ready to really do nasty stuff to us, or not?

JONES: Well, here was my take on it. I thought that the information that Butler had on the fact that Saddam probably didn't have a nuclear program or had successfully closed down most of the nuclear program was probably accurate. We all pretty much trusted Butler. But we also trusted our intelligence and Butler's that there was still something going on with chem/bio and that that needed to be addressed.

I also believed, and most of us did, that Saddam was capable of any outrageous act. If he could go after the Kurds the way he did with biological weapons he could go after them again or go after the Israelis or shoot up the Gulf. We thought the Gulf states were very vulnerable, as kingdoms, as not being Ba'athis. So I was completely convinced that Saddam was a very dangerous person.

However, I was very much on the side that the sanctions aren't perfect, but they are working to isolate him and they are working to keep him under a certain amount of control. Especially when we went to what Colin Powell later called Smart Sanctions, expanding the sanctions so that we were in a better position to have better talking points for ourselves. We could make a better case that we weren't thereby harming the Iraqi public, we weren't preventing children from being able to learn because we were letting books, lead pencils, computers and TVs go in for education, computers, that that was the way to go.

Now, the one thing I haven't talked about is what happened from October through December, when—

Q: Of what year?

JONES: Of 1998, when Saddam had thrown the inspectors out, there was a lot of discussion in the Security Council about what to do. There was a big effort on the U.S. part to pull together a military response to this, to make sure that Saddam knew we weren't joking, we weren't kidding about this and that he really had to comply with the UN Security Council resolutions. So there was a big effort to pull together a military response. It was made clear that there would be a military response.

We were very mindful of when Ramadan was that year, to make sure that we weren't having a military response during Ramadan. We'd given Saddam a deadline, through the UN, that Butler had articulated. The deadline was to come when Secretary Albright was at an APEC meeting, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, in Kuala Lumpur.

First the decision was made that she shouldn't cancel her trip, because that would tip our hand that we really were going to do something, or try to decide to do something militarily. So I was asked to go along on the APEC trip to be her Iraq person, to be on the phone with everybody at every minute to make sure we understood what was going on, what decisions were made. Well, a couple of things happened. First of all, we were on what's called the "doomsday plane," so we were refueled in the air twice on the way to Kuala Lumpur, so we never landed.

Q: This is the plane that's hooked up for the president, really.

JONES: That's right. It's all fitted out for the president to be in the air for two weeks or longer, if need be, if there was some kind of nuclear attack and he couldn't land, but could be refueled.

So I was meant to be on the phone and I was, throughout, with the Ops Center and with my Iraq guys. There was to be a National Security Council meeting, one chaired by the president. Madeleine Albright's view was that we should not allow Saddam to talk us into any kind of delay, that he's likely to come up with some kind of a trick, he's going to come up with something that will make us think twice and we should not allow that, we should absolutely just say, "Your time is up, you haven't produced and we're done."

Well, it turned out that the State Department wasn't actually represented at the National Security Council meeting, because for whatever reason Strobe Talbot, who was the acting secretary at the time, either went to the first one, couldn't be found for a more important one, couldn't be found for any of them. I don't know what it was, but in any case it turned out he didn't go to any of them.

I can't remember if Tom Pickering actually went or he was forbidden from going because he was considered too junior. But in any case, the bottom line is that Madeleine Albright's view was not represented at the National Security Council meeting. And unfortunately we had a communications blackout in terms of communications on the plane for about three hours, right when that happened, so I was unable to learn that the

National Security Council meeting was underway, that they couldn't find Strobe and that Madeleine Albright's view was not being put forward at the National Security Council meeting.

So just before we landed in Kuala Lumpur I learned what the decision was – to delay. It was about midnight when we landed and Secretary Albright went right into a videoconference with the national security team. Of course it was daytime in Washington, it was Saturday or Sunday, the weekend, anyway. And she was completely livid that her point of view had not been represented and had not been taken into account. She went round and round with them about getting it changed. The bottom line is she couldn't get it changed and was asked to talk to her British counterpart about this, to get the UK on board for a delay.

What had happened was, Saddam had waved a white flag, that's the way it was put. I can't remember what he promised, but it was something that caused the National Security Council meeting to say, "Okay, well, we can't really attack now, we've got to take him at his word and maybe he'll supply the information in a month" or whatever the time frame was that he said he was going to do it.

The upshot of all of this was of course he didn't produce. There were various meetings in between. He didn't produce what he was supposed to produce and three days before the Eid, before Ramadan started in December, we attacked, using cruise missiles, attacked Baghdad, hit a few sites. In the end, it didn't send a very alarming message to Saddam. It seemed like kind of a joke. It went on for a couple of days, two days, three days. It was right before Christmas. It resulted in my having to evacuate Embassy Kuwait and ConGen Jerusalem just before Christmas, which was very difficult. Our people there were very unhappy about that. It got to be known in the Department as the "Just Kidding" attack. It was derided around the world. It didn't come across as having been anything much, other than kind of a joke.

And we went back to going for the Smart Sanctions, the containment policy that General Zinni talks about, who was the Central Command commander at the time, which, like I say, we thought worked, actually, pretty well.

Q: You say Saddam could try anything. If Saddam actually tried anything, particularly with chemical weapons, on Israel, Israel might answer with nuclear retaliation. Was this in our thinking?

JONES: Yeah, there was definitely a worry about that. When this happened before, Eagleburger had gone out to the Israelis and gotten them not to attack. Before we did our attack in December, we went out to the Israelis and everybody else to say, "We're doing this, stay out of it!" Very, very, very strong representations. We might have even sent a senior person out to Israel to talk to them, I can't remember. We probably did. That was the kind of thing we would have done at the time.

Q: Moving over to Gaddafi and Libya, what were we up to?

JONES: When I took over from David Welch, he had just succeeded in getting a really remarkable agreement in place, whereby the Libyans had agreed to allow the Pan Am 103 perpetrators, alleged perpetrators, to be tried by a Scottish court in The Hague, a very unusual agreement. So my job was to just make sure it went well, it went right. David had done all the work to set it up politically and diplomatically. There were a variety of things we had to do, because we had offered to pay part of the costs. We needed to make representations to get the defendants to the court from Tripoli. That was a lot of work, diplomatic work, that we undertook.

We had a lot of discussions with the Pan Am 103 families. Some of them were very happy about this, some of them were very unhappy. So we were in constant conference calls that we undertook. Sometimes I was the one on the conference call, sometimes we'd get the Secretary and Sandy Berger to be on the conference call, if we possibly could, just because it was that important. It was a very high-profile issue. It was one that we went to Congress on all the time, just because the Pan Am 103 relatives were very influential, especially with Teddy Kennedy, Senator Kennedy.

Fortunately, I had an extremely good Libya team in the bureau. They were all over this and would bring me in when needed, so I didn't have to spend a lot of time on it, but it was a constant issue that required a lot of caretaking, including with the British, of course, because of the Scottish judge who was brought in there. It was a very positive policy, it worked quite well. We didn't really like the result in the end because one was acquitted, one of the two perpetrators was acquitted. One wasn't, thank goodness for that! At the same time there were a lot of negotiations about the money that the Libyans should pay to the victims'' families. That was all being done by the lawyers, the State Department wasn't directly involved in those negotiations, but we kept track of them, as part of this whole effort.

One of the elements of this that we kept track of was the negotiations the Libyans were conducting with the French, because the Libyans had blown up a French plane over Africa, the plane on which Bonnie Pugh was killed.

So that was the Libya effort. At the same time, one of the issues was, as the Libyans complied with each of these Security Council requirements, at what point will we lift which kind of sanction? So that was a constant discussion among us and with the Security Council, because some of the Security Council members were a little bit more eager than we were to lift the sanctions. We still had a little pressure from the Pan Am 103 families.

One of the areas that I was very interested in was to try to open an interests section in Tripoli. I felt that the time had come, that it was important to the Americans who lived in Tripoli, mostly married to Libyans. The business community wanted to get back in there, because of their old oil contracts. It took a long time. We put together a proposal to the

Secretary, Secretary Albright, to do just that, to have Maura Hardy, she was PDAS for Consular Affairs, to go on a visit to Tripoli, just to see what might happen and was it really a consular issue and all that kind of thing.

There was a lot of to-ing and fro-ing about that, because the counterterrorism people were very unhappy about this proposal. I was pushing it very hard for policy reasons. I thought it was the right thing to do. The consular people wanted to do it. They were a little bit more neutral. We went round and round.

So that was another big issue that was on the policy agenda. We eventually won, in the sense that we got an agreement for Maura Hardy to go to Tripoli. We never got agreement on my watch for us to open an interests section. We were in touch with the Belgians, of course, throughout this period, because they ran our interests section. They didn't do a very good job of it.

I should mention, in connection with Iraq, the Poles ran our interests section there and did a fabulous job. They were constantly sending great reports in and dealing with all kinds of issues. They were being penalized badly by the Iraqis for doing the work that they were doing for us. We would send them classified cables through the Polish Embassy in Washington, actually through our embassy in Warsaw. We would send them instructions, just like you would an American embassy, "Would you please do this?" and "Would you please do that?" and they would do it instantly. We also got them out of there before we attacked in December, just so they wouldn't be hurt at all.

Q: Was NEA seeing a change in Gaddafi? Was he seeing the light?

JONES: Not yet. We hadn't gotten so far as the big change that came with his declaring he was ending his nuclear weapons program. But we were getting cooperation out of him, grudgingly. It was difficult, but we did get him to agree to the trial, we did get him to agree to send the defendants over for trial, that kind of thing.

He was doing a few things on the political side that seemed to make sense. Bandar, the Saudi ambassador to Washington, was involved in some of those negotiations. We had him go over to Libya and talk to the Libyans about this and that. So we felt we were making some headway. It was not nearly the breakthrough that came later. But this was one instance where we could demonstrate that the sanctions we had against the Libyans and Gaddafi in particular, seemed to be working. He hated the isolation, hated the inability to travel and that sort of thing. So that box was what he was trying to get out of.

Q: He really couldn't travel and we got European cooperation. It really brought the place--

JONES: Brought it to a standstill and it really worked. I must say I kept remembering that later on, when the issue came up about how we do sanctions on certain Serbs or the leadership of Belarus or whatever. Okay, that isolation bit can work.

Q: Sudan was the other one?

JONES: No, Iran. Sudan was in AF.

Q: Okay, how about Iran?

JONES: Iran, also very interesting. The effort that we had with Iran at the time was of course we absolutely refused to deal with it so long as it had policies to undercut the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, continued to develop a nuclear weapons program, and supported international terrorism.

At the same time, we wanted to demonstrate that there was a way out of the box and we were constantly saying to the Iranians, "We're happy to talk to you about all of these issues. You don't have to do these things before we have a conversation. You just can't take any of these issues off the table for the conversation." And the interesting thing to me was, we communicated all this through the Swiss, who were our protecting power in Tehran. But, the Iranians really couldn't take the step to open discussions with us, because for them, that was a concession, that was a loss of face in a way that was kind of interesting.

We tried to find a way to make it easier for them to have a conversation with us. This was when there was clearly a divide or a discussion in Iran between the hardliners and the not so hard liners, to the point that there was an election. Rafsanjani came in, and there seemed to be quite a bit of democracy in Iran, to the point that I would call Iran one of the more democratic countries in all of NEA, in terms of actually honoring the results of an election. I had my Iran desk officer do a really careful study of all of the issues that were the irritants in the Iranian-U.S. relationship, as far as the Iranians were concerned, what was it that upset them the most, to try to see if we could speak to all of those issues in a way that would put them aside enough so that they would feel that a conversation with the U.S. was not a loss of face.

He did that, he did a great job. We proposed a policy to the Secretary, to which she agreed, which was that we would try to come up with a set of ideas that she would approve. We would work interagency, we would then put into a speech, a big speech. We did all of that and we came up with several ideas in which we tried to speak to the irritants, the big irritants in the relationship.

The irritants were: serious upset about the U.S. shootdown of the Iranian commercial airliner over the Gulf; serious upset about Mossadegh being thrown out by the U.S. and the Shah being put back in; serious upset about the Shah being admitted to the United States when Khomeini threw him out when he had cancer; and serious upset about the sanctions, the continuing sanctions against import and export of goods. We got fairly far in the interagency process in the language we could use. We got very close, virtually apologizing for shooting down that plane.

Q: It was a horrible mistake. We did it!

JONES: We had already offered compensation, which they'd accepted, for the families. So that part was already done. But the kind of apology that they were looking for, we hadn't really come up with. We came up with language for an apology that was the most I could get and it was an apology. We came up with a discussion of the history of the Mossadegh coup that concluded that we should have honored the elections, so an acknowledgement that we'd mishandled that, basically. And on lifting the sanctions, or removing the sanctions, the closest I could get was removing some sanctions, on agricultural products and handicrafts, basically.

That was the toughest, because of the U.S. Trade Representative language on this kind of thing means all kinds of things to trade specialists. So they finally agreed we could lift sanctions on Iranian exports to the United States of agricultural goods and handicrafts, which translated into pistachios and rugs, unfortunately, but you take what you can get.

We put it all together, had Secretary Albright make a speech in Washington. It turned out that the speech was on March 17, 2000. We had done a lot of work ahead of time to position the speech with the Hill. I had done a million briefings with staff on the Hill so that they would know what was coming, why we were doing it, that this wasn't a sign of weakness, this was how we were going to get the Iranians to finally do the three things we needed them to do. We did a huge rollout of it with our European friends and allies.

We had briefed the Swiss, they had gone into the Iranians to say, "The Secretary's making this speech. This is what it means. This is what we're looking for," et cetera. So we really, really made a big, huge diplomatic effort. There isn't anything that I thought of later that I wished I'd done to roll this out, to try to get them to understand that this was a major, major policy initiative.

Dead silence was the result, dead silence. We got pretty good press in the U.S., an acknowledgement that this was a serious effort by the Clinton Administration to open a new chapter with the Iranians.

From Tehran, we only got an acknowledgement that, "Yes, thank you, we've read the speech" and we kept going back to the Swiss to say, "What's the deal?" Finally, a month later, the Swiss ambassador, presumably, was called in and they said, "Please thank the Americans for the speech. We understand what the intention was. We can't deal with it."

That was the bottom line. It was just too hard. Their politics would not permit them to open a discussion with the U.S.

Q: Were you getting either any good analysis from outside or intelligence from inside about the inner workings? You had this elected government and then you had this ayatollah committee, which apparently had final approval.

JONES: That's right and we were getting a substantial amount. We knew going into it that it would be a fight between the "reformers" and the conservatives, that was the terminology used. I was in touch on a regular basis with the Canadian ambassador who was there, with the Swiss ambassador. The Canadians would regularly come down to see me. I'd go up to Ottawa to see them. We would have EU quad meetings quarterly to talk about Iran, just to make sure I understood. They would get their various ambassadors to come out of Tehran to meet with me about what was going on there and their take on it.

So we had a pretty good sense of it and we'd briefed all of them ahead of time on the intent of Secretary Albright's speech and we said, "Could this work?"

They all said, "It could work, but there will be a fight."

To me it really reminded me of the way the fights go in Washington. Yes, there could be a fabulous initiative somewhere, but you might not be able to get the neocons and the more liberals to agree on responding to it, like on North Korea, say, or whatever.

So we just never got anywhere with it, which was really a shame. But, we went ahead and lifted the sanctions like we said we would, none of this was contingent on an Iranian response, we just said, "We are changing the rules to allow" these kinds of exports.

Q: What were you getting, while you were going through all these briefings and all, from the neocon side? They must have been livid.

JONES: They were very unhappy. It was "appeasement," it was "What are we going to get for it?" It was very negative, but they couldn't stop us, they just weren't strong enough. It turned out that the positive arguments for making the effort, for giving it a good try, won out, in the Congress and elsewhere.

They could have stopped us. They didn't have to agree. If I had had a complete stonewall on lifting those sanctions I wouldn't have gone ahead with it, I couldn't have. USTR wouldn't have let me. It didn't require legislation. It did require an executive decision and we got it, we got that.

Q: Was the neocon position, because it later became quite important, in the next administration, did you get a feel that they had a real policy, or was this just, it sounds like a bunch of guys sitting around a bar talking tough.

JONES: That's really how it came across, because my tactic was to say, "How do you think we should break this deadlock?" "How do you think we should try to persuade the Iranians to stop supporting terrorist organizations?" "How do you think we should get the Iranians to stop supporting Hamas, who's getting in the way of the peace process?" "How do you think we should get them to stop their nuclear program? What ideas do you have?"

Well, they didn't have any.

Q: Were you in that position when there was this attack launched against Sudan and Pakistan?

JONES: Yeah.

Q: How did that play? Can you explain what that was?

JONES: I'm pretty sure I was in NEA when that happened. I think the actual attack had happened before I started in NEA, but it was fairly fresh. I think it happened in the late spring or early summer, in Sudan and it had a very serious effect on European attitudes about the U.S.. The accusation that came up very quickly was that we had not attacked a chemical weapons facility in Sudan, but a manufacturer of baby formula and had killed a number of people in the process. So it piled onto the negative attitudes about the U.S. and the sanctions on Iraq. Did we really know what we were doing and what was really the purpose of all of this?

It unsettled the Gulf, so that one of the things that was a big element in our policy at the time was to have constant conversations with the Gulf Arabs, which often was done by Cohen, by Secretary Cohen, particularly before the December 1998 attack on Iraq, to make sure that they knew why we were

Q: Secretary Cohen being?

JONES: The Secretary of Defense. He traveled all the time. It was a little upsetting to us, because he traveled a lot more than the secretary of state traveled.

Q: And this wasn't the way Weinberger would travel.

JONES: No, he did a good job.

Q: And was undercutting the State Department, this was—

JONES: And once Frank Ricciardone was appointed, if it was an Iraq issue, I'm pretty sure Frank went along every time on Secretary Cohen's trips, that sort of thing, so it worked perfectly well from my perspective. I didn't get too upset about that kind of thing. But the Gulf Arabs said the same thing to Cohen that they later said to Cheney and to Rumsfeld, "If you're going to attack Iraq, for God's sake do it right." From their perspective we never have done it right.

Q: You mentioned Prince Bandar. Now he was the ambassador from Saudi Arabia, but he was a major figure in Washington and particularly in Near Eastern issues. Although he wasn't in your area, was he a factor?

JONES: He was a factor. I would meet with him fairly regularly. He would come in to see Martin Indyk, who was the assistant secretary and I would sit in, if the conversation was about Libya, Iraq or Iran, which it sometimes was. Very often it was on the peace process. Martin Indyk regularly would go out to his residence for dinners and that kind of thing. I never did that. It wasn't necessary, because the dinners were all about the peace process or Saudi Arabia or something that I wasn't actually working on.

But he was very much a man around Washington, very much an ambassador to be reckoned with. He regularly had meetings with Secretary Albright. I remember that he actually met with Strobe Talbot when he was deputy secretary. But he would be at the White House on a regular basis and he was considered a very good friend, a very good ally. We trusted him. He had good credibility with us.

Q: What about Martin Indyk? Were you pretty much left on your own?

JONES: Well, I had known Martin well when I was working for Christopher, when I first met him. He was the one who asked me to come be his PDAS. So we did have a good, positive relationship.

The way we divided things up and it was explicit, we had a conversation about what my role should be versus what his role should be, as PDAS. I would have the same portfolio that David Welch had had, the "bad boys." I would manage the bureau and I would manage the embassies, the 16 embassies under the bureau's jurisdiction.

What that meant was that I did not spend any time really at all on the peace process, or on the Arab Gulf. Ron Neumann was the DAS (Deputy Assistant Secretary) for the Arab Gulf and Toni Verstandig was a political appointee DAS and she was responsible for the peace process. At the same time, Dennis Ross had his whole separate operation on the peace process, with a couple of colleagues. So I would consult with Martin maybe not every day, but fairly regularly, very, very quickly, because he was always in meetings, always busy. He was well known for keeping a lot of people waiting for a very long time. I stayed in touch with all of our embassies.

On the peace process, my perception was that Indyck and Dennis Ross had not bad ideas about how to parse some of the issues that needed to be tackled. Even I knew that it was imperative that we have the trust of the Israelis if we were going to be credible mediators for them. I didn't feel it appropriate or possible for me to second guess what was going on at Wye. Then they moved fairly quickly into a negotiation that involved the Syrians at Shepherdstown. I would get involved in that, mostly to make sure that the support was there, that they had enough staff, that the people coming from the various U.S. embassies were the right people, which ambassadors should be coming, et cetera. So that was the role that I played.

Plus, there was always tension and competition, shall we say, in NEA, with our peace process group in NEA led by Toni Verstandig and the Jordan desk or the regional affairs people, the Jordan and Syria desk and the Dennis Ross operation. So there were plenty of times that I would go to Dennis or go to one of his guys and say, "Come on, let's participate here! There are some bigger issues here! What about the assistance side of this? Let's get the water negotiations in there. What about the settlement negotiations? What about this part, what about that part?" to try to keep the ships all going in a similar direction.

Q: You left the job when?

JONES: I left the job in August of 2000. The reason I left the job then was that the Director General at the time, Skip Gnehm, had called me the previous fall to say they wanted to put me forward for an ambassadorship, another ambassadorship and first I said, "No, I've only been here a year, it wouldn't be fair to Martin."

Suffice it to say that Skip and some of the others around the Secretary said, "No, no, no, we want to put you forward. It's time. Two years is plenty of time," et cetera.

Long story short, I was put forward and approved, even by the White House, to go as ambassador to Germany, which for me was fabulous, because I'd been born in Germany, I spoke German, served there twice. This would be the first time an ambassador was going to Berlin, to the embassy in Berlin, as opposed to Bonn. John Kornblum had moved it to Berlin.

But what happened, as I was working on all of these other things, was that Jesse Helms, Senator Helms, head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, made clear to Secretary Albright that he believed that a political appointee should go to that job. Since he "knew" that the Republicans were going to win in November of 2000, that he was not going to even permit me to have a hearing to go as ambassador to Germany. That turned out to be what happened. I had lots of hearings scheduled, never went, but I went through the entire process of being nominated, et cetera, to the point that I went through the chief of mission training, I selected a DCM, I made sure the personnel system had a PAO out there that I'd selected, an administrative counselor that I'd selected and then I ended up not going.

But the big downside for me was that it was August of 2000, I didn't have a job, because I'd been replaced, the DCM from Tel Aviv was coming in to replace me and I thought, "Gee whiz, here I'm going from possibly a fabulous job to no job!"

What happened, though, in the summer, or maybe even a little bit earlier, was that Strobe Talbot called me up to his office to ask if I would replace John Wolf as the Caspian Basin energy diplomacy negotiator. I said yes before he even finished the sentence. He said, "Are you sure you don't want to think about this?" I said, "No, I would die happy to have that job. I would love that job." John Wolf was the second person to have it. Dick

Morningstar had been the first. And it was agreed that I would finish in August, do some Russian brush up at FSI, because I knew I'd have to get my Russian back to do all the traveling that I needed to do and then John Wolf and I went on a joint trip out to the region in November of 2000.

Q: Why did Senator Helms want a political appointee? Did you ever find out? Was there a person in mind, or—

JONES: So far as I know he did not have a person in mind, but this was the first postwar ambassadorship in Germany that would be based in Berlin from the beginning. I am completely convinced that he believed that there would be a whole lineup of political appointees who would want a job that was in Berlin. Political appointees didn't want the job when it was in Bonn, when it was in a little village, but a capital city like Berlin, absolutely.

What then happened of course is that Dan Coates was nominated to be ambassador. I don't think that is who Helms necessarily had in mind. That was the consolation prize, because, as you remember, Dan Coates was the one who interviewed for Secretary of Defense, didn't do very well and Rumsfeld got it instead.

So I had a whole team of people who I respected tremendously that I'd recruited to work for me in Berlin. So there they were and I didn't go.

Q: What happened to them? Did they manage to survive the change in boss or not?

JONES: Not only did they survive, but in the job that I did get later, as assistant secretary covering Europe, one of the early trips that I took with Secretary Powell was to Berlin. Dan Coates had especially contacted me ahead of time. He wanted to have a little drinks party for me when I was there, which was a little difficult, when you're traveling with the Secretary, you've got to focus on the Secretary, but I carved out the time. He organized the drinks party in the hotel where we were staying, in the library, which was absolutely lovely. The senior team that I had selected to work with me in Berlin were all there. In his remarks at drinks, Dan thanked me profusely for having selected such fabulously competent, wonderful people. And he said, "I know you picked them to work for you and I know that you didn't go and I'm really sorry, but I'm really glad for me and thank you very much."

It was extremely gracious. It was really very, very nice.

I was slated to go to Germany in the summer of 2000. The argument I had been making is, "Let me go in the summer of 2000, even if there's a political appointee coming in, they won't get there for a year, just because the confirmation hearings and all that take such a long time."

In the meantime, because we were slated for the Germany posting, Don and I decided it was time for us to get married – which we did on April 1, 2000 at home in Bethesda. We invited lots of friends and family, including good friends of ours from our time in Almaty, Johan (a Dutch banker) and Marla (an American lawyer). Johan asked Don in advance what it would take for them to get married at the same time. The wedding was on Saturday. When they landed at Dulles on Thursday afternoon, Don took them to the Rockville county seat to get a marriage license, giving them the option to marry on Saturday. Marla still wasn't convinced she wanted to do so and kept asking my advice. "How can I be sure this is the right thing?" I finally figured out the difference between the two of us and told her: "You are a lawyer, and want everything firmly decided before you sign the agreement. I am a diplomat. I know that once the agreement is signed that there will be a lot of work to implement it properly, so I take a leap of faith that the agreement will work. If you can take that leap of faith, do it, otherwise, better not". She did. Don took Johan and Marla out Friday morning to buy wedding rings. Friends took Marla out Friday afternoon to buy a dress. Don and Johan spent Friday afternoon getting her family onto planes from New Mexico and California to be in DC in time for the wedding the next afternoon. We hosted the rehearsal dinner at our house. I ordered up another bouquet, and we told the officiant that he would be marrying two couples, not just one. My daughter, Courtney, was my maid of honor, Don's brother was his best man, Marla's father walked both of us down the aisle, Don's two daughters (both adopted from Russia) were the flower girls and my niece (adopted by my sister from Kazakhstan-two years old) was the ring bearer. It was a very fun impromptu double wedding!! Don and I went skiing in Alaska for our honeymoon. And NEA gave us a fabulous weekend at the Greenbrier Resort for a wedding present.

Also, in the meantime, Courtney had graduated from Madeira High School, where she had boarded even in her senior year while I was home in Bethesda. She argued that I wouldn't be home until very late every night, so what was the point of her living at home and having to be in beltway traffic jams every morning and evening? She came home with a bunch of pals every weekend, which was super fun for me. Todd was back in the U.S. living with his Dad and finishing high school in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Courtney and I went there once to see Todd in a school play. He had then started college at American University in DC. It took me twenty minutes to take him to college! He was in the School for International Service there, which made me very proud.

John Wolf was in my next job as Caspian Basin Energy Diplomacy chief. He wasn't quite ready to leave so soon, so I had from August until I took over from him in November to go on vacation, which I did for a little bit. Then I did a Russian brush up at the Foreign Service Institute, because I knew I was going to need to use a lot of Russian with all of the countries that I was going to have to be working with in this new job.

The formal title of the job was Special Advisor to the President and Secretary of State for Caspian Energy Diplomacy. The acronym was a source of great fun when you say it: "SAPASS."

Q: Okay, as you saw it at the time and as others saw it, Talbott and company, what was the job?

JONES: The Caspian Basin Energy job? The job was to continue the extremely good work of my two predecessors, John Wolf and Dick Morningstar (he was the first one), who had been working to develop the political support and the legal support for a pipeline that would take oil from the Caspian Basin to Western Europe, somehow, in a way that would not go through Russia. The whole idea was to develop a pipeline that would compete with the Russian pipelines, could not be controlled by the Russians and would allow the states of the Caspian Sea who were oil rich to get their energy to market without having to be pressured by the Russians.

The Russians had played a very cynical game all through the nineties. Anytime they felt that they didn't like what Kazakhstan was doing, or Azerbaijan, they would just shut down the pipeline, within hours, literally, so the cause and effect was very immediately apparent. And, by the way, it's the same thing that they did to Ukraine, when they didn't like what Ukraine did in terms of gas a couple of years ago. It's what they did to the Czech Republic a couple of months ago, when the Czech Republic signed up to the missile defense agreement with the U.S.

So it's the kind of thing that they've been doing for a while.

Q: Just to get a feel for this, what was the feeling about Russia at that time?

JONES: Well, we had a difference of view. John Wolf had been much more aggressive about the Russians, anti-Russian in his work on this subject. At the same time, he had spent a tremendous amount of time doing the negotiating for what we called the host government agreements with Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, the countries through which this pipeline was going to go. He also worked to develop the intergovernmental agreements, agreements among the three countries for the pipeline to cross over the borders.

The pipeline was going to be built by a consortium led by British Petroleum.

My strategy with the Russians was different. Mine was to say, "Please participate. There is more oil in the region than can possibly go through the existing pipelines. This is not an anti-Russian pipeline. It's simply an addition to the Russian pipelines. You are getting your oil out either through Russia, or through the neck of the Caucasus into the Black Sea." The ships that carry the oil were not double hulled tankers, so they were highly susceptible to leaks. When you go through the Turkish straits, it's an extremely difficult place to navigate. So the chances of some disaster with an oil spill all up and down the fabulously gorgeous Turkish beaches was very, very high, that possibility.

So the argument I made to the Russians and, of course, the others had already long since agreed to this, is, "You don't want to be in a situation where you can't get your oil out.

What if your existing pipelines are too jammed up, you still have oil you want to get out and the Turkish straits are closed? Don't you want to be able to participate in this?"

I got pretty close. My Russian counterpart was very, very hostile about all of this. I would meet him at various symposia in the UK and other places. We'd be on panels together discussing energy security and pipelines and all that kind of thing. I finally was able to persuade him that this was simply to add transportation capacity, that it wasn't an anti-Russian measure by the U.S.. Finally, he in one public statement, on the record, to the media said, "We understand that this isn't an anti-Russian move. We understand that Russian companies are invited to participate. We just don't want to."

Q: Look, this is what you're saying and maybe what you believed, but there must have been a rather significant anti-Russian, not necessarily just plain Cold Warriors but Russia was not a benign country.

JONES: Well, but remember, this is 2000 and 2001. We're still in the Clinton Administration, when I first started, moving into the Bush Administration, or should I say Cheney Administration, where pipelines are concerned. So I was in the job long enough, in terms of the interagency discussion, to be very much in charge of the issue.

There was not Russia-bashing going on at the time. Putin had just come in. Putin was very preoccupied with the Chechnya War. That's what he came in to do, to solve the Chechnya problem. So Russia wasn't the resurgent Russia that we see now. I can't remember exactly what the oil prices were, but Russia was just coming out of an extremely bad financial crisis, 1998-99, it was still kind of shaky. The income wasn't nearly what it is now, so there wasn't this big surge of power that we see on the part of the Russians now. There were lots of discussions. I went to Moscow all the time. I would see my counterpart at various oil and gas shows at various places, we'd be on panels together arguing about these issues.

The issue that came up when the Bush Administration came in, from the Cheney crowd and from the new Secretary of Energy had nothing to do with Russia. The Secretary of Energy had a very large Armenian community in his constituency and his advisor was very unhappy that the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline did not go through Armenia, that it went through Azerbaijan and Georgia and down into Turkey.

What they wanted very much was that it should go Azerbaijan-Georgia and maybe Armenia or maybe just skip all Georgia altogether and go through Armenia and Turkey.

The reason it didn't was because Armenia was highly volatile throughout the nineties. The entire period of time that the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline was being negotiated, for its commercial value, was when there was the attack on the Armenian parliament, during which the prime minister was slain. So there was no way politically, in terms of political risk, that that pipeline was going to go through Armenia.

Basically the argument I made to the Bush people when they came in is, "You know what, this is a commercial deal. This has been negotiated by the companies this way. The U.S. government, yes, has had people like me and my two predecessors who've negotiated the host government and intergovernmental agreements and they're done."

The only things left to do were to get some of the banking support that we needed from the U.S. government, through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. I basically spent a lot of time explaining to them why this pipeline was necessary, why it was appropriate for the U.S. to support, and that all of the environmental impact statements had been done, so that they could meet the OPIC standards for loans.

Q: Why was Russia a player, in a way? Obviously we were bypassing Russia. Was it to keep them happy or benign? Because essentially they weren't in Azerbaijan or Georgia.

JONES: No, they weren't, but they're players in the region. Even at the time, they still were very aggressive in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia about their people, their position. They could not control the ports on the Black Sea, but would like to have controlled the ports on the Black Sea. They were constantly making proposals to the Georgians to bypass Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan. In the meantime, the whole issue of Blue Stream, the gas pipeline under the Black Sea, was a big issue. It's now been built.

The position I took on it as the Caspian negotiator was that the Russians are players in the region, they should have not a say but a role, they shouldn't be left out. Nobody wanted an isolated Russia. My strategy was that the more involved Russia felt and the more transparency there was in all of the deals, the less paranoid they would be about what was going on behind their backs. The fact of the matter was we, the U.S., wanted Russian cooperation on another pipeline, on the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, which did go from Central Asia into Russia, in which the major American oil companies were also participating. So we needed to keep them going with us on all these fronts, understanding that the U.S. policy was driven by the commercial viability of the pipelines involved.

Q: You have your political element which you've just mentioned on our side, with Cheney and Armenians and all that. How about on the Russian side? At that point was there a forward looking oil establishment, or was this pretty much a government establishment?

JONES: There was no question in my mind that the Russian oil sector was all run by the government. Yes, there were "private" companies in Russia. Lukoil was one, Rosneft, there are all kinds of names like that. Lukoil was probably the most prominent one. I used to meet with a Lukoil director to say, "You've got all these properties in the Caspian. Don't you want to participate in Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan?" And he also would say to me, "I would like to, but I can't." Again, the political pressure of the Kremlin was so extreme, because it was seen as national prestige for the Russians to be able to control all the oil and gas going out of the region. They just could not give it up.

This became even more of an issue and this is something that started when I was working on it: we not only had the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline going, but we said, "Let's do a parallel gas pipeline as well, because there's plenty of gas out here in Azerbaijan. We need the gas to get not only to Turkey, most importantly, we need to get it through Turkey up into Europe, to compete with the Russian gas coming into Europe." The Germans and the French and some of the others in Europe were becoming more and more dependent on Russian gas. This was all in 2000, 2001. I was making these arguments in Brussels. I feel like I kept repeating myself for eight years about the importance of having a competitive source of gas, so that Europe doesn't have to be so dependent on Russia.

Q: How did you find the Georgia-Russia element?

JONES: South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Ajaria was the third one. Ajaria was one that went back into Georgia. Saakashvili undid that one. So there were those three disputed areas.

Plus, there was the other frozen conflict of the region, between Azerbaijan and Armenia, over Nagorno-Karabakh, which was being negotiated separately through the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Those issues were there, but because Russia wasn't particularly resurgent and because they were so still focused on Chechnya and the Chechnya War, they weren't really issues at the time. They were around, but they weren't hot.

Q: Did the oil pipeline project go through those?

JONES: No, it did not.

Q: Was that a consideration when the line was being—

JONES: Not really. Geographically it would not have made sense. There were discussions about going through some of the Armenian majority areas of Nagorno-Karabakh. They would be upset. There were some underlying security issues there, but the political risk crowd took a look at it and said, "No, it's fine. Yes, there are issues, but it's not that big a deal."

A bigger deal was that these pipelines were going by where some of the Russian bases were. The Russians still had military outposts in Georgia left behind from the former Soviet Union. Yeltsin in November of 1999 had signed an agreement sponsored by the OSCE (in its Istanbul Summit (that President Clinton had participated in) that agreed to withdraw troops from the bases in Georgia and to withdraw ammunition and bases from the eastern half of Moldova ("Transnistria"). So the focus was all on could the OSCE get these "Istanbul commitments" to be adhered to by the Russians. It was much more of an issue between the U.S. and Russia than it was with Georgia. Georgia didn't like it that Russian bases remained, but there wasn't a lot that they could do about it at the time, didn't try to.

Later, when I was assistant secretary, we got into all of that kind of thing a lot more, but at the time, then, when I was doing pipelines, it wasn't that big a deal.

Q: How did you find the oil companies? I assume by the time you got there it was pretty well encased in concrete, wasn't it, where the pipeline would go and all?

JONES: Where the pipeline would go, yes. Construction hadn't started, but the agreements, all of the host government agreements that would govern where exactly the pipeline would go, had all been negotiated and signed. Then the intergovernmental agreement -- is how do they connect over the border and to sort out the security arrangements for the pipeline in each of the three countries.

BTC, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, was being built by a consortium of companies led by BP. Several of them were American companies. I would stay in touch with all of those companies separately to talk about what their issues were, how is it going and were there any problems with the various host governments that they were trying to deal with.

Part of my job, too, was to talk oil companies into committing volumes, committing oil, to the pipeline to make sure it was full, so that by the time it was open and ready for business it wasn't empty, that it could be filled with oil right away. That was highly controversial, because Exxon Mobil, Mobil at the time, Exxon came in later, was adamantly, a thousand per cent, opposed to BTC. They thought it was the worst idea in the world and they were completely convinced, get this, that the only pipeline that made any sense would be one through Iran from the Caspian.

Okay, fine, if you look at a map, sure, maybe it makes sense, but, hello, there are political issues with Iran and, hello, they're not going to be solved tomorrow or next year or even in ten years.

Q: They couldn't read the tea leaves.

JONES: Well, that's what I found so astonishing. I would be in knockdown, drag out fights with Mobil up and down the line, from the CEO to the vice president for exploration to everybody, the political risk person, everybody, over this whole issue. And they just kept saying, "BTC isn't going to work. We're not going to participate. It's not going to work, we're not going to participate."

Then they'd do crazy things that didn't make any sense. Part of the argument for BTC is you can't get the oil tankers reliably through the Turkish straits. So they did up a whole presentation that showed how oil tankers coming out of New Orleans or Houston was the same as going through the Turkish straits. So since that was easy, going through the Turkish straits was easy. It was completely crazy. They completely ignored the difficult topography of the Turkish Straits.

Even somebody that I knew extremely well and had for years, when I kept saying, "Tell me why you think that the sanctions, the Iran-Libya sanctions, are somehow going to go away and permit you guys to participate in an oil pipeline or a gas pipeline coming through Iran from the Caspian, anytime in my lifetime? It's just not going to happen."

"Oh, well, you never know," was the answer from Mobil.

It was a hugely controversial issue with them, to the point that I was at ExxonMobil a year ago, giving a presentation of something totally different to oil company guys, they took me to task for this all over again. I said, "We don't have a discussion here, boys and girls. That pipeline is built and oh, by the way, it's full without your oil."

Q: Was it that they didn't have oil?

JONES: Oh, no, they had plenty of oil, because they had oil coming out of Kazakhstan. They also had this huge offshore property in the North Caspian. So my argument to them was barge it over here to Baku and get into BTC and they said, no, they'd rather wait until—

Q: You're a political officer by instinct. What the hell was going on? Did they feel they had Cheney in their hip pocket, because he was very much an oilman, or did they feel they had something going or what were you getting?

JONES: The only thing I could come up with is that Mobil was a highly successful American company. We can tell that from the profits it makes. This has gone to its head in a way that translates into "We know we're right. We've always been right. We have been right because we don't take risks. We're not going to get into something that's risky," which they believed BTC to be. "We would rather wait and see" and in the meantime, of course, they were part of this other pipeline, the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, that would go up through Russia. So they said, "We'll just get our oil out that way and we'll wait for Iran to open up." It's one of the few times that I've seen a company argue so much against what I considered its own interests.

Chevron, on the other hand, also has a lot of oil, more than Mobil, actually, coming out of Kazakhstan and they eventually did participate in the pipeline. They didn't want to, at first. They didn't want to put the money in. They thought it was highly unlikely that the pipeline would be built, et cetera. They agreed that the risk was high, but they eventually could see that they ought to have an alternative to CPC, which they also participate in, along with Mobil.

Q: What about the European countries?

JONES: The European countries were surprisingly oblivious to all of this. Maybe I shouldn't say surprisingly, because the Europeans were not paying attention to this part of the world at all. They were focused on themselves; they were focused on their own

enlargement. I will grant that enlargement, it's very difficult and very expensive and it takes a lot of effort, it really does.

Q: What do you mean when you say enlargement?

JONES: Enlargement of the European Union. There was a tremendous amount of focus on getting the first of the former Warsaw Pact states into the European Union, like Poland and the Czech Republic, tremendous focus there.

So this was just too far east for them to think about. Every time I came out to the region, which was at least once a month, if not more often, I would stop in Brussels, either on the way in or the way out, to meet with various of the European Commission officials to argue, argue, argue for them to pay much more attention to the Caspian, to pay much more attention to lending political support to Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, to participating in lending political support to the gas pipeline for the reasons we talked about before.

In the meantime, Turkey and Greece, although they have been at loggerheads all this time, had made an agreement to join up two pipelines that had been closed down between Turkey and Greece. They agreed to change the direction of the one in Greece so that it would all go north, provide the extra competition that I was advocating for.

I can't say I succeeded. The first time the Europeans really woke up to what was going on, all the things that we'd been saying, was when the Russians cut off Ukraine on New Year's Day a couple of years ago. That's when they said, "Oh my God, oh my God, there's a monopoly going on here!"

Q: There is a story about somebody saying to Henry Kissinger "We've got to take Europe into account," and he said, "What is the telephone number of Europe?" It's something that keeps coming up in these oral histories, our embassies abroad dealing with human rights in Africa or somewhere else, the Europeans really aren't a world power. They talk that way, but they just don't seem to feel they have responsibilities beyond their own borders.

JONES: I actually disagree to a degree with that, but maybe we can talk about that later. But just the precursor of that maybe is the Europeans are world powers in the issues that they care to be world powers on, and their definition of what's important and our definition of what's important isn't always the same. That I think is where the difference is.

Q: Okay, we'll come to that. But, anyway and particularly on the oil thing at this time and we're talking, today, in 2008, oil is a huge factor, because it's very expensive and China has entered the scene and India is entering the scene and there's much more competition, so people are thinking much more about oil.

JONES: Oil, even then, believe it or not, was really big. It just didn't happen to be so expensive. In fact, it had gone through a period where it was extremely inexpensive and the oil companies were going, "Oh my God, oh my God, we can't afford to produce with the price of oil so low!" and all of that sort of thing. But there are two other items, I didn't quite answer your questions, now that I think about them.

One is with the Europeans. The leader of the BTC consortium of course was a European company. So that was another hook that I used. I'd go to London every so often as well and Brussels to say, "Come on, guys, pay attention! Your companies are paying attention!" The Norwegians participated, the British participated. So that was a hook that I used. It didn't work very well, but it was at least something that we could go back to.

The other thing you asked about that I didn't complete my thoughts on was Russian government versus Russia private oil companies, what was going on with that. One of the issues that we discussed at the time quite a bit was there actually a state policy to try to increase the Russian company monopolies over production in the Baltic states, storage facilities in the Baltic states, the same all the way through Eastern Europe? Or was it just by chance that these Russian oil and gas companies and production companies were prepared to buy these facilities for a dime on the dollar. Western companies were not prepared to do so, because they after all had shareholders that they had to answer to. Whereas Lukoil and Rosneft and these kinds of companies didn't.

They could just buy up this or that energy facility for no money and thereby have access to those facilities all over the territory of the former Soviet Union.

So we had a twofold policy debate in Washington. One strand was, as I said, is this a state policy, a government policy, or is it just by chance that this is happening and it was just convenient? Either way, is there something the United States and Europe, if we can get them to move, can do about this? Is there a way that we can shore up the Czechs so that their gas facilities aren't bought by Russia? Is there a way that we can shore up the Baltic states, so that their ports aren't taken over by the Russians? Is there something more that we can do in Georgia to make sure that their electricity networks aren't bought out by the Russians, et cetera?

The debate continues today on the second question. On the first question, nobody disputes anymore that this is a state policy. We see more and more that even the companies that were kind of private, like Lukoil, have long since been basically renationalized and brought back into their strategic resources and they're now under the control of the state, one way or the other.

Q: The question at this point is why did we have somebody in your position doing this? Wouldn't this be just private enterprise doing this? Why do we have a State person here and were there other people, your counterparts, in Europe or other people who were involved?

JONES: There was no one else involved from any other country that I knew about doing the same kind of work.

The theory of it was this: the Russians throughout the nineties had been very, very difficult with the Kazakhstanis, the Turkmen, the Azeris, all of the former Soviet countries that had oil and gas, in terms of export transportation. The countries were at a loss as to how to deal with this. They felt they needed help. They were constantly coming to us, saying, "Please help us figure out about pipelines. Please help us figure out how to get past the Russians. Please help us compete with the Russians."

It was something I heard as ambassador to Kazakhstan, all of us heard all the time. They were constantly coming to the U.S. to say, "Please help us figure out how to be independent of the Russians in terms of our own energy security and our ability to get these strategic resources sold in the West, in ways that the Russians don't control." That was the genesis of it. It was started under the Clinton Administration with Dick Morningstar, in probably about 1996 or so, '97, something like that. The idea was, yes, it has to be commercially viable, whatever pipelines are decided on and whatever we look at has to be commercially viable.

So, for instance, the first thing that any of us got involved in was supporting the companies in their political negotiations with the Russians over the Caspian Pipeline Consortium, because the Russians were being so very difficult.

It is a requirement; it is in the work requirements of every ambassador in every embassy to support American business. So we were already doing that, anyway, with Mobil and Chevron in CPC.

We then saw it as a strategic interest of the United States to support the independence of these various countries. They could most easily gain prosperity, independence, et cetera, if we helped them with the whole energy transportation issue, provided there were companies or consortia of companies that were prepared to build the thing, because there wasn't going to be a dime of American taxpayer money going into this, other than my salary. We were two people, it's not like it was a big office or anything. So the idea was that we would take the lead in negotiating with the Azeris, the Georgians and the Turks on the governmental support for these pipelines.

That involved negotiating things like what would the labor rules be, what would the revenue be versus the profit? How much would go to the governments and how much would go to the oil companies and what would the timeline be for all that?

But they were fairly complicated agreements, the host government and intergovernmental agreements, that oil companies came to us and said, "We don't know how to do this. Could you please help us figure out how to deal with these governments?"

Because of course in all of these countries this kind of thing is a state prospect, it's not a private prospect. So we basically served as a liaison between governments and the private sector to negotiate all of this, on the basis that it was in the national interest of the United States for these countries to be independent and prosperous through the revenues from the oil transportation and the sale of their oil and gas.

Q: In a way, looking at it if I'm a Russian, you're trying to undercut the Russian control over things.

JONES: Right, absolutely.

Q: No matter how you slice it, it's not a zero sum game, but if you're talking power, you're talking about diminishing their power.

JONES: We're talking about diminishing their leverage over independent neighboring states.

Q: Were people in the Department, the old Soviet affairs crowd, people you were well familiar with, were they saying, "Eventually Russia's going to try to reconstitute its empire and so we may be going through a transitory period"?

JONES: The discussion at the time was "Russia hates it that it no longer has its empire. It wants to maintain the facade that it still has an empire through this kind of leverage over these countries. The pressures on these countries are inappropriate. There's nothing that we're doing commercially that hurts Russia, because we're not saying 'You can't have any pipelines,' we're not saying 'Russian companies can't participate.'

"We are saying, 'That pipeline's going to be full, because we didn't know how much oil was in individual fields. We want to be able to ensure that the energy in this entire region, including from Russia, can get to Western markets and can get to Western markets in a commercially viable way. Russian companies are by no means disenfranchised or disadvantaged in any way, in terms of participating. Russia, you want to be part of the World Trade Organization, you want to be part of the world economic system, where competition is the fundament, so we're just helping implement the rules that you've already agreed to.'"

Q: Let's talk a bit about the countries involved. The Azeris, how were they to deal with? I think of them and the Armenians going hammer and tong. But how did you find them?

JONES: I found them really terrific to work with. Part of it was that the people assigned to work on BTC were very sophisticated. They were genuine oil experts and transportation experts. They had the ear of the president, Heydar Aliyev, who's since died. They could make decisions.

So my dealings with them were always very businesslike, very straightforward: here's the issue, how do we solve it, what are the other issues involved, here's what the Russians are saying, here's what the Georgians are saying, here's what the Kazakhstanis want. At the time I was mostly involved in persuading the Kazakhstanis to dedicate volumes coming from Kazakhstan for transportation through this pipeline. In other words, not all of it would go through CPC.

Q: How would that work? Would they be using tankers?

JONES: That's right, tankers across the Caspian down to Baku, that's right. The north Caspian is very shallow and the winds are such that there are times when if the wind is blowing from east to west it'll blow all the water out to sea, basically. So suddenly you have thirty miles of beach, where yesterday, if the wind was going the other direction, you were ten feet underwater. Very dangerous if you're out on the beach and the wind changes.

But what that meant was that environmentally the whole north Caspian is extremely delicate, which means you can't just say, "Oh, let's build a pipeline." You're not going to just build a pipeline across the north Caspian. So that's why barges and how they were going to build the production sites and all that kind of thing for the off-shore Kashagan area was very, very delicate.

Keep in mind that at that time, even though a lot of the work had been done on these territories, in terms of what was in there with oil and gas, Kashagan was still not proven; it wasn't a proven reserve. So it wasn't too clear, yet, that there was many, many, many millions of tons of oil under the sea. We now know there is. So the kind of work that we did, saying, "Okay, why don't you commit some of those volumes to BTC?" were completely appropriate, as it turns out.

Q: What was happening around Baku? I remember seeing pictures, shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union and it looked like a disaster area, because, let's say, the environmental protection efforts were nonexistent, practically, sort of stagnant oil and old equipment and all that.

JONES: That's still the case. Looking out to sea, out into the Caspian from Baku, all you see are these derelict oil derricks out there. It's really awful looking.

In the period of time I was there, there was just beginning to be an environmentally conscious sense. It's much better now. Everything's not cleaned up, but SOCAR (the Azeri national oil company) now has a very powerful, energetic person in charge of the environment. They're trying to get at some of these issues.

But Baku itself, as a city, is extremely interesting historically, because it's had so many different groups that have lived there. There's a big Jewish quarter. There's a big Iranian quarter. The Nobel younger sons were big into oil in Azerbaijan and so there's a big

Nobel mansion there that you don't hear about. You always hear about Nobel dynamite, but the Nobels were a big part of the city's history. So there's some fabulously interesting tours that you could take of historic Baku. A few of the buildings were being put back into shape with all kinds of different ethnicities who lived in Baku through the years, with various groups bringing back the mansions and the houses and the museums and all that kind of thing.

Q: Did the government seem to be dealing with ethnic minorities fairly well, because I remember there had been an attack on Armenians there at one time, wasn't there, I thought there was a kind of race riot?

JONES: There was very serious fighting between Armenians and Azeris in the nineties. The period of time that I've been involved there that hasn't happened, fortunately. That's also mostly in the Nagorno-Karabakh area, away from Baku. But the political issues with Azerbaijan had to do with democracy, was there really sufficient democracy, was there enough of a market economy, how bad is corruption? Those issues are all still there, even with the change in governments since Heydar Aliyev died and his son was elected president.

A lot of the backdrop is focused on the inability of Azerbaijan and Armenia to negotiate this Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Each president claims that he would be overthrown were he to give up any territory, give up any of the traditional rights of one side or the other. So that's still an outstanding problem.

Q: Did the pipeline go through that area?

JONES: No.

Q: Okay, how about the Georgians, at the time you were dealing with it?

JONES: Shevardnadze was the president. The head of the Georgian oil and gas company, the minister of oil and gas, foreign minister, were all people that were very easy to deal with. They had been involved with this project for a long time. They knew how to get the decisions made. Everything that we could see and the due diligence that had to be done for the international financing was very thorough, so there couldn't be corruption on the pipeline and all that kind of thing. The environmental impact statements had been done.

So from that perspective, in both places and in Turkey, the Turkish officials that I was dealing with, were all very matter of fact, very what I would call "with the program". They knew what needed to be done, they knew how to negotiate with each other.

I was involved when the project was further along. There were always glitches. Regularly, BP would come say, "Oh my God, such and such has gone wrong. The Georgians have an issue with this village or that village that doesn't want the pipeline to go through or the village elder hasn't gotten enough cut on the deal." There were no cuts

on the deal, but there were jobs to be had, that was the way it was handled, but that gets into my next job.

Q: Well, what about corruption? My God, we're talking about the Caucasus. That's another name for corruption, practically.

JONES: Well, one of the interesting things about working in this whole region with the Western companies, especially the American companies, is they have such strict laws and rules about what you can and can't do to get a deal. Because of the American companies involved in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan consortium, all of those rules had to be followed under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. All of these governments knew that, so they knew that there was a limit, a prohibition, to the kinds of kickbacks that they were used to on other deals.

That's always a struggle in working in this part of the world: are you or are you not going to be able to get the deal done without the kickbacks?

The argument I make is that the transparency of the consortium, or the American companies involved, is such and their commitment to community participation is such that the long-term interests of the communities is much better taken care of than it would be through the blatant corruption that can occur where, yes, the senior officials get the kickbacks, rather than the community. In the end the argument I would make is: senior officials stay in office longer if their communities are happier.

So, in other words, as nearly as we could tell, it was very, very difficult to be corrupt on any part of the deal that any of us could see, through the host government agreements, or the intergovernmental agreement. All of the very intrusive studies and reports, et cetera, that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development required, that Overseas Private Investment Corporation required, all of the banks required, the environmental impact statements, et cetera. Assured transparency of the deal.

Q: How about Turkey?

JONES: Turkey probably had the lead, really, took a leading role in negotiating all of this. First of all, they were just more practiced, they were more experienced, in these kinds of deals. The officials in Georgia and Azerbaijan we were dealing with had only been doing this kind of thing for ten years, really. The Turks had been doing it for much longer.

Number two, much, much more of the pipeline goes through Turkey than through the others, so they had a much bigger stake in seeing the whole project through and making sure that it was done in a way that was politically supportable in their own government, that it would pass all of the smell tests of corruption and all of that kind of thing.

So really whenever I was in Georgia or Azerbaijan, we almost always organized it so that the officials of all four countries, the United States included, would be together at various of these events, for continuous discussions about whatever it was that needed to be solved.

We'd get down to a lot of detail about, okay, how do we coordinate on the security arrangements? How are the security officers going to communicate with each other? What constitutes an incident, how do we categorize it? There were various experts that would be called in, or the oil companies themselves would do it, to say, "Okay, here's how we do it in Africa, here's the plan that we propose to use here," et cetera, those kinds of discussions.

Q: Well, did you find being an American at these negotiations, to a certain extent you seem to have been either the odd person in or the odd person out?

JONES: Well, it was a very different time for the United States, so I guess it's a little hard to remember, but the United States was in extremely good odor in all of these countries, including especially with Turkey and in Europe, as a matter of fact.

Everything that the U.S. was doing, nobody had any complaints about what the U.S. was doing, anywhere, really. Maybe there were. I can't think of any. Iran, people didn't like our Iran policy, the sanctions. I guess that's probably the main one. So the oil company representatives, BP, were all British, they were delighted to have a government that was interested and would help them, because their governments weren't. So from that perspective, it was all positive. The other countries had all been pounding on the U.S. embassies to get this kind of U.S. attention they were getting, they liked that.

Q: How about the French? Were they in this thing at all?

JONES: No. You're right, often the French participate in a very positive way, but they weren't involved.

Q: I realize you wouldn't, directly, but were you getting thunder on the right from Iran or not, were they at all saying, "Hey, how about us?" Was anybody?

JONES: The only way that Iran made its weight felt were the negotiations on the demarcation of the Caspian, how to divide up the Caspian among the five littoral states. And the Iranians were constantly saying, "Five countries, we get twenty percent of the Caspian." And the others would say, "Five countries, you get x number of miles from your shore." So one of the things that I was involved in quite a bit was talking to each of the governments, everybody but the Iranians, about the Caspian demarcation, what are the legal requirements for a demarcation.

If you read some of the discussion at the time, the whole discussion was "Was it a lake or a sea?" because how far offshore you own is different if it's a lake or a sea.

So I would not participate in the five country meetings, but I would often go to capitals before the five country meetings to say, "Here's what the U.S. experts think would make a good demarcation. Here's what international law, from everything we can figure out, from this history. This is how the Russians and the Norwegians demarcated." We'd bring a lot of legal history into it as well. One of the lawyers would help me do a presentation to the Kazakhstanis or to the Azeris or to whomever to say, "Here are some suggestions for how to negotiate this" with the Russians, partly and partly with the Iranians.

So that's as close as we got to the Iranian bit, except when Iranian gunboats would come up and threaten some of the Azeri properties in what the Azeris considered their part of the Caspian. Then we'd get involved in that.

Q: Was this the Revolutionary Guard wing, or was this—

JONES: To a degree Revolutionary Guards. I don't really remember how much I knew at the time as to who was pushing which button in Iran.

One of the things that I did bring to the table was my conviction that the Iranians were quite prepared to negotiate politically for some very nice deal that would involve the other countries, but when it got down to commercial implementation of whatever that deal was they were extremely tough negotiators and would basically pull apart a political agreement and disadvantage, that's the nicest word you can use, any of these countries.

There are all kinds of instances when that happened. One occurred when I was in Kazakhstan. We had given the Kazakhstanis a brief reprieve from the Iran sanctions to do a swap deal of their oil with Iran, since the Russians were being so difficult about allowing Kazakhstani oil into CPC. The Kazakhstanis sent a tanker of oil to the Iranian port on the Caspian, expecting to be paid at that time's price of oil. Instead, the Iranians waited months until the price of oil was very low, and paid the Kazakhstanis then for their tanker of oil. It was not a great way to win friends.

Q: Well how did the negotiations over the Caspian Sea come out?

JONES: Well what happened in the end was that each of the countries negotiated bilaterally. So the Kazakhstanis ended up negotiating with the Russians over part of the demarcation and the Azeris did the same. The Turkmen and the Uzbeks would figure out where their line was and then the Uzbeks and the Kazakhstanis would figure out where their line was.

Q: But how about with the Iranians, then?

JONES: Well, they would be involved in the five party group and they would always come to the table saying, "We want twenty per cent!" and then the others would say, "Forget it!" and would continue talking.

Q: What about, on the home front, Vice President Cheney was, still is, a very powerful person in the Bush Administration and was very much sort of an oilman. Did you sense his influence, or Big Oil?

JONES: Not really, partly because I was there only at the very, very beginning of the Bush Administration. I was there only through May and they of course came in late January. The way we felt, it was with the vice president's energy policy review.

Q: This was extremely controversial, because Cheney would not say whom he invited to the—

JONES: We knew this study was underway. I kept calling up the office of the vice president to say, "I know something about this. Would you like to talk to me? I know something about this!" and the answer always was, "No, thank you."

But, at the same time, there was no reflection of him or his views on the negotiations we were doing, in quite sharp contrast, I might say, at the time it was sharp contrast. Leon Fuerth, from Gore's staff, the previous vice president, was the one who -- I didn't really get in a tussle with him about who would chair meetings but there was always a kind of discussion about was he in charge of all of this or was I in charge of all of this.

So I had a lot more back and forth with the office of the vice president, not in a negative way, really, because there wasn't anything we really disagreed about. It was more a turf kind of issue with Leon Fuerth. With the Cheney people, they just sent somebody to meetings. They didn't bother me.

Q: Did you run across any real problems with the Russophiles versus the newly independent-ophiles or not?

JONES: No, I didn't, at all. There wasn't anybody that I came across, in any of the interagency discussions that we had and we had lots, we had a monthly big interagency meeting that involved everybody and their great-uncle and there was never anybody who advocated that we somehow should go soft on the Russians. There was none of that kind of talk.

I was a little worried about the reverse when the Bush people came in, because one of the big complaints about Clinton through the campaign was that he and Strobe Talbot had been too soft on Yeltsin and that the new crowd was going to be much tougher, et cetera.

There was no reflection of that, either, in the early days. That all came later. I dealt with all that later, but in the period of time when I was doing this job, there was no reflection of that.

Q: So, you did this until May of 2001?

JONES: Right.

Q: And then what happened?

JONES: I probably slid out of doing it a little earlier than that. Steve Mann took over from me a little bit earlier than that, I'm pretty sure he was part way in there, because I was nominated to be assistant secretary for Europe and Eurasia when Colin Powell came in as secretary of state. I had those first conversations in early February.

So pretty quickly after the new administration came in I knew I'd be going on to a different job. I also knew that the job that I would have involved this whole area, so I was able to stay active, knowing that whatever meetings I had I could carry on over into my new job.

Q: Beth, you had just been nominated to be assistant secretary for European and Eurasian affairs and this was in 2001. How did this come about? You had been around the block and all that, but you were more a Near Eastern hand, in many ways, than a European hand, despite your credentials.

JONES: What happened was that Secretary Powell was nominated before the election, so everybody knew that he was going to be the secretary of state, most importantly he knew he was going to be secretary of state.

Q: Nominated before the inauguration?

JONES: Well, he was named before the election.

Q: Even before the—

JONES: Yes, so before people went to the polls, it was known that Colin Powell would be George Bush's secretary of state, which is important only in the sense that Colin Powell knew he was going to be, so he was already talking to people, including in the Department, about who he should have in key appointments. But it wasn't until later that he sat down with Marc Grossman, who was the Director General at the time, to go through who was where and the kind of people that he should pick. Marc gave him a lot of information.

When the Florida presidential election controversy was finally decided, which was of course very late after election day, finally there was a rush of briefings that Secretary Powell and Mr. Armitage and Grant Green had with the Department.

At the time I was of course doing the Caspian energy job, but I went every day to the Russia-Eurasia staff meeting that was in the semi-bureau, sort of a half bureau, run by Steve Sestanovich. His bureau was asked to give a briefing to Secretary Powell. I learned about it the night before from Steve, who invited me to participate, even though I wasn't part of his bureau. But he thought, well, why not, that would be the best way for us to discuss the whole Caspian energy sector.

So I was asked to participate as a member of his front office, which was extremely generous of him to do that, very thoughtful. I was able to give my little briefing on the Caspian issues. I've been told that the combination of that briefing and Marc Grossman explaining to the Secretary that because of Jesse Helms insisting that no assistant secretary for Europe would be confirmed by Jesse Helms' committee in the Senate unless Russia was part of the European bureau, that they needed to think about who could bring the two sides of the bureau together, bring the Russia-Eurasia group into EUR.

Because I had both Russian and German and Marc knew that, I was put forward by people like Marc and Tom Pickering as a person whom he might consider.

Q: But had there been consideration at the time to split the former Soviet Union off into a sort of Russia-Eurasian separate bureau, geographic bureau?

JONES: Well, it had been acting as a separate bureau since the breakup of the Soviet Union. Under Strobe Talbot, then Jim Collins and then Steve Sestanovich, it was its own bureau. The head of it was not an assistant secretary, because it had not been authorized by the Congress as a separate bureau. That has to be authorized in terms of the assistant secretary positions and deputy assistant secretary positions. But it had functioned that way, for all practical purposes.

Q: I don't want to belabor the point, but do you know what Helms' thinking was?

JONES: I do, he was very clear about it. He said, "If Russia is part of a separate bureau, Russia gets the impression that it is much more important than I think it should be. However, if it's subsumed in the European bureau, then it takes its rightful place as just another country and it doesn't so overpower its neighbors. It doesn't so overpower the thinking of the State Department bureaucracy and so overpower the thinking of an assistant secretary, to be, in his mind, representing Russia's interests all the time."

Q: Well, I have to say I think there's justification for that.

JONES: Well, I actually didn't think there was justification for it, because I thought that the three people who had managed this quasi-bureau had done quite a good job of paying

attention to all of the other former Soviet countries. Because the issues were fairly complex, it meant that a senior person was spending full time on this whole set of issues. When Secretary Powell interviewed me for the job, probably in January, he said to me, "I want Russia brought into the European bureau" and I said, "I understand that. Which other countries would you like to have in? Is it all of the other countries that were S/NIS (the quasi-bureau) previously, or do you want just Russia in, or what?"

He said, "That's for you to figure out. You talk to your colleagues, you figure it out, and you come back to me." I said, "Fine," which I proceeded to do. He also, with Grant Green's help, appointed an organization man from the Pentagon to take a look at it with me and we had quite a few conversations about it.

I took this to heart. I did a lot of polling among my colleagues out in the field as to what would make the most sense. I came to it from the notion that if you're going to have Russia in, you need to have all of the other countries that were formerly associated with Russia with them, because there are such great similarities.

I also knew, of course, having worked out in Central Asia and the Caucasus with the Caspian job, that it was just one office that handled each of these eight countries.

I was thinking to myself as I was considering all of this, if I have an issue that involves Russia and the Caspian Sea, it's going to be much easier for me bureaucratically to go to the head of the Caspian-Central Asia desk and the head of the Russia desk and sit down and sort out whatever the issues are with the Caspian, rather than have to go to another assistant secretary and another deputy assistant secretary and another office director, if these countries are all broken up and in a different regional bureau.

The ideas on the table were the following, there was a whole variety of them: if all of S/NIS wasn't going to be brought into EUR, which was my proposal, there were some who said who said the three Caucasus countries should become part of the Near Eastern bureau, just because they were close to the Near East. There was zero good reason for that, in my view. There was no connection between them.

Q: There really isn't any connection.

JONES: Substantively, the issues of the Caucasus related to Turkey, whether it was Armenia or Azerbaijan, it was Black Sea issues. If it was oil transportation, again, that's in Europe. So right there, I thought that wasn't a good idea.

There was another proposal that the Central Asian countries should be part of the South Asia bureau, which was a little, tiny bureau of only six countries. Particularly at that time there was zero connection, literally, between Central Asia and South Asia. You couldn't fly between the two. You had to go back to Europe to fly between the two.
So there was no commercial connection, there was no substantive connection. From all of the time I'd spent in Central Asia and the Caucasus, all of the institutions that we were

linking these countries into were basically European institutions or transatlantic institutions, whether it was Partnership for Peace or Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Council of Europe. All of these were European organizations and institutions. WTO isn't European, but the themes are similar.

So I made the argument that all of the countries should be brought into the European bureau and that it should be called the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. Again, "Eurasian affairs" was something that I collaborated on with lots of colleagues: what should it be called? Eurasia has certain connotations and Russia has certain connotations among these countries. There were a lot of different suggestions. I finally just made the decision that it should be Europe and Eurasia. Yes, there were some historical issues, but for ease of everything we should call it that. I made the further decision that the acronym should remain EUR, it shouldn't change, there was enough change going on without changing that, too.

I couldn't get approval for this without going to Marc Grossman, who had been by then appointed Under Secretary for Political Affairs. I needed his okay on who would be the people who would help me run this gigantic bureau, because it would be a gigantic bureau. The European bureau had four deputy assistant secretaries. S/NIS had had three. Obviously, I couldn't have seven DAS's, but I did argue for six.

When I first started, Armitage and Marc wanted me to have only one additional DAS and I said no, that that would perpetuate the split. I didn't want to have four DAS's for Europe and one DAS in the former S/NIS area for all of these countries. That would just mean that there was no real amalgamation of the two bureaus.

I wanted to have six. I needed to have one DAS that was responsible for a certain number of the countries from S/NIS, from the old quasi-bureau, to pull together what would start out as two separate halves of the bureau.

I then went after the people that I wanted to have as DAS's without reorganizing too much. I interviewed quite a number of people about this. I asked a group of mid-level officers to work separately from me on what are the issues, what are the best practices of what were the two separate bureaus, what are the issues that would be involved in trying to combine the bureaus and to work out what set of proposals they would like to make to me as to how best to do that.

I got co-chairs, one from S/NIS, one from EUR, to work on those kinds of issues. They came with all kinds of very good ideas, most of which I was able to implement pretty quickly. One of them that stood out was that all the Balkans issues had been huge in EUR under Jim Dobbins, who was the acting assistant secretary for a long time and under Marc Grossman, for obvious reasons: the whole Yugoslavia issue, the NATO attack on Belgrade, all of that kind of thing.

One of the issues that came to the front very quickly was how difficult it was bureaucratically for anybody in the rest of the bureau and the rest of the building to work on any Balkans issues, because there were so many different power centers on Balkans issues. "It was a Balkanized bureau," is what everybody kept saying, that there were way too many people, there were way too many little funny fiefdoms and centers of power. All needed to be changed, I was told. There were a lot of contractors, those needed to be streamlined, the whole area needed to be streamlined.

There was one person I especially wanted to have help me do this, Janet Bogue, who I knew knew the Balkans extremely well. I knew her management style extremely well. I knew that her management style and mine were completely compatible.

Q: She'd been your DCM.

JONES: She'd been my DCM in Almaty and we had worked together in Pakistan as well. When I was working for Secretary Christopher she was one of what was known as the Bosnia Twelve, had worked on Balkans issues and had done this essentially dissent on Balkans policy at the time. She then had gone on from that to be speechwriter for Secretary Christopher.

I had to do a lot of persuading of Janet to do this, because Balkans issues had been so difficult and such an unhappy time. We talked a lot about what it would take to reduce the number of people, how difficult that might be for a lot of people and how important it was for me to be involved in that, to make a friendly reduction rather than a difficult one for people. I of course pledged to do that.

But the other thing I wanted to do is to make sure, since it was a big bureau and there were so many countries and so many issues, I felt that I needed to have very senior, very experienced, very respected people to be DAS's for each of the other areas that I had worked out in my mind in talking with a lot of people. I wanted each one of them to be able to represent their issues with heads of state, heads of government, White House meetings, Pentagon meetings, whatever it was.

I didn't want, as good as they might be, junior people. I wanted people who really had the stature to be responsible in every possible way for these issues. So, for instance, for Central Asia, the Caucasus and what I called the "crossover DAS," I wanted to bring that together with the Aegean group, because of the Caucasus-Turkey connection, so Greece, Turkey, Cyprus. I wanted to have somebody who also was a China hand, because China is such an important issue in Central Asia. I really worked extremely hard to get Lynn Pascoe to accept the job, whom I had known from my time working for Secretary Christopher. I finally persuaded him to be the DAS for that area.

Charlie Ries was already the principal deputy assistant secretary, had been the PDAS for about a year. He was clearly extremely good at all of this. I asked him to stay, he was the

only one, really, who stayed. The others were already gone or were about to go, through previous planning.

So Charlie Ries, hugely respected for his understanding and work in the European Union and economic issues, which I knew was a shortcoming of mine, so to have a PDAS who was very respected and knew USTR, economic issues and the European Union was a terrific addition to what I needed.

I also knew that the previous assistant secretary had had him be responsible for the EU and NATO and he already told me that that was too much, that being responsible for all EU affairs and all NATO affairs would be just way too much, particularly since it was very important to me that the office in EUR responsible for European Union affairs should also think about the EU issues that related to all of these other countries that would be brought in to the bureau. There would be partnership and cooperation agreements that were already under negotiation with all of these countries that this office needed to pay attention to and they really hadn't been paying attention to it.

So I made that a big charge of that office, with Charlie Ries in charge of that.

The person that I knew to be extremely good at NATO affairs was Bob Bradtke. Bob was at the National Security Council, he was the executive director. I worked on him, worked on him, worked on him to be my DAS for NATO and the Western European countries. I was finally able to persuade him to take that job.

It took a while because he was of course extremely tired from having been executive director of the NSC for several years. I eventually was able to persuade him that this would be an interesting, exciting job, he'd have a tremendous amount of responsibility on his own, that he wouldn't be "just a DAS," overshadowed by the assistant secretary. So he agreed.

In the meantime, Mr. Armitage had come to me to tell me that I would have to have a "political" DAS, every bureau has a political DAS. I said, "Yes, yes, I knew, did he have a suggestion?" He said, "Yes, he did" and that person was Heather Conley, whom I had never known. She had worked in the Department previously and it turned out that other people did know her and thought extremely highly of her. They just didn't know her by her married name. So as soon as she walked into the office for her interview people said, "Oh, my God, Heather" whatever her last name used to be.

She had had a lot of experience in Central Asia and the Caucasus and initially, before I was thinking about Lynn Pascoe and the amalgamation of the bureaus, I was thinking, "Well, maybe Heather should work on that." I suggested it to her and she said, no, she had a very young child, that that kind of travel would be too hard for her. She'd done a lot of work academically in Western Europe and so as the bureau took shape I suggested that she take over as the DAS for the Nordic-Baltic States, some of the Eastern European states and the Nordic-Baltic States.

We thought that would be very interesting, there was a lot of NATO enlargement work going on: Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Iceland and then we had her take over responsibility for the northern Eastern European states, the Eastern European states that weren't in the Balkans, basically. So she had responsibility for also Poland, the Czech Republic. So it was a big chunk, it was a very big chunk, but she was quite prepared to take that on. We thought it would probably be fairly straightforward.

Q: When you're saying, "You knew you had to have a political DAS," could you explain what we're talking about?

JONES: Yes, every geographic bureau, by this time, the practice was that there would be a deputy assistant secretary that came from the outside, who was a political appointee and it was accepted that this would be the case.

Q: But, in our definition, we're talking about not necessarily somebody who's plugged into the political, Republican/Democratic apparatus, but we're talking about somebody who's just from outside, is that right?

JONES: No, usually it's somebody who's very plugged into whatever party took over the White House. It's usually somebody either recommended by the White House personnel office or who's been active in the campaign or a big supporter of whoever came into the White House, or gave a lot of money or whatever it might be.

In this case, it was somebody whom Rich Armitage had worked with very, very closely when he was responsible for the Freedom Support Act. Heather had worked for him then and he knew how good she was at that kind of thing. In fact, I believe she was also working in his private company at one time.

Q: What was her background?

JONES: She had been a presidential management intern at the State Department, that's how she first got into government. She came out of graduate school basically at that point. She worked in the political/military bureau at the time, which is how she came to the attention of Rich Armitage during the George H.W. Bush Administration, when he was responsible for the Freedom Support Act, just after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Heather had gone to work for him then. She was known to be a Republican, known to be involved in Republican politics, just through her association, really, with Mr. Armitage. So he suggested Heather to me. We had an interview, a good talk and she seemed like she would be appropriate for the job.

So I had all of those people lined up. Then I needed somebody to be responsible for Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, for the part that Jesse Helms was so interested in having be part of the Europe-Eurasia Bureau. I looked at Steve Pifer for that, who I knew

was coming out of Ukraine as ambassador. He at that time was just finishing a year of assignment to Stanford University, a university year after his assignment to Ukraine.

He had been in Ukraine when I was in Kazakhstan, so we'd been kind of in the region together. I didn't know him particularly well, but I had grown to know of his reputation, both as a specialist on Russia-Ukraine, but also as an arms control specialist. I knew I needed that sort of capability and the front office did as well. Steve agreed to come.

So at that point I had my six DAS's lined up. I figured out which of the offices should flow to which DAS. I rejiggered only one office, based on the best practices information and recommendations I got from my group studying all of this.

That was to take an office responsible for regional affairs in S/NIS that was run by Nerissa Cook. I asked her to think about taking over a lot of the regional issues, the global issues, that would be very important for both sides of the bureau. So, trafficking in persons, human rights issues, law enforcement issues, anti-narcotics issues, all of these big issues that had been half-handled by the office in EUR that was responsible for European Union affairs. So I took all of those responsibilities out of there, put it all under Nerissa Cook, who's a civil service employee, an extremely good one. I centralized those issues under one person who would have purview over them through the entire joined bureau.

I then did a whole chart of how this would all work and went up to Marc Grossman. I sat down with him and I said, "Okay, this is going to be a big bureau. I'm recommending through you to the Secretary that it be the Europe Eurasia Bureau, that it include all of the countries of Central Asia, the Caucasus, Russia, Ukraine, et cetera. This is how I can do it, with these six DAS's. I do need six DAS's." I explained why, put the names in, who the office directors were, none of the office directors were changing.

I still remember very clearly, Marc took the chart, looked at it, looked at each of the names, said each name out loud, looked up at me and he said, "Now I see how you can do it." He said many times later that the decision that I made to go for the top people, the most respected, prestigious, competent, well known people to take each of those DAS jobs was what persuaded them that it was possible for one assistant secretary to manage a bureau that included 54 embassies, big embassies. Very quickly the proposal was approved. We put forward the recommendation to Congress to permit this, because this required congressional action to include these countries and add these two DAS's to the Europe Eurasia Bureau.

That was all done, I took over as assistant secretary at the end of May. The authorization to combine the bureaus we got in early July, so it happened very quickly. It all worked extremely well.

Q: Something that you were up against, which I think you met very well with the appointment of these top-level people was sort of the entrenched classism, snobbery, whatever, of the European bureau.

I've interviewed people, being a Balkan hand, particularly Greece and Yugoslavia, in '74, when Turkey, Cyprus and Greece were put into the European bureau, they had been part of the Near Eastern affairs bureau, the European bureau greeted it, as somebody put it, maybe it was Tom Boyatt or somebody, "As though somebody had shat on the marble floor of the European bureau," because all of a sudden there was almost a war.

JONES: Well, they had a war, I think. I remember that very well, because I was in the Near East bureau at the time, when Turkey, Greece and Cyprus were taken away from us in NEA. I remember thinking they were going to the poor cousins in EUR.

Q: And also to get an assignment to the European bureau was considered a great plus and it was hoarded. It was like joining the Episcopal Church, getting out of the Baptist Church into the Episcopal Church.

JONES: Well, you're absolutely right. There were a lot of prejudices, practices, snobbery that I knew very well about, I knew had to be overcome. That's one of the reasons that my little best practices group, I thought, did a very good job. They brought a lot of that to the fore, a lot of which we all sort of knew. But it took quite a bit of concentrated work with each of the offices, with the country directors separately. I did a whole series of meetings and eventually a town hall, but meetings with different constituencies, really, that were going to be part of this big bureau.

One of the biggest concerns of the S/NIS group when I sat down with them and I talked through, okay, this is what's been approved, here's how it's going to be lined out. The first question was, "We're going to be second-class citizens in this bureau." I said, "Wait a minute. Remember where I came from, guys? I come from Central Asia. That's where my head is. I did serve in EUR twice, in Germany, but all of my previous experience has been in NEA and the other poor cousin over here. What I know the most about is Central Asia, a little bit less on the Caucasus, Ukraine, Russia. So, if anybody should be concerned about my taking over EUR, it should be all of the Western European wallahs."

That helped a lot, that brought them around. But the other thing that I felt very strongly about, knowing the sort of second-class citizenship that the Aegean group had is, that's why I wanted to have this crossover, so that there wouldn't be a sort of automatic divide with the new people.

The other thing I did, which actually worked, was just a little device. In the very first staff meeting I had with all the country directors, we did a staff meeting every day, after the senior staff meeting, so I could report to everybody what Secretary Powell was thinking about that day. The very first one, I said, "Okay, I come from the Caucasus, Central Asia group and I know that every single day there's an 'Oh, my God! Guess what happened

today story.' It's usually hilarious and it's awful. Whatever it is, it's something that is unbelievably ridiculous that we have to deal with in policy terms, but is actually quite fun and it's what keeps all of us going. The hardest part is going to be all you guys from the old EUR are never going to be able to match these stories. I challenge you, any of you, to be able to come up with any kind of stories that's even close to the ones that we'll hear about at every single morning staff meeting from the Caucasus guys or the Ukraine guys or the Moldova guys."

Of course, I was absolutely right. And of course, the rest of the people in EUR were just like, "Oh, my God! Look at this! This is hilarious!" when they heard the daily stories coming from their colleagues working on Central Asia or the Caucasus or Russia.

Q: You're speaking to a consular officer, who at country team meetings I always had "the story," because this is what we had. So I know what you mean.

JONES: I also remember the first time that someone from what we called the "Old EUR," the head of the Germany, Switzerland, Austria desk, said, "I have the story that can beat out, or at least compete with, the hero shepherd of the Caucasus," because that was one of the big jokes. He had some story about some ridiculous thing that happened in Switzerland, which was great. It was exactly what I was looking for.

So we're going along and we have this very big bureau. I'm trying to do some initial traveling to make sure that I get to all of my posts. The first one I do is to Ukraine, a couple of the Caucasus countries and Vienna, to go to the OSCE, to demonstrate that that's part of the bureau, this is part of what we're all working on. My first trip wasn't just to Brussels and London.

But then of course the next thing that happens is 9/11. All of a sudden here we are in this big bureau, where various colleagues have been talking about Dushanbe and Bishkek and Tashkent and things that happened there. All of a sudden these countries and these places are front and center. Everything that has to happen next by the entire Europe Eurasia Bureau has to go through Tashkent, Bishkek and Dushanbe to get to Afghanistan. So the first thing that Charlie Ries does after 9/11, among the first things, is he gets my special assistant to put together a cheat sheet for everybody and send it around, all of the countries of Central Asia, all the capitals, all the heads of state, he said, "Because you're going to be hearing this over and over again and everybody in this bureau has to know exactly where Dushanbe is and exactly who is head of Tajikistan."

Q: I'd like to stop here and go back, because 9/11 is such a demarcation between then and now, more or less.

First place, when Powell came to you, or you had a talk with him, did he say, "This is how I want to use you," "This is what I'm after," setting the parameters?

JONES: Here's how our conversation went, actually. It didn't quite go that way. I thought a lot about what it was that I could contribute to leading the European bureau.

I knew perfectly well that I wasn't a NATOnik and I couldn't put myself forward as being a big NATO expert or a big EU expert. But I had spent a tremendous amount of time, particularly in my more senior position in the Near East bureau, meeting with NATO groups and EU groups on Middle East issues, on Iraq, on Libya, on Afghanistan, on terrorism, on Middle East peace, whatever it was.

I knew from my time as PDAS in NEA that there was virtually no paper that went forward for a meeting that the Secretary had or any kind of proposal about how to work with the EU that NEA didn't have a very big part in. All of these countries and the EU as an institution and NATO less so, more the EU, wanted to talk about all of the issues that I knew a heck of a lot about: Kashmir, Pakistan, India, all of these issues.

So when I had my interview with Secretary Powell, I had not known him before, the first time I met him was at that little briefing that we did with Steve Sestanovich. He said to me, "What do you bring to this?'

I said, "I bring expertise on the issues that I believe the Europeans want to talk about first. They want to talk about the Middle East. They want to talk about Kashmir, Pakistan, India. They want to talk about Afghanistan. They want to talk about what's going on with the Iranian nuclear issues. They want to talk about what's going on with Libyan nuclear issues. I've just spent a whole career working on those kinds of issues.

"I don't know NATO particularly well. I'm going to have people around me who do know NATO well. I'll learn it very quickly. But I can't sit here and tell you that I'm the world's expert on NATO. But I will be able to bring in a lot of expertise on all these other issues that I think need to be amalgamated into our conversations with the Europeans to a much more extensive degree."

He sort of looked at me and said, "That's interesting. As a matter of fact, I was wondering what you were going to say, because I know all the Europeans. There's nobody who knows the Europeans better than I do. You're going to have to be playing catch up to me all the time. I'm going to be calling all the Europeans and I may or may not remember to brief you on what I've just said to them."

I basically said, "I appreciate that. I would like you to let me know when you're talking to various Europeans so that I can follow up properly. You don't want to do all your own work. There's all kinds of ways that we can do that. You don't have to brief me. The Ops Center's going to be on the call and you can just make sure that they brief me. Or I'll talk to the Ops Center director and every time there's a conversation with a European they call me up and say, 'Beth, there's been a conversation with a European. Here's how it went.'"

He said, “Okay.” The only other thing he said was sort of the geographic substance of our discussion, he said, “I want to make sure that all of my assistant secretaries are up with Congress all the time. I never want to hear Congress saying that they haven’t been briefed on something. I want you up there, I want your guys up there. It needs to be coordinated with the congressional relations people, but I’m lifting the muzzle that Secretary Albright put on all of you, in terms of contact with the congressional people.

“I’m also lifting the muzzle on the media. You need to be in touch with Richard Boucher, who’s going to be responsible for all of this, but I do not want it said that the State Department won’t talk. I want the State Department to put its best foot forward. I want to make sure that background notes are done on time.”

He was very effusive about all of that. I got it, we all suffered under the prohibition on talking to Congress. A lot of us thought it was very counterproductive to our interests.

Q: Because you have some insight into it, what was behind Madeleine Albright putting this muzzle on?

JONES: Control.

Q: To channel communication from any government activity usually ends up, it doesn’t work too well.

JONES: It didn’t work, from my perspective. As a result of muzzling, Congress complained about not being briefed. It was an issue of control for her.

Wendy Sherman was the head of congressional relations for a good part of that time and she just didn’t want other people up on the Hill. She wanted to be the only one who was discussing any kind of issue on the Hill without a tremendous amount of clearance and approval. We couldn’t go up unless one of her guys was available and they were mostly not available. It was very difficult.

My philosophy had been all along and it very much meshed with that of Secretary Powell and Mr. Armitage, which is, you want the issue with Congress, or the media, for that matter, to be about substance, not about process. If they’re spending all of their time complaining that we haven’t briefed them or we didn’t brief them right or we didn’t tell them the right thing, that’s all process complaints and that’s a waste of time.

You want the issues to be about substance. In other words, this is what we want to do about Russia. Chairman Helms, we can disagree about what to do with Russia and then have that argument, rather than “You haven’t briefed us enough.”

Q: This is all before 9/11. Did you pick up this bureaucratic disconnect or something, you had a president who did not come in with great foreign affairs credentials, you had a Secretary of Defense who seemed to be trying to grab the foreign policy helm and you

had a vice president who had in a way almost his own foreign policy and a mindset and not necessarily just on Iraq but on other things and almost a contempt for dealing with particularly the European powers. Was this at all there, or was this something that came later?

JONES: No, it was definitely, but it wasn't as much from the Pentagon, at the early, at the very early stages, with one exception, which I'll get to in a second.

But the neocon ideology.

Q: We're talking about the neoconservatives, extreme right wing of the Republican Party.

JONES: The ideology that they put forward, of wanting to extricate the United States from international treaties and agreements began to manifest itself very, very early. The first way it manifested itself was walking away from the Kyoto Treaty on climate change.

When Secretary Powell learned of a letter from Congress to the president that the White House was answering, he got a draft of what Vice President Cheney had proposed to reply. He added a variety of points to this, because, after all, you can tell from the name that it's an international agreement and that there might be a foreign policy angle to this. As I understand the story, he rushed over to Dr. Rice with his proposed changes, he physically went over these changes with her,

Q: She was?

JONES: National security advisor, Condi Rice, only to be told by Rice that the reply had already gone to the Hill. We know what happened with that, the reply basically said the United States will not participate in Kyoto, will walk away from Kyoto, does not believe that climate change is an issue. I've forgotten all of the details of it, but it was an immediate, huge uproar internationally, especially in Europe.

So this was the backdrop of the president's first trip to Europe that he took in early July for the G-8 summit, which was hosted by Italy, in Genoa.

By the time he started his European trip, there were already huge demonstrations in the streets of Europe. The death penalty was brought in, which is an issue with Europe, although it wasn't particularly an issue directed at Bush.

His first stop was in Spain. He did very well with the then prime minister. The public outcry against him was still extreme.

He went to Brussels, there were big demonstrations in the streets of Brussels, but he had his meetings with NATO.

He then went to Göteborg, where the U.S.-EU summit was being held, because Sweden was in the chair and Göteborg was like an armed camp, there were so many demonstrators in the streets against President Bush, because of Kyoto and because of climate change, that you basically couldn't move around without terrific difficulty.

There are a couple of things to point out in these early months of the administration and that is even though climate change/Kyoto was an extremely big issue all through Europe, President Bush's first meetings with the European leaders in Genoa and particularly I was expecting in his meeting with Chancellor Schröder, the German chancellor, that there would be quite a big part of the discussion on climate change. The Germans were the most outspoken about the importance of the Kyoto Treaty and how awful it was that the United States had walked away from it, that this was a travesty, et cetera.

I had a very interesting insight in that. I was the note taker at this meeting, the note taker for the State Department in the Bush- Schröder meeting in Genoa. Chancellor Schröder did not bring the issue up, at all. He didn't even hint at the issue in his conversation with President Bush. President Bush didn't bring it up, of course.

I began to see this syndrome, I call it, where the most senior leaders are embarrassed, unwilling, to bring up tough issues with their counterparts. It was the most stunning thing I've seen during my time in the Foreign Service, that when they get face to face these guys who talk tough in public and are slamming each other to their media and to their congresses and to their parliaments, when they're face to face they don't have the guts to say it to each other. Very, very interesting. With extremely rare exceptions.

But Chancellor Schröder did not bring it up. He was asked about it by the media. He kind of lied to the media about whether he had raised the climate change issue. It was stunning.

Q: This was on all sides, Americans, Europeans and all this.

JONES: I saw this same thing happen. President Bush would be meeting with President Putin, he wouldn't use the tough talking points about what was going on in Russia. One of the Europe trips, the early one, first one, involved President Bush meeting with President Putin in Ljubljana. The run up to this was the following: in the campaign, you'll remember, between Bush and Gore, the Bush charge had been that Clinton had been too close to Yeltsin, that he had personalized the relationship with Russia and that this had led to bad policies. It was inappropriate and, by golly, he was not going to call the Russians, he was going to conduct a far different foreign policy with Russia than Clinton had done.

True to what he said in the campaign, President Putin called to congratulate President Bush soon after Inauguration Day, just as every foreign leader in the world did. Bush returned all of the calls pretty quickly, not so easy to do, but he did return all of the calls pretty quickly.

He didn't return President Putin's call I think until May. This was a subject in each of the morning staff meetings that Steve Sestanovich and then John Beyrle chaired when Steve left, when was this phone call going to take place?

So right from the beginning there was a very clear message to the Russians, "You're not the top dog. We don't think of you as such an important country. We're not even bothering to return your phone call for three months."

But by the time he did return the phone call, there was a suggestion that there be a summit. It was very quickly agreed that it be done in Ljubljana. There was a lot of work done about what issues should be engaged in that summit. Most of the format for the meeting in Ljubljana was for the two presidents to be off by themselves, maybe for a little while without their national security advisors, just the two of them with interpreters. There would be side meetings on a great variety of issues. The longest agenda was between the two foreign ministers, between Powell and the Russian foreign minister, which were meetings that I was in.

The one-on-one meetings were going to be twenty minutes and then the bigger meetings were going to be two hours. Well, the one-on-one meeting lasted for two and a half hours or something like that, they just kept talking and talking and talking. We kept waiting to be called into the larger meeting. We were never called in until the end. I didn't know too much about what had happened in the one-on-one until the press conference, which was outside in a very lovely setting.

I'm up on the stage in the second row. I happened to be seated right behind National Security Advisor Rice. That's the infamous press conference in which President Bush says, "I looked in his eyes. I could see his soul. This is a man who believes in God and I believe in God, so we can do business together" type of discussion and "Oh, by the way, we've agreed to meet again. I've invited him to come to Crawford."

At which point Condi Rice gasped. I was close enough to her that I could hear her gasp and see her gasp, which was my clue, because I had no idea this invitation was coming. I thought, "Well, maybe it's something that was worked out at the White House and we just didn't happen to know about it at the State Department." It was clear that Condi didn't know about it, either. It was something that Bush had done on his own and was a further mark of just how taken he was with President Putin. That was an interesting aspect to the early days, the summer before 9/11.

Q: Back again, what was the response to this letter that went to Congress, essentially from Cheney? Did we see the consequences, that this would touch off—

JONES: No, it was a stunning example, to my mind, of Cheney and Rice seeing something that looked to them as a strictly domestic issue, where they wanted to placate the right wing of the Republican Party about this climate change issue and the Kyoto

Treaty. The business interests and the right wing, the right wing didn't want the treaty, the neocons didn't want the treaty, the business interests didn't want Kyoto because it was too expensive.

That was clear. We all knew it was too expensive. Even President Clinton had said, "This is expensive, I don't think it can be ratified by the Senate." But he had pledged to try to participate in undertaking some of the measures to address climate change, as an issue that was important to the United States, that required concerted American attention.

But the letter basically said, "Oh, climate change, we don't think there really is a problem." The idea that it would have serious foreign policy implications never crossed their minds, apparently, because the description I have read since then is that Condi's jaw dropped when Powell brought her his changes to the letter to the Hill. It never occurred to her that there were any foreign policy implications to all of this, number one. Number two, that had there been a recognition that there were foreign policy issues, there should have been a rollout with the Europeans and with others about what this meant and what was the U.S. going to do or not do.

That would have at least allowed some kind of a discussion within the administration about do we or don't we believe that climate change is an issue and that would have allowed the discussion to take place.

As it was, the way it rolled out, the neocons had a field day with this and the anti-climate change people, because they had the paper that they needed to say the administration believes it's not a problem. It's taken six years for the United States to get back into a position where, yes, maybe there is an issue with climate change, yes, maybe there is something that the U.S. can do to address the science of this problem.

Q: Well, that's sort of the theory of first strike or something, if you can set the agenda, everybody else is playing catch up and this is what was happening.

JONES: Right. Now the next thing that was coming down the pike was the Rome Treaty. The Rome Treaty was the treaty that was negotiated to combat genocide and war crimes. The United States was unsuccessful under Clinton in getting into this treaty the kind of outside involvement the United States would have had to have in order to be able to agree to the treaty.

There was no way that the U.S., either through the UN or through any other mechanism could steer a war crimes trial or could steer the selection of the judges or reach into a war crimes issue in some way. It was considered, even by the Clinton Administration, to be too much of an assault on American sovereignty to agree to all elements of the Rome Treaty, of the war crimes treaty. Even though Clinton signed it, he knew and said this cannot be ratified in its current form, there has to be some way that the United States can reach in, as we've been able to do on previous war crimes trials, either with the Rwanda

trials and the Balkans, Milosevich, the Hague Tribunal kinds of trials of Balkan war criminals.

But then what happened, the neocon crowd, led by Cheney and very much by John Bolton, who by this time was an undersecretary at the State Department, led the charge to "unsign" the Rome Treaty. It wasn't sufficient just to say, "We're not going to send it forward to the Senate for ratification." It wasn't sufficient for them to restate all the complaints that the Clinton Administration had stated. No, no, we had to have a formal ceremony to unsign the treaty as well, which was a further affront to all of the signers, who were most of the Europeans and plenty of others.

But it was further evidence of just how alarming this new administration in Washington was and how determined they were to walk the United States out of any kind of treaty, any kind of restriction, on the U.S.

The third thing that happened was the beginnings of the U.S. renouncing its participation in the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the ABM Treaty. There was a lot of work being done on it by the Pentagon and by the White House. At the same time we at the State Department were doing a lot of work to say, "There are a variety of ways of doing this. We don't have to walk out of the treaty. We can give clarifying information about the treaty," something to stay in the treaty, because we knew that it was part of the architecture that was very important internationally, particularly to the Russians, as a touchstone for their position as a senior member of the world leadership.

We know the result of all of this. In the end, the United States just decided to walk out of it, regardless. The whole ABM Treaty issue was put on hold just a little bit by what happened on 9/11, but it came back pretty quickly after that.

Q: We're talking about early days, before 9/11. Because, particularly, most of the issues all certainly involved the European bureau, did you have the feeling that you were under siege, outgunned by Cheney and Bolton and the president and Rumsfeld and all?

JONES: We didn't understand then just how bad it was going to be. It wasn't clear yet, partly because there weren't that many senior people who'd been confirmed by the Senate Armed Services Committee for the senior positions in the Pentagon. So there were still lots of acting people. I didn't have a Pentagon counterpart for months and months and months. I didn't have a Pentagon counterpart until after 9/11. I can't remember when Wolfowitz was finally confirmed and then Doug Feith, Under Secretary for Policy at Defense, but it was quite late. There was skepticism about the positions of these guys, because they were so well known to be very close to Cheney and very much in the neoconservative camp.

What we did see fairly early on and before 9/11 was the Rumsfeld attitude about streamlining and reducing the size of the American military. The focus of that was in two areas in Europe: one was in the Balkans and one was Iceland. In the Balkans, he has

basically decided, without any interagency coordination, decided that the Balkans was solved, we didn't need to have the American military in there anymore, NATO didn't need to be there. Of course the people in the Balkans and our NATO allies totally and completely disagreed, as did all of us at State. So there was an immediate fight between Powell and Rumsfeld over that. That's when Powell coined the phrase, "In together, out together." We all went in together into the Balkans and we're going to go out together.

In other words, the U.S. isn't going to pull the rug out from under NATO and pull itself out and leave the rest of NATO in the Balkans.

The other thing that was going on, which EUR wasn't involved in, but one of the very early fights, there were several early fights, none of which EUR was particularly involved in. The first one was the shootdown of the U.S. plane over Chinese waters.

Q: It wasn't a shootdown. It was—

JONES: Excuse me, a collision, not a shootdown.

Q: A collision, where one of our monitoring planes, called a "spy plane," a plane that flies around the periphery of China monitoring various things and these had been routinely buzzed by Chinese fighter pilots and one got careless.

JONES: And clipped them.

Q: He was killed and our plane made an emergency landing on Hainan Island.

JONES: In China, right. That was the first, my recollection, anyway, that was the first that any of us understood just how tough the fight was going to be with the Pentagon and with Cheney. It was clear that Cheney and Rumsfeld were as one in all of this.

Partly because Armitage knew the whole China issue and the Asia issues extremely well, Jim Kelly, who was the assistant secretary, had worked with Mr. Armitage and with Secretary Powell for decades, so they were as one in all of this. And the ambassador was well known to them.

Q: And he was an admiral, wasn't he?

JONES: It was somebody who had been with them. Their tactic, basically, was to understand time change issues. So every time there was an issue, they would get an instruction out to the ambassador to carry out in the middle of the night, well before opening of business in Washington. They just kept ahead of the decision cycle in Washington, so that every time Powell, Rumsfeld and Rice would have their 7:15 in the morning phone call, decisions were all taken by Powell unilaterally. Rumsfeld and Rice kept wanting to be much more draconian with the Chinese, they didn't want to get close to any kind of apology, they wanted to hardline everything to within an inch of its life.

But Armitage and Powell were able to come up with language, with the help of the U.S. ambassador in China, that was satisfactory to the Chinese. It wasn't really an apology, it was close enough so that the guys could get out and we didn't put U.S. relations with China into the deep freeze forevermore.

There were two other issues that came up during that time that didn't work so well for the State Department. The first was the whole North Korea nuclear issue.

It came up at the time, I'm pretty sure this was before 9/11, of the visit of the South Korean head of state or foreign minister to Washington, when Powell got out and said something complimentary about the previous negotiation, the previous agreements of the Clinton Administration that had reduced or ended the nuclear program in North Korea He made a policy statement which he thought was agreed by everybody.

It was then almost immediately countered by the White House, thanks to Cheney and Rumsfeld. He had the rug pulled out from under him completely on any kind of accommodation, or any kind of continuation of the agreements that had been reached by the Clinton Administration, agreements with South Korea, with China, with Russia, with others, about how to contain, control, the North Korean nuclear issue. So that did not work well for him.

The other big issue that was a problem at the time was the Middle East peace process, trying to figure out how to negotiate with Arafat, what to do about the Israelis. Every time Powell tried to make some headway on the peace process with the Israelis and Palestinians, which required being quite tough with the Israelis at times, very tough with Arafat, too, but he again would have the rug pulled out from under him.

He would make a statement while visiting Jerusalem on something or other and it would be contradicted, almost, or denigrated, or whatever by the White House press spokesman or by Cheney or by Rumsfeld or by somebody. He was made to understand that whatever it was that he thought was agreed wasn't agreed.

So we had a pretty clear idea through the summer that things were going to be extremely rough with the neocon crowd and that our biggest problem was going to be Cheney, Wolfowitz, and Rumsfeld.

The problem is, as we saw it, which I saw myself in going to National Security Council meetings, principals committee meetings, or deputies committee meetings, to sit behind Powell on an issue or sit behind Armitage on an issue (these were all meetings chaired by the national security advisor, by Condi Rice), is that she put herself in the position of being the executive secretary of the group, rather than the chair of the group.

She would allow all of the sides to disagree, disagree, disagree violently. She would not adjudicate the problem, would not say, "Okay, the president wants this," "The president wants that."

She would just say, “Well, I’ll report all your views to the president,” which meant that things weren’t ever decided. So whoever felt that their position was the position that had been kind of accepted at the meeting would go away thinking, “Okay, this is what we’re going to do.”

The result was, on a practical level, bureaucratically, Secretary Powell would come back from a meeting, even when I attended and I’d be taking notes for us, I’d give instructions to the team, if it was an issue with Turkey or an issue with the Balkans and we’d write up the instructions to USNATO in Brussels or to Belgrade, or whatever it was. Then we couldn’t get it cleared by the Pentagon, even though my counterpart at the NSC, Dan Fried, would say, “Yes, yes, that’s what I believe was decided in the meeting.” Because there was no real chair who could force a decision we just wouldn’t be able to get cables cleared.

This happened month after month after month after month.

Q: Previously, had whoever been the national security advisor acted as the chairman of the group and say, “All right, we have a disagreement, but the decision is thus and so?”

JONES: Yes. Not always, I won’t tell you that I thought Tony Lake and Sandy Berger, successively, were perfect at this. They tended to be much more “Well, let’s study it some more, let’s study it some more, let’s study it some more,” rather than make a decision. But they never described themselves as an executive secretary. They were the national security advisor to the president. The NSC was in charge of the policy.

Whereas, under Rice, when I had a fight with the Pentagon over something that I was there, as a witness that something had been decided at a National Security Council meeting and I would call up Dan Fried and say, “Hey, the national security advisor, the National Security Council, needs to explain to the Pentagon that the president’s decision, as apparently decided by the national security advisor, is X. You need to force them to sign off on this cable, or just let me send it without their signature.” Dan would constantly say, “Oh, no, no, no, we don’t get in the middle of those kinds of fights. You’re the one who has to fight with the Pentagon over this and when you’ve made an agreement, let me know.”

It was nonsense, it was complete nonsense. What happened as a result (this started happening in the summer), again, I didn’t know Secretary Powell that well. I got to know him, is especially meetings where he’d been and I’d been, we’d be the only two from the State Department at a meeting and I would know that Dan Fried and I had agreed between ourselves on what the decision was, I was constantly calling him or emailing him, saying, “Mr. Secretary, you and I believe that X was decided. There is a NATO meeting tomorrow where the U.S. representative has to have an opinion on this and has to say yes or no on this proposal” or that proposal on the Balkans or putting in troops or

whatever it was "I can't get the instruction cleared out of the Pentagon on something that was agreed this morning."

He would call Rumsfeld and he would call me up and say, "Okay, I've reached Don and he said, 'Yes, we agreed on this.'" And so I would call up whoever the counterpart at the Pentagon was, it took a while, it was finally J.D. Crouch and they would say, "We don't have that instruction from Rumsfeld, so we're not going to clear the cable."

There was one instance where this happened, I had Powell call Rumsfeld three times one night and I still couldn't get them to sign off on the cable. Finally he said to me, "God damn it, I'll sign the God damned cable out!" and I said, "Fine!" and we did. I called up Dan Fried and I said, "Sorry, cable's going! You don't want to sign it; the Pentagon doesn't want to sign. The Secretary of State's signing it! Try and stop me!" And that's what we did.

Q: I'm just trying to capture the mood. Was this percolating down through the decision making body of the—

JONES: Completely. As the deputy assistant secretaries were brought in to the Pentagon, they were brought in before the assistant secretaries, so for quite a while there was an acting assistant secretary, they were in some instances very close to Rumsfeld, in others not so close. They were also terrified of him. They would not clear anything without an explicit agreement from Rumsfeld, which meant that countless times these cables were held up until they could get to Rumsfeld and know personally that he agreed.

I didn't have to get Powell to agree to NATO instruction cables, for heaven's sake. I knew perfectly well what I could approve and what needed to go to him. If I knew he'd been at the National Security Council meeting and had agreed to this, the cable went out. I didn't need to bother him with all of this stuff.

But our Pentagon counterparts couldn't do it. The way it manifested itself is that at the desk officer level, at the office director level, at the DAS level, every single one of them would have fight after fight after fight with the Pentagon. The Joint Chiefs would agree with us countless times, virtually every single time, on what had happened. Of course their representatives would be at the principals committee meeting or the deputies committee meeting. They would sign off on it and then they would understand that the Pentagon hadn't signed off, so they would have to retract their clearance on a cable and say, "Oh, yes, we clear, but we're not allowed to clear."

As far as I was concerned, that was nonsense, too. The Joint Chiefs are supposed to have a separate pen, but they weren't permitted to have a separate pen, because the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs was too weak to stand up to Rumsfeld, wouldn't stand up to Rumsfeld. He allowed his guys to withdraw their clearance.

Now we would know that they had cleared it, so I could represent that to Powell or Armitage, whoever was leading the charge. So what I did, we started this in that summer, but it really got important later on, we started a practice that by three o'clock every day, every single day, I had to have on my desk any issue that anybody in the bureau was having a fight with the Pentagon over.

I said, "I need to know by three o'clock what these issues are and I'm going to start dialing my counterpart to argue these, because I know it's going to come to me. But please get to me before I have to try to find them on the Beltway at seven o'clock at night! Give me a chance! Don't be heroes about this and try and try and try until six and then tell me at 6:30 that you can't get it cleared. Tell me at three that you're not getting it cleared."

So especially when J.D. Crouch got there, I said, "J.D., I'm going to call you at three o'clock every day and we're going to go through all of the fights that our bureaus are having with each other and we're going to sort this out, because these cables have to go out. You cannot stop policy, you cannot stop world events, by being too afraid to go to Rumsfeld on these issues."

Frankly, I also was kind of a bully with him on it. I learned I had to be, because when he couldn't clear something, he would say, "I have to take it to Rumsfeld" and I'd say, "Fine, I'll take it to Powell and call you back in 15 minutes."

I knew it would take him hours to get to Rumsfeld. I also knew I could get to Powell in 15 minutes, if he was there and if he wasn't there, I could get to him within 15 minutes of his being there. He was extremely accessible to us. He and Armitage would always tell us, "We are here in order to adjudicate these fights. That's why we're here. Don't spend days and weeks not clearing things."

Powell would regularly give a dissertation about this in the morning meeting. He would say, "I know how Washington works. The way to stop progress is not to clear and we can have things not cleared for weeks here. We can have things never cleared here. I won't tolerate that. I'm here, Armitage is here, Grant Green's here, Marc Grossman is here. So bring us these issues and we will bigfoot these guys if we have to, as much as we possibly can" and they would.

Now, the problem was with the Pentagon, neither Doug Feith nor Wolfowitz had the guts or the influence with Rumsfeld to change his mind on these issues and they didn't have the guts to take them to him. So I knew pretty quickly that I couldn't work up the chain, to take something to Marc to work with Doug Feith or to take something to Armitage to work with Wolfowitz.

They both said to me very quickly, "Don't go through us. Tell us when you're having an issue, but go straight to the Secretary, because the only person who can adjudicate these things is Rumsfeld." So I did, because going to the intermediaries didn't work.

Q: What were you getting from, particularly, I don't imagine Latin America was very much in it, or Africa, but the Near East and the Asian bureaus?

JONES: The Near Eastern bureau was run by Bill Burns. We used to talk all the time. He had a particularly difficult time, because Liz Cheney was his political DAS, which meant that they could never talk about anything. This is the vice president's daughter, who was a big neocon herself.

So as there were battles with the Pentagon or with the Office of the Vice President, the poor people in NEA had to go into a closet to discuss it, because they could never discuss it in front of Liz Cheney, whereas we could have a free for all, really, in terms of discussions among ourselves about where the issues were and how to solve it and who was going to go to who.

In addition to the morning meeting that I had with all of the DAS's and the office directors every day, to report on the Secretary's morning meeting, so everybody would know what he was focused on. My philosophy was we need to know that today everything is going to be North Korea, or we need to know that today everything is Haiti, so that when we pound on the table and say, "By God, you've got to do this extremely important thing on Albania" and they say, "Are you crazy?," we're going to know better than to say, "You've got to do this important thing in Albania today," because Haiti and North Korea are up and Albania can wait until tomorrow.

So that was the philosophy that I had with my guys as to why we needed to know everything that was going on in the entire building, to be able to represent and advocate for our issues in a responsible, sensible way, so people didn't think, "Oh, God, doesn't EUR read the news? Can't they tell that there's a big issue going on over here with Guatemala?"

Plus, very quickly it was clear that we needed some sort of a discussion at the end of the day, "What are the big issues? What did we get done today? What's going to happen overnight?" We had what we called vespers every night, just with myself and the DAS's and a couple of the other senior people. My senior public affairs person was there and the senior assistance person was there as well, as well as the executive director, so that everybody would have a say on everything.

We had a couch in my office and lots of chairs. It got so that anybody who had a particularly vexing issue, or had a particularly stunning failure, had to sit on what we called "the couch of shame." Everybody moved around and people would walk in and say, "Okay, I'm on the couch of shame tonight. I can't wait to tell you what awful thing has just happened." So we kept ourselves amused through the worst of the worst of the worst of times.

Q: We just had yesterday the vice presidential debate and John McCain's prospective vice president, Sarah Palin, was talking about the office of vice president, saying how fine Cheney was as vice president. And Joseph Biden made a point of looking straight at the camera and saying, "In my opinion, Dick Cheney is the worst vice president ever." He didn't mention, I think one vice president killed a former Secretary of the Treasury in a duel.

I don't know, I'm supposed to be the neutral observer, but I can't help feeling that, I've never said this of anybody else in the government, Cheney is just plain evil. That's a personal prejudice, which is—

JONES: Well, we got so we called him the evil genius. That was a name that I used and a lot of people I know used and for the following reason: I mentioned that we would go to principals committee meetings and deputies committees meetings and think that there was agreement about a policy. We would then discover that there hadn't been an agreement about policy and it was up to us at State to fight it out with the Pentagon, usually it was the Pentagon. By the way, we almost always had support from CIA and as I already mentioned from the Joint Chiefs.

The most telling aspect of why I called Cheney the evil genius is that he would often participate in these principals committee meetings, where I personally was. Rumsfeld would be there and Wolfowitz, they would both come. They didn't trust each other, I guess.

Dan Fried would take the notes. If I was there it was an EUR issue, because we were exact counterparts on all of the countries. He would send over to me the draft of the memorandum of decision that is always issued after a principals committee meeting or a deputies committee meeting: what was the discussion, what was the decision made?

He would send it to me for a sanity check, we were good colleagues that way and I would make a couple of suggestions, "My notes say, really it's a little bit of a nuance here, let's add that in," whatever and he'd say "Yes, fine, great!" and I would think, "Okay, we're done!"

Then the final memorandum of decision would come out and I would look at it just to double check, thank God. Because lots of times it turned out they would be quite different from what Dan and I had written together, or Dan had drafted and I had cleared, basically. I'd call him up the first few times and say, "What the hell happened? This isn't what we decided in that meeting."

He said, "Oh, the Office of the Vice President, Cheney decided he didn't like the decision and so he changed it."

I said, "But that's not a memorandum of the discussion!"

He said, “I know. It’s above my pay grade. I can’t do anything about it. I’ve discussed it with Rice. She says to let it go.”

So I got so I was a real bear on making sure that I had what really happened at the meeting and the changed version of what happened at the meeting, I would send them both, every time, to Marc Grossman, to Rich Armitage and to Secretary Powell, to say, “Okay, guys, this is what’s going on and what do you want me to do about it?”

And Powell, especially, would say, “I’ve got it. Let me take care of this. I’ll handle this.”

What he actually did I’m not sure, but I was very convinced that he had a very good way to deal with a lot of these issues, even though he doesn’t get a lot of credit for that. But to my mind, as my editorial comment about Powell’s stint as secretary of state, he prevented, by being there and by sticking it out for those four years, he prevented many, many bad things from happening.

He couldn’t prevent all of them and he’s gotten criticism for that, but to my mind he prevented a lot more bad things from happening by just sticking to his guns and constantly fighting back and beating back, beating back, beating back. It’s not public, all the things that he did. It’s hard for it to be public, probably. It’s hard to list the negatives that didn’t happen. But it could have been a heck of a lot worse.

Q: Did you get any feel for the role of the president in what was happening?

JONES: I found the president to be detached. He wasn’t interested. It was very hard to brief him. I would see him in two ways in meetings with foreign leaders: often I was the State representative to meetings in the Oval Office with a leader from a country I was responsible for. Certainly whenever the president went to any country in Europe or Eurasia I was always on the trip.

I was always on Air Force One with Secretary Powell as his backup substantive person. With extremely rare exception I was in the meeting as a note taker or as backup to Dan as note taker.

The insight I have into President Bush is that he was fine with what I call the first sentence. You can brief him to make the first point. Let’s say it’s to President Putin and he says, “Mr. President, I’m disturbed by the retrenchment in democracy that you seem to be pushing in Russia, such as the reduction in independent media, such as the fact that you now appoint governors and they’re no longer elected. We think that that’s a retrenchment of democracy, point number one.”

Putin would then launch into his defense of all of this, including things like, when President Bush would criticize the reduction in independent media, Putin would say things like, “Well, the White House got Dan Rather fired,” (of course this was much later) “for misrepresenting your service in the National Guard.”

When President Bush would complain about Khodorkovsky having been jailed for political purposes, they would say, “Well, we’re doing the same thing to Yukos that you’re doing to Enron.”

Or on the governors, they would say, “Well, Denmark,” or the Netherlands or one of the Western European countries, “they appoint governors, too.” Putin would go on at some length, he would really launch on this.

President Bush never had what I would call a second sentence. He would never say, “That’s wrong. You cannot equate Dan Rather, at all, the White House had nothing to do with Dan Rather being fired by CBS. The way the governors are appointed in Western Europe has no relationship to what’s going on in Russia.”

On the governors, he even said to Putin. “You know, you’re right. It would be great. I wish I could appoint governors in the United States. It would be much better for me.”

He’d say it as a joke, but it meant that the points were never made. He never hammered home a single point with Putin, or any foreign leader.

Now the other thing that Bush would do, is in meetings with foreign leaders whom he didn’t like, Chirac being a good example, he would demonstrate severe disrespect for the person, in a variety of ways.

So, for example, in his first meeting with President Chirac, in the Elysée Palace, they were seated in identical chairs towards the end of the room and the rest of us were seated around, so we could see both of them extremely well.

Q: You’re talking about the president of France.

JONES: The president of France, yes, in Paris. President Bush sat with his legs wide apart, legs akimbo, slumped in his chair, turned away from Chirac, with his head in his hands, with a disgusted look on his face, rolling his eyes, every time President Chirac said anything, basically. Bush wouldn’t respond.

I looked at him and I thought, “If my teenager sat in front of any adult that way, I would smack him.” It was unthinkable to me to behave that way. I thought to myself, I must say, “If only his mother could see him now!”

Q: Well, I understand his mother did tick him off a couple of times for not standing when ladies came to the dinner table or something like that.

JONES: But he wasn’t serious. He didn’t spend any time on these issues. He didn’t care about them. He would —

Q: Did you get any feel for the Cheney-Bush relationship?

JONES: Not really. I can't say I could see it personally. I wasn't witness to it. I heard a lot about it from third parties, I should say second hand.

But the perspective I had on it, again, this is mostly second hand, although I saw it happen a couple of times personally in the pre-brief of the president before a foreign leader came into the Oval Office, when Cheney would be there.

That was basically that whoever had the last word with the president, that's what the president did. So eventually and I heard this, again, second hand, there was a lot of maneuvering that would go on before a decision needed to be made, who had the last meeting with the president, because you could be pretty sure that that was the position that he would take.

Q: I've heard the same complaint about Clinton.

JONES: It might be. With Clinton, I was not present for nearly as many meetings as I was with Bush, just because I was a PDAS, a principal deputy, I wasn't an assistant secretary. But the few times I was in meetings with Clinton, he brought to the table much more discussion. For me that was the big difference.

So there was no problem with Clinton having a second sentence. He could discuss the issue and if there was pushback that needed to happen, you could brief him and he'd take it in. He didn't need to read his talking points in order to know what the second sentence was and the third and fourth and fifth and sixth.

I saw Clinton in particular during Camp David II, where he could discuss these issues for hours and bring his own ideas to the table and push back with lots of good ideas and bring new ideas to the front.

I never, ever, one time, saw George Bush bring a single idea to the table, not one time.

Q: Again, I'm still dealing with this early period, did you get any feel for the White House, including the national security advisor and Cheney, for their views about Europe? Here is really quite a new entity on the scene, that's the European Union, that's beginning to feel its oats. Did you get any feel for it, was it considered a rival or something?

JONES: To a degree. It was an interesting setup, because there was a sense that the EU should not have a strong military. The neocons were clearly in that camp, especially Rumsfeld, having been the ambassador to NATO, so he was very steeped in all of these kinds of issues.

But it was an issue that was under quite a bit of discussion within State as well. It wasn't one of these black and white kinds of issues where State and the Pentagon and the Office

of the Vice President disagreed a hundred per cent. Marc Grossman, for instance, was very concerned to make sure that whatever the EU did militarily, that NATO would have primacy. I didn't disagree with that. I thought there might be a little bit more flexibility that we could have inserted into that, but Marc's argument was, "We have to be a little tougher on this to keep the neocons at bay, or else they'll force it. If we don't look fairly tough on this, they might take over the whole thing" and I appreciated that argument.

We didn't get into the big fights over this until after 9/11 with Brussels, when the Chocolate Summit took place. But it was beginning, those kinds of things were beginning. It was manifesting itself in suspicion about the EU. Now I came from the camp where, because of all of the time that I'd spent with the European Union, various organizations and offices, talking about Kashmir, talking about Iran, talking about the Middle East, I had a great deal of respect for the expertise in the EU and the fact that they really could bring substantive weight to the table on some of these issues. I thought that we needed to get them more involved in these issues, that we needed to have their weight felt much more strongly, so that we could go in as a collective juggernaut with the Iranians or with the Middle East crowd or whatever, with combined positions on some of these issues.

It also came from all of the work that had been done with the Caucasus, Central Asians, Russians, Ukrainians and Eastern Europeans, Baltic States, on getting them ready for EU membership.

I was very much in the camp that USAID work should be completely coordinated with the EU to make sure that all of the assistance programs we had and we had lots of them, spent lots of money in these areas, could be completely collaborative with the EU, to make sure that the legislation that we were proposing, the structures that we were proposing, were all ones that could stay in these countries as part of their developing their capabilities to be EU members.

That of course was the policy of the United States in any case, but I was a very vocal, strong proponent of that philosophy. I think we were very successful. That was not an area where the neocons really got much hold, even though they would have liked to. But they had so many other fish to fry that we were able to take over, be the bigger voice on that part of the issue.

Q: John Bolton, he had already been involved before, but was he on the scene prior to 9/11?

JONES: He was very much on the scene prior to 9/11. He was the one who led the charge on unsigning, he and Doug Feith and J.D. Crouch, the Rome Treaty.

I think there must have been an article in the paper on how John Bolton was forced on Powell or something like that, because I particularly remember a morning staff meeting, at which John Bolton was present, when Secretary Powell turned to everyone, this was

early September, before 9/11, when there was a *Time* or *Newsweek* magazine cover story about Colin Powell and the headline was "Where has Colin Powell gone?" It was all about how he was being trumped by the Pentagon, it was the beginning of, "Yes, he did the China airplane thing well, but he got trumped on the Middle East, he got trumped on North Korea, he got trumped on" this and that.

Powell, at the end of the morning staff meeting, as everybody was getting ready to leave, said, "Oh, by the way, everybody sit back down. I don't know if you've noticed, but there's a cover about me out there." And of course everybody laughed, as everybody had been worried about this, "Oh, my God! Oh, my God! What's happened to our fabulous secretary of state?"

He said, "I've been around Washington a very long time and I know that in Washington sometimes you're up and sometimes you're down. You don't like it when you're down, but you always get over it and the only way to get over it is to keep doing the best possible job you possibly can. There isn't anything that we've done that isn't right. There isn't anything we've done that in any way detracts from the pride I have in this institution and from the pride and respect I have for all of you. I feel that you're returning that respect to me. I appreciate that. And we all just need to keep doing the best possible job we can for the American people. And I will keep fighting the good fight to make sure that foreign policy proceeds in the best possible way that it can. I know that there are stories out there that not everybody in this building was chosen by me. That's wrong, John. I'm very happy to have John Bolton here. He is part of my team. He wasn't imposed on me by the outside and I wouldn't have him here if I didn't believe that he would be respectful of me, respectful of my position as Secretary of State and wouldn't be a good collaborative colleague of all of you."

Which, to us, was a counseling session for John Bolton about how he should behave.

Q: He was what, at that time?

JONES: Under Secretary for Arms Control and Disarmament.

Q: We've talked about the inner workings. How did you view your duchy there, at EUR, as far as the major countries are concerned?

JONES: I thought of EUR as divided up into several chunks, each requiring a certain focus and a certain amount of attention. As opposed to being a bureau of 54 countries, I thought of it more in groupings, which was a good way for me to organize it for myself mentally and intellectually.

I think the place to start in talking about EUR before 9/11 is to start with the EU presidency at the time when I first started, which was Sweden. That was important because there was an EU-U.S. summit that was to take place in Sweden, which would be the first summit of President Bush's presidency. The reason that was important is because

by the time that summit took place in July the Bush White House had made itself already very unpopular in Europe by pulling out of Kyoto, by talking in terms of the Rome Treaty on war crimes and ethnic cleansing in a way that made the U.S. look like it wasn't really going to participate internationally very much at all.

At the time I can't honestly say I realized the great degree to which the U.S. was pulling out of treaties because of the binding nature of them, in the view of the neocons. But that was certainly in the air as we went to Sweden. Anna Lindt was the Swedish foreign minister. She called Secretary Powell very regularly. She was probably as outspoken as any of the European leaders, in terms of her displeasure with the direction the U.S. was taking.

Secretary Powell wasn't always ecstatic to talk to her, because he knew he'd get a bit of a talking to about this or that issue, but on a personal level they got along famously, for a couple of reasons: Secretary Powell is a great lover of Volvos.

Q: He takes them apart.

JONES: He takes them apart and puts them back together again and his favorite singing group is ABBA. So his favorite line, whenever he saw Anna Lindt, was his three favorite things in the world were Anna, ABBA and Volvos. So they did very well on a personal level and that is what carried us through to a great degree in some of the difficulties that lay ahead.

The other key to the U.S. and Europe at the time was Prime Minister Blair, Tony Blair, of Great Britain, who, one wouldn't have imagined that he and President Bush would have gotten along as well as they did, coming from sort of different sides of the political spectrum as they did. But he was an early guest at Camp David and because of the way they both thought of God and religion, in their own personal faith, they established a rapport very, very quickly, very early, that was extremely important to the U.S.. When the Bush White House decided to go into Iraq and of course Blair was a very, very important supporter of the U.S. at the time.

Two other key allies of Bush, at the time, I wouldn't even say of the U.S., but it certainly was the U.S., was Spain. Prime Minister Aznar, Spain was the first foreign country that Bush visited, the first foreign leader whom Bush visited and they also got along like a house on fire, thought very much alike, were very pragmatic in a certain sense. This is of course well before Iraq, but the personal relationship they were able to establish in that early June visit, I think it was, was very important as the U.S. and Europe proceeded along the way after 9/11.

The other person who was very important to the Bush White House but the relationship didn't develop right away, it took a second trip to Europe, was with Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi, who also professed himself very supportive of President Bush, very supportive of U.S. policies. The thing that I think is important to note is that Berlusconi

and Aznar, to a degree and Blair, to a degree, were going against their own public opinion in their personal support of President Bush, even then, even before Iraq ever became an issue.

Q: Was Berlusconi somebody, from your perspective, we had to treat a little bit with kid gloves or something, because his was not the most popular regime, in the view of many Americans?

JONES: It was not, but the thing to keep in mind, I think, is that he ended up being the longest serving prime minister since the Second World War or something like that. He's back now, which in Italian politics is saying really a lot. But he proved himself to be a rather adept politician, helped considerably, I must say and I'm a cynic on this, by the fact that he basically owned all the newspapers and the media, so it was easier in this democracy in Italy to control public opinion to a degree that was pretty interesting.

We talked about Putin before. He and President Bush developed a personal relationship when they met in Ljubljana in the summer, in June of 2001. It was an important relationship. We didn't know at that point which direction it would take. I think we've talked about this to a degree already.

Germany and France were of course extremely important countries to the United States but the two leaders, Chancellor Schröder of Germany and Chirac in France, were not particularly enamored of President Bush.

Schröder played along, I think is the best way to put it, with Bush at the beginning, didn't demonstrate his disfavor, even when the Bush White House pulled out of the Kyoto Treaty, which was an extremely unpopular move in Germany, especially for Schröder.

Even then, when they met at the G-8 meeting in Genoa, even then Schröder didn't raise it. We talked about the propensity of even the most tough-sounding leaders to be chicken, just gutless, about raising difficult issues with a counterpart when they're face to face, yet being quite happy to trash them roundly when they're speaking to their own constituencies or their own journalists.

With Chirac, it was a personal discomfort that President Bush felt with Chirac, I believe, just from looking at the body language. But also President Bush really disfavored, he just looked down on anything French.

This was, again, well before 9/11 and well before any policy difficulties. He made clear in the way he behaved with Chirac that he disdained him, that he didn't appreciate anything to do with French culture, for him French culture was just a big bunch of snobbery.

There's an infamous, for me, point in a press conference after his meeting with Chirac, when one of the American journalists addressed Chirac, I believe, in French, asked a

question in French. President Bush was derisive of him, at the press conference, for pretending to be too good for everybody, to speak in French. It really was appalling.

Q: It really is appalling, the comment, "You think you're so smart" or that sort of thing.

JONES: Well, the first dinner that was hosted by Chirac for President Bush, very elegant dinner, indoors but a garden-looking place. Chirac engaged the president in a discussion on Lebanon, which was an issue at the time. It wasn't a super hot issue, but it was important, and it was something of course that's important to France. It's a country the U.S. has spent a lot of time on, and Bush had nothing to say.

He could not engage in a conversation. We hadn't briefed him on Lebanon, other than to say this is an issue that Chirac could raise. But he just refused to speak, basically, for the entire dinner. Chirac, of course, was perfectly happy to keep talking, too, so it went both ways. But it was a real personality clash that I don't think either one ever got over.

Q: When you run across this, you are part of the handlers. You can't dismiss France because of a personal tiff, because our president just doesn't like the French.

JONES: No, you can't do that, but it becomes an issue for the national security advisor, for the secretary of state, to take up the slack in the relationship with their counterparts. I don't know a lot about Rice's relationship with her various national security counterparts. She did establish a relationship with each of them, with the main European allies. She talked with them on a regular basis, much to the dismay of some of the U.S. ambassadors, who weren't briefed on the telephone calls and were constantly berating the National Security Council for not briefing them. I would get a little bit of a briefing and try to pass it on if I could, but it was just one of those things that this is going to be a fact of life and they didn't like it.

But it was an issue that Secretary Powell felt very strongly about that it was really up to him to maintain a relationship, move the relationships forward with each of friends and allies. In any case one couldn't depend upon a president, no matter how good, to do that. That was by design the job of the secretary of state. When he could see that relationships weren't working with this country or this foreign leader or that foreign leader, he made a special effort to stay in closer touch with that country's foreign minister and others. Occasionally there were others in the government that he would be in touch with, just to try to keep things moving in the right way.

Q: The State Department had gone through this reorganization, so that we no longer had a U.S. Information Agency, we had public diplomacy. Obviously, particularly in a place like Germany and France, it cried for doing something to work on the public, if the chiefs of the countries couldn't see eye to eye. But did you find your tools were essentially diminished or helped by this change?

JONES: I thought it was helped overseas, in the following way: overseas, there was still a public affairs officer, there were still information officers and cultural affairs officers.

The difference was that they reported through the ambassador to the State Department in a more seamless way than they had before, which meant that there was a way that we could better focus them on policy issues that were of importance to the State Department, to the White House, to the foreign policy establishment.

So overseas there was no difference, really, other than a bit of an enhancement in terms of direction. In Washington, on paper it looked like it was more integrated, but there was, I found, considerable resistance among the older former USIA officers to being integrated into the State Department.

When I began as assistant secretary, one of the things I wanted to do was move the public diplomacy desk officers from the public diplomacy office for EUR into each of the desks, so that they could be right there with the desk officers and be right front and center every time a new idea was proposed, very time a new issue needed to be discussed, whatever, that they would be very integrated. I thought that was better for them, better for policy, better for public diplomacy. I asked that that be reviewed when I did the best practices work in bringing the two bureaus together. There was very severe resistance to it, so severe that I decided to drop it.

Q: Who was resisting?

JONES: Only the former USIS people. All the State people thought it was a great idea.

Q: I would think the USIS people—

JONES: They didn't want to be broken up. They wanted to be with their own kind. They wanted to be where they could reinforce each other. The compromise I made was that we would have a couple embedded in various places in the bureau on a volunteer basis. There was enough change in the bureau that I didn't want to have a disaster in public diplomacy because of process. I wanted to stick with substance.

I found that that worked very well. We had a couple of offices in which the public diplomacy officers were embedded in the desks and it worked great. I gradually moved it over more and more, so gradually they could see that it wasn't because I was trying to get rid of them that I wanted them embedded, that I wanted them to be more effective.

Q: I've talked to hundreds, literally hundreds, of people who've worked for USIA and I've found that their time in Washington is kind of dull, they were involved in personnel stuff and administrative stuff, but there wasn't any policy role and I would have thought that they would thirst to get their hands

JONES: That's what I would have thought, too and I found that there was a little bit of a different culture, that those who came back to Washington, not all of them, expected to come back to rest a bit, they didn't really want to be in a job where they might have to stay past 5:30.

I'm exaggerating just a little bit, but I did find this among more than I expected. But especially the younger ones, I was able to convert them to the idea that being in Washington, especially under Colin Powell, was exciting and fun. That's where the action was. They were the ones who could be providing the guidance to policy people about how you do this kind of thing. I was extremely aggressive with the State guys, to say, "I don't want a single meeting ever to happen on a policy issue without your public diplomacy guys there" on the grounds that silence is also a public diplomacy decision, "No comment" is a public diplomacy decision, but the public diplomacy people need to be in on all the substance of the discussion right from the beginning to be able to give their best advice about is this right, or is there a another way to play this?

This became ever so much more important after 9/11, but it was already pretty important, with the whole Kyoto disaster, climate change and all of that.

One of my disappointments, though, as much as I was able to work very effectively hand in hand with my own public diplomacy people in EUR, the former USIA offices for cultural affairs office that does all of the sort of publications and research was different. The new assistant secretary, a political appointee, when he came to call after he'd been appointed, said, "What do you need?" and I said, "I really need you guys to pull together some good talking points and good history, whatever it is, about how much the U.S. is way ahead and has been for some time on environmental issues. You could cite the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, all these things, so even though the White House is portraying the U.S. as in the Dark Ages about the environment and climate, I know that the U.S. was ahead of Europe at one point and isn't that far behind, even though we have withdrawn from Kyoto."

He said, "Great, absolutely. Great idea!" It didn't come and didn't come and didn't come. I kept saying, "Where is this? I need this! We're being killed in Europe! We need to have somebody who's going to do this. We need the research, we need the talking points, we need the stuff so that we can make our case."

He finally came back he said, "Well, he talked to all of his people, but they said that their office doesn't do policy."

I said, "What? Of course! That's all you do!"

But, no, he couldn't make them do policy.

Q: Was that him, do you think, or?

JONES: No, I don't think it was him. I think he was just too new. He was a political appointee. He didn't know and he was being led around by the nose by his career guys. It was just ridiculous.

Q: Well, it's sort of a cultural thing, my impression is that Washington just was not a very good stimulus and so in many ways this unification will probably work much better.

JONES: I think it will. Certainly the proof is in the pudding, in terms of the overseas work. The other part of the public diplomacy work that I really worked at is to have my public diplomacy experts not just be the organizers of a press conference and the organizers of an event, but be the specialists about it, too, so they're not just organizing a political officer to do a press event, but then they do a press event, also.

There's no reason that they can't know the policy as a political officer or an economic officer or a consular officer. They can be just as much a member of the outreach team, instead of the one who's just making appointments with the press for the ambassador, which is often what they felt their role was.

Q: Pre-9/11, you've got two major elephants who we're not working well with, Germany and France. France, I would assume everybody's used to that, in a way.

JONES: In a way.

Q: Okay, let's talk about France, first. How did you view our relationship with France?

JONES: Well, at the time, before 9/11, there weren't any really big issues with France, where we differed. Climate was an issue, to a degree, but it wasn't more of an issue in France than it was in Germany. It was much more of an issue in Germany. So that wasn't really a big problem.

There was always a NATO issue with France that manifested itself in Brussels. The French ambassador to NATO was a difficult character who seemed to like very much to really poke his finger in the eye of the American ambassador, who unfortunately rose to the bait too often. There were times when I would just say, "Just don't answer him. Just forget it. Don't worry that he's got his newspaper up, reading out loud while you're speaking. Just ignore him. Everybody else thinks he's ridiculous."

So it was that kind of thing, more than real policy, as I recall. I don't recall very big issues with the French.

Q: Well, how about the other big one, Germany?

JONES: Germany, there were some issues in terms of NATO. They were more severe later and with France, too, the whole issue of how much does the EU put forward its military force and what's the relationship with NATO. There'd already been the Berlin

Plus agreements, which spelled out that NATO had the right of first refusal, basically, in use of troops in a particular situation. So there weren't any big issues, other than the sense that Bush was a cowboy and the U.S. was all for global warming and whatever disaster happened in the world was going to be the fault of the U.S.. So it wasn't any particular issue, other than nasty dynamics.

Q: Did you have to worry about the neocons wandering around Europe giving out pronouncements and tooting their neocon horns and all?

JONES: Not yet, partly because although Rumsfeld was confirmed pretty early, most of his people were not confirmed for the entire summer. They weren't confirmed until the fall. So no confirmed people were running around, feeling that they had authority to do this or that.

As I recall, we didn't even have the big tension that I had with John Bolton over the Rome Treaty, the war crimes treaty. There is an article in it called Article 98 which allows for countries to opt out of imposing the Rome Treaty bilaterally with a country that does not wish to participate in the Rome Treaty. That was an issue that I got into in a severe and direct confrontation with John Bolton over how to pursue what we called Article 98 agreements with every country in the world. But even that hadn't raised its ugly head yet.

The issue of the U.S. walking out of the ABM Treaty started to come up. The terms of the treaty permit either side to walk out of the treaty, giving I think it was six months' notice. But because there were so few people in place at the Defense Department yet who basically came into the government in order to get rid of the ABM Treaty, they weren't in place yet, so none of that really got moving before 9/11.

Q: Now, did this summit happen before 9/11?

JONES: Which summit?

Q: The one in Sweden?

JONES: Yes, that was in July.

Q: How did that go?

JONES: In the end it went very well, in the following respect: first, it was in Göteborg and the whole area where the summit took place was blocked off, because there were so many crowds all over the place that the police were very concerned it could turn violent. So it was a very artificially quiet area in which the summit took place.

A lot of us were worried about the dinner, because the dinner was heads of state and government only, which meant that it would be Bush with all of his EU counterparts, with no one else there. Maybe the national security advisors were all there, maybe they

were there at a separate table, I can't quite remember the set up. The foreign ministers had a separate dinner where Secretary Powell was, which was also the first time he met Jack Straw, the new British Foreign Secretary, which was a great meeting, actually. But what I heard from the Swedes and from others after that dinner was that Bush had held his own quite well in all of the discussions, principally climate change and that it had not been a disaster by any means, the way so many people were worried that it would be.

In terms of the bilateral part of it, because whenever there's a U.S.-EU summit, it is a summit with all of the EU leaders. But the bilateral part is really the Swedish presidency with the head of the European Commission and the head of government of the next country that is going to have the EU presidency. That was a scripted discussion. It was at a lovely place outside Göteborg. The scripted part of the discussion went fine, there was nothing remarkable about it.

What was remarkable was how difficult it was to get agreement on the statement. There was a joint statement which was negotiated for months in advance. My senior DAS, Charlie Ries, was the one deputized to go over to Sweden several days early to put the finishing touches on negotiating this thing. I was on Air Force One with the White House people and with the Chairman of the Economic Advisors, who was desperate about some of the language on climate change and this and that. He had Charlie Ries up all night in Sweden. We were up on the plane, anyway, negotiating this and negotiating that.

Charlie did a fantastic job of walking the White House people through what was possible and what wasn't possible and then talking the Swedes and the Commission from Brussels into some of the language that the White House people absolutely had to have.

But he did a masterful job of it. He's very good at it. He knows the issues cold, anyway and he'd been doing the job for a while, but it was really a *tour de force*.

The biggest issue in the pre-9/11 period was the Balkans. This was the period of time when Macedonia was coming apart. The Albanian minority in Macedonia was fighting the Macedonians. There were lives lost, there was fighting in villages. There was a terrific worry that this would be a new sort of Balkans War. It started not too long after I started in EUR and I felt very handicapped because I didn't have my Balkans person there. Jim Swigert had stayed on, did a great job. He went out to the field and was doing a lot of the negotiating. I then asked Jim Pardew, who had been doing some of the Balkans and was going off to do a different job, to be the big negotiator in the end and he was the one who actually got the Albanians in Macedonia and the Macedonians to negotiate an agreement called the 3, which is still in place and still working.

But it was a very, very dicey situation. There was a tremendous amount of hand holding that was needed with Trajkovski, the president of Macedonia. We had him come to Washington to meet with President Bush. They prayed together. He's a Methodist lay minister and they got along very well in that respect.

But it was a very difficult set of questions about how would NATO be involved in this, how would the U.S. be involved, if NATO troops were involved, how would U.S. troops be involved, what was the role of EUCOM, the European Command, in directing the U.S. troops under NATO command, what would the EU participation in this be? So it was a tremendous amount of coordination from me in Washington and a few others with NATO in Brussels, with the EU in Brussels, on how to bring all these negotiators and wise men in to try to figure out how to manage the negotiations, talking everybody into stopping the fighting, not permitting it to go beyond Macedonia, because there was a terrific danger of that, how to bring in the Bulgarians, what should the role of Belgrade be? It was tough, but it got done. And then on top of all of that, that's right when Milosevic was turned over to The Hague War Crimes Tribunal, right around that same time in early June.

Q: What about my old stomping ground, Greece? How did that play during this time?

JONES: Greece was fairly quiet at the time. The only issue that came up and it came up only sporadically was the whole issue of the Macedonian name, use of Macedonia as a name for the modern republic. At the time we were still calling Macedonia the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, FYROM. The Greeks were very insistent on that. We gradually moved away from that, but that took a while, before we found a way to manage that issue.

Q: They weren't trying to screw up the work?

JONES: No. We actually tried to find ways to get them to be helpful and they weren't unhelpful, it's just that there wasn't a whole lot that they could do to weigh in.
But the Bulgarians were helpful. They did get in there and we had Belgrade, also, the Serbs, helping us as well.

Q: Well what was your impression of the two groups in Macedonia? How did you see them?

JONES: Well, the issue that was so difficult, the issue that had to be resolved at Ohrid was the issue of use of language, the issue of spoken language, written language, participation in government, participation in the police. Was there fair distribution among the ethnic Albanian population of Macedonia versus the ethnic Macedonian population?

That was the big issue. So there was tremendous focus on which villages were ethnically which and was there a way to reduce the power of some of the very radical sort of rightist Macedonians and rightist Albanians who were not representative of the main groups of Albanians and Macedonians in Macedonia, or we didn't believe they were representative. The issue was how to get the more moderate leaders of the two groups to control the more radical elements. In the end they were able to.

But it was through a tremendous amount of reassurance of Trajkovski and of the Albanian leader, which was done with a very intense effort, with a lot of collaboration with the intelligence community to try to find out what was really going on so we could be reassuring to Trajkovski that, for instance, what he was being told by his Albanian counterpart in the negotiations, that the Albanian counterpart really was trying to get control of the radical groups, was true. We knew that from what we could tell from intelligence. So it was a great collaborative effort to reassure him that when he made a deal with this guy, the Albanian was really going to try to make it stick and that he wasn't going to be undercut, which was of course terribly important to him.

At the same time we spent a lot of time talking with European experts on language. How do the Finns manage the agreement on use of Swedish? How do the Belgians manage? What were some of the devices that had been used in constitutions, whatever it was, to give respect to both ethnic groups and still maintain unity of the government?

Q: Was there any concern at the time about a Greater Albania? I'm obviously talking about Kosovo and Macedonia. Albania was pretty weak at the time, so

JONES: Yeah, Albania was very weak and Kosovo was still part of Serbia. There was a lot of talk about that from the more radical Albanian groups, not by Albania itself, the country. The Albanians themselves were very helpful, in terms of the government. Jim Swigert went to them regularly for help and support, as well as the Bulgarians. There was just enough talk of it that it made the Macedonians nervous, but it wasn't enough to really count. There wasn't really enough oomph behind it to be a great worry.

Q: In Germany, was it anti-Bush or was it anti-Americanism?

JONES: Again, before 9/11, whatever the view of the U.S. was, it was very focused on Bush, in terms of the "anti" part of it, because of what he symbolized in terms of being a cowboy, sort of knee jerk reactions, not really thinking, not doing outreach to Europe, the kind of collaborative work with Europe that so many countries felt was necessary and appropriate. Schröder at the time was not particularly weak. It wasn't for another year that he basically criticized President Bush as his campaign to win again.

Merkel was just barely, had been chosen as the opposition leader, it happened about that time The president and Secretary Powell certainly met with her regularly as the opposition leader, whenever we went to Europe. She was the one who was very vocal about being pro-U.S. and pro-going into Iraq, which was not at all the popular view in Germany.

Q: By this time, had the conventional opinion of Ronald Reagan and his time changed? Speaking of the cowboy image, did he leave a bitter aftertaste, would you say, in Germany?

JONES: I don't remember much discussion of Ronald Reagan. The comparison was with Clinton, because he was so well liked and such a sympathetic figure in Europe, including in Germany, that that's where the focus was. The other thing that is interesting to recall is that these were very early days of the relationship between Schröder and Putin, so the very close relationship that they developed eventually they were just developing. We were getting reports that Putin and Schröder were meeting and all the conversation was in German. This was all very, very comfortable for Putin.

We thought, "That's okay." There were no red flags that were raised at the time, he's going to let Putin get away with murder type of thing, that wasn't an issue at the time.

Q: Well, let's go to 9/11. Where were you and what was your immediate reaction?

JONES: On 9/11 I was in Washington, at the morning staff meeting that is normally chaired by Secretary Powell. He was in South America, though, at the time, so it was chaired by Mr. Armitage.

Before we went into the staff meeting, one plane had hit the tower. I don't think the second plane had yet, but when we sat down at the table I can remember several people saying, the head of counterterrorism saying, "We don't know whether it's an accident. Could it have been a plane that just flew into the World Trade Center by accident? If it wasn't, it had to be al Qaeda." Already, before there was much of anything known, not all of 9/11 had happened, but people were saying, "If it was terrorism, it's al Qaida."

The second plane crashed by the time I was just getting back from the staff meeting. We finished our EUR staff meeting and had started a meeting in the same room. We were in the inner part of the State Department, in a room without any windows. We had just started a murder board, because I was supposed to go up on the Hill that day or the next day to do some testimony on NATO, when one of my senior officers poked her head in the door at about 9:40 and said that a plane had hit the Pentagon.

That's when I said, "Okay, this is really bad. This meeting is dismissed. I don't know what the State Department is going to decide, but we should be prepared to leave this building. Be sure to take cell phones and contact lists with us, so that we can all operate from our own homes."

By the time we got upstairs, they were already announcing to the State Department over loudspeakers, "Everybody evacuate, everybody evacuate."

I walked into my office, getting ready to get my stuff together so I could set up an alternate command post. That's what I had in mind and had been telling people along the way that's what I planned to do at home.

I never knew that I could see the Pentagon from my office. I looked right across the river and I could see a huge plume of smoke coming from what obviously was the Pentagon

that I had never known I could see, the white rim of it, which I had never, ever, noticed before. I remember thinking, "That is a hell of a clear sky, with not a single building in the way between the plane that crashed into the Pentagon and a plane that could come straight at the State Department."

Not that it is going to, but there was a lot of talk then -- is there another plane and what else is going on? So I passed the word, I got all my deputies together, we were all sort of in a big office and said, "Everybody go home. We're each going to set up a separate command post. The first order of business is for each of you to get hold of each of your embassies," I said to my DAS's, "And make sure they know how to reach each of us, that we're all fine and that's what we're going to do."

I collected several people to go with me to my house to set up a separate command post, because I had two phone lines and a fax and all that.

Q: Where do you live?

JONES: In Bethesda.

Q: About that time, I remember, because I was getting off a shuttle bus from FSI, when all of a sudden all the security people came running out, looking up at the sky and then I happened to have sort of like an I-pod, where I could turn on a radio and I turned it on and then I hear that there's been a car bomb went off by the State Department.

JONES: That rumor started after I had left. I actually was able to leave before it got to be too much of a jam downtown. It was a jam by the time I got partway up Canal Road, but I was able to get through to a couple of people on my cell phone, like my husband, who was in Chicago and my mother in Bethesda. I wasn't able to reach any of my family, because within minutes, as you remember, the cell phone lines were so jammed you couldn't get through to anybody. But I asked her to try to get in touch with Todd and Courtney to tell them I was okay and heading home.

I learned later that the story of the car bomb at the State Department was all over the news. My daughter, Courtney, was in a sports team practice out on a field in Princeton when one of her friends came racing up to her to tell her that the State Department had been bombed. It was several hours before she was able to connect with my mother to learn that I was okay. We had that family emergency plan – that my mother would be the center of communications whenever any of us was hard to reach.

Several of my colleagues ended up having to walk home, because the jam was too great. We realized of course quickly that we couldn't communicate by email on the State Department system, so we started collecting personal email addresses. My office manager was with me and so that's one of the things she started doing, so that we could communicate as much as possible, because that was working.

When I got home, I dialed several of my U.S. embassies overseas to tell them where I was and how to reach all of us and all that kind of thing. We realized that we were having trouble getting through to all the embassies, so I called back to our mission to NATO in Brussels, for some reason I could get through to them more easily than I could to London or any other of the big embassies. I said, "Okay, I am going to dictate a message, a cable, that I want you to send out to all EUR posts in my name. It's going to say, USNATO from Beth Jones, EUR. This is what has happened, this is where we all are, this is what I want you all to do, these are the phone numbers. I need the personal email addresses of every single one of my ambassadors and DCMs, home phone numbers. We're just collecting a whole matrix of information on everybody, because this is the only way we figure we can communicate." That's what we did.

I did note right away that Mr. Armitage was at the State Department, in the Operations Center. He stayed there. I think Marc Grossman stayed with him. We got through to them right away and I briefed them completely on what my plan was, so that they would know that all of EUR was taken care of and they didn't need to worry about any of us.

Charlie Ries, my PDAS, from the next day decided to send out a daily email to all of our posts, with "Here's what happening and here's what people are talking about and here's what the plan is and all of that." He kept that up rigorously for months and months. It became a series of very good pieces of inside scoop that was repeated all over the world, as other bureaus and embassies outside of EUR heard about and started repeating it to their posts. It got to be quite famous as "Charlie's daily report." It was obviously an extremely smart thing to have done, because people are starving for information in situations like that.

The other thing that we did is we took a very quick inventory of who was where, because one of the DAS's was actually traveling overseas, Janet Bogue was. We were able to find her as well and make sure I knew where she was and what her plan was. We definitely needed to handle all of her posts, she was the Balkans DAS, so that we had everybody completely taken care of. One of my DAS's, the political DAS, was to be sworn in on 9/11, so she was actually not able to do anything, because she didn't know any of her posts or anything. So I had people take over her posts, as the communications link with them, to make sure they knew how to reach all of us. We swore Heather Conley in the next day in my office at State.

Q: How did you feel the White House apparatus responded?

JONES: Well, at the time, we were focused on where was Secretary Powell? We knew he was in South America and we knew from Mr. Armitage he was coming back right away and therefore would be a little bit incommunicado while he was traveling.

From the news, we heard that President Bush was God knows where. It was appalling, actually, for the President of the United States to be absent at a time like this. There was really nothing coming out of the White House and it was frightening.

I knew that Mr. Armitage had offered Rumsfeld and the Defense Department use of the State Department Operations Center, since the Pentagon was so badly damaged, to set up there as an alternate command post, but they didn't take us up on the offer.

I think it was that very first day that Mr. Armitage ordered an alternate operations center be set up at FSI, just in case the State Department had been hit. We didn't really have another way to function, other than the pickup way that we'd all decided to do.

Q: I understand the Foreign Service Institute had been wired for an alternate. Nobody had ever looked at it, so they probably—

JONES: It might have been. I recall that it wasn't and that they had to put in the extra wiring for all the extra computers, but I don't know.

Q: I think maybe it was kind of in the plans, but probably things had moved so rapidly

JONES: The other thing that was very important for us to know was what was going to happen the next day, on September 12th.

I don't remember exactly how the communication came about, but we were told, the Ops Center must have called us, to say, "Please advise your bureau that the State Department will be open for business as normal the next day," which I thought was exactly the right decision, that we should and we passed the word around to absolutely everybody, all of my country directors and asked them to do an information tree to all of their staff and all of their posts.

Then the next morning when we all gathered, we gathered as normal, with one exception, one of the things I particularly remember, this is Charlie Ries again, saying, "Everybody around the world wants to know what they can do to help at this devastating moment. We're the lucky ones. We do get to do something and there's a lot of work to be done." It was a perfect thing to say.

But the reason I said with one exception, I got a call very late the night of 9/11 or very, very early the next morning, after Secretary Powell got back. He asked if I would come in to the State Department extra early the next morning, 5:30 or something like that, which of course I was delighted to do, to his office. NATO had put forward an Article Five protection offer and he wanted to have a discussion with Marc Grossman, the Under Secretary; me; Richard Boucher, as the spokesman. I can't remember if John Bolton was there, the Under Secretary for Arms Control, I think Bolton was not there, but Armitage was.

What should we do? Should we accept it? What should we respond?

And I went through some pro's and con's.

Q: Article Five being?

JONES: Being the common protection, if one is attacked, all are attacked, which is the fundament of NATO. The NATO Secretary General had offered that. Nick Burns, as our ambassador had sent it in, with a recommendation that we accept. Secretary Powell just wanted to poll all of us, what did we think, what were the downsides, what were the upsides, how would all this work, et cetera.

We all said, yes, we should definitely accept. I can't remember if I offered to coordinate with the Pentagon or suggested that I coordinate with the NSC, which I did. But the Secretary was less inclined to coordinate so much as to inform. He really didn't want to have a big interagency free for all over this, he wanted to just accept, because we were talking about this at 5:30 or six a.m., that was already noon in Brussels and there was a meeting where Nick Burns, the ambassador, had to say, "Yes or no, the U.S. accepts and would appreciate this."

So I drafted a cable that said, "Yes, thank you," gave him the talking points and sent it out.

I recall -- I don't think it's just my gloating self, but I recall that there was some blowback on Secretary Powell for having done this without full consultation around the block. But he did talk to Condi Rice about it. But Cheney and Rumsfeld were not happy about a treaty being invoked on behalf of the U.S.: the U.S. needed to go alone and didn't want any of this NATO stuff holding us back. We said, "Nothing's going to hold us back. It is an offer. It is something that the U.S. should accept." But there was a bit of "We don't want to participate in any of this treaty stuff."

Q: There really was an aversion to treaties.

JONES: Because to them treaties equaled constraints on the U.S.

Q: It really is incredible, when you look back on this.

JONES: The other immediate things that we had to handle on 9/12: one was what to do to catalogue and organize ourselves to respond to all of the offers of assistance that were coming in from all of the countries, for search and rescue, for humanitarian assistance, whatever it was. The second set of offers was to participate militarily in whatever the U.S. was going to do to retaliate or whatever it was going to do, once it was determined who had done this. Both sets of offers turned out to be very, very awkward and the beginning of the squandering of all of the goodwill that came to the United States after 9/11.

Of course, for the humanitarian assistance and the search and rescue, that all had to be coordinated with New York, with Mayor Giuliani, with FEMA and with all of the rescue, New York Fire Department, New York Police Department, people who were involved.

The answer came back, basically, "We don't need any help and tell everybody to go away." It was very curmudgeonly. It took days and days and days to get any kind of an answer.

So that was already the beginning of a not so good response from the U.S. Separately, within a couple of days, the Pentagon came back on the military offer and said, "We don't want any of this coalition of the willing. We don't even want the term "coalition" used. We don't want the retaliation or the response to be a NATO issue. We know only too well that when NATO got involved in the Balkans, everybody and their great uncle had to approve target lists. We don't want to have anything to do with that. We're going to go it alone and nobody needs to apply to help."

We, nevertheless, it was rather difficult for us, we, EUR, since a lot of this was coming from our countries, principally because of NATO, coordinated quite a bit with the political/military affairs bureau to at least keep track of what the offers had been, in case that we could change anybody's mind at the Pentagon. Or we just knew what had been offered, or whatever. So we started a big matrix effort to make sure we knew what had been offered by whom and what responses we'd sent back, so we could keep some track of this and not be totally disorganized on all of it.

In those first few days I recall having a meeting over at the NSC, it was probably later, maybe it wasn't right away, but the point of the story is other participants in the meeting included J.D. Crouch, from the Pentagon, my Pentagon counterpart and Eric Edelman, who was with the Office of the Vice President, at the end of which J.D. tried to get us to say that the word coalition should not be used by any of us ever again and certainly never be used with a capital letter. Basically I just said, "Forget it!" We're not restricting ourselves that way.

Q: Who was he?

JONES: He was Doug Feith's protégé, I guess. He was a neocon, came in from academia, was a political appointee. He was my direct counterpart at the Pentagon, assistant secretary.

Q: Did that suffice, so we had to watch the "c word"?

JONES: We ignored it. We never did get much of a coalition going for Afghanistan. We did, in the end, for Iraq, of course. Then it became a big deal. But on Afghanistan, no others need apply and we're going to go it alone and we're not going to let anybody participate.

Q: 9/11 happened. What was the common wisdom of who did it and why?

JONES: The instant reaction was, "This has to be al Qaeda!" Many of us had known about al Qaeda for a long time. I of course came from the Near East bureau, where I had been working against al Qaeda for quite some time, with the Clinton White House, with Dick Clarke, trying to get the al Qaeda people constrained in Afghanistan.

There was a tremendous amount of information about all the things al Qaeda had done. It had been responsible for the attack on the *U.S.S. Cole* in Yemen.

We knew about al Qaeda from Central Asia. There were various agents around Central Asia that we were worried about. We knew from the intelligence that we'd been seeing that al Qaida, there had been a lot of talk about planning a U.S. operation. This has all been discussed now, but it is something that all of us took seriously, even though we weren't in a position to do anything about what they might do in the U.S. The State Department just doesn't work in the U.S. that way at all.

We had been very involved, a lot of us, in the whole Y2K transition from 1999 to 2000 and the activities that al Qaida and others had tried to get underway, blowing up hotels in Jordan. The heads up came when U.S. Customs picked up a fellow who was crossing from Canada who maybe was going to blow up Los Angeles International Airport. In other words, our level around the State Department was extremely aware of al Qaeda, extremely aware of all of the talk, all the "chatter," as people like George Tenet have written, about al Qaeda focusing on trying to do something in the U.S.

That it would be this and it would happen then, of course, was nothing that anybody expected.

Q: Was there anything prior to 9/11, anything coming your way, about European cells, in Hamburg or other places?

JONES: No, there wasn't. We looked at all of that quite a bit afterwards, of course. That was one of the things that we especially noted, that we hadn't noticed this. We hadn't had the kind of intelligence exchange with the Germans, with the French, with others, that we should have had, in order to share this kind of information. To be aware of the kinds of things that might go on, especially in Europe, where there's much less domestic intelligence work done against groups like that than the FBI would do, especially in Germany, because of their wartime habits.

Q: I hadn't realized that they'd diminished their surveillance activities.

JONES: Well, because data privacy is so critical in Germany, it's so well known in intelligence circles to be highly detrimental to an effort to collect information against groups that might be doing terrible things against you and that social norm is very, very popular in Germany and a few other countries.

Q: Again, this wasn't, obviously, your particular area, but from people you were talking to, was anybody relating Saddam Hussein to al Qaeda?

JONES: No, never, absolutely not. I, of course, had just come from the Near East bureau, where I had been focused on Saddam Hussein, solidly, for two years. I knew all the intelligence that there was on Saddam Hussein and there was zero, zero connection with al Qaida and almost no connection with the Palestinian terrorists, except Saddam may have given safe haven to a PFLP leader, I think was, but the organization was inactive by that point.

Q: He was also giving pensions, or was he, to the families of suicide bombers?

JONES: There wasn't much of that coming out of Iraq. A lot more of that was coming out of Iran, much more coming out of Iran.

Q: In your work, just at the time and prior to it, was Richard Clarke, was he a figure that you dealt with at all?

JONES: To a degree. He was at the White House. I dealt with him more when I was in the Middle East bureau, he was at the White House then as well. As principal DAS in NEA I was doing a lot more of the coordination on what should the talking points be for him and for others going to Abu Dhabi or Dubai, the various Gulf states, where planes originated going to Kabul or going to places where they potentially could take cash to al Qaeda, that kind of thing. We were trying to tamp that down and make sure we knew what was on those planes. Could we get better control of the assets that they were moving back and forth?

But by the time I was in EUR, I don't remember having any contact with him at all.

Q: What about Russia and the immediate aftermath?

JONES: In the immediate aftermath, President Putin's was one of the first immediate condolence calls that President Bush accepted. In the course of that discussion they said, "We need to coordinate better."

That was passed down the line, Secretary Powell passed it to Mr. Armitage, who was the chair of the U.S.-Russia Coordination Committee. We called it the Afghanistan Group, because it was the format that had been used for coordination of all of the countries that encircled Afghanistan. That included of course Russia and Iran, that was the forum in which the U.S. sometimes was able to have conversations with the Iranians, although that almost never worked.

What happened was, the day after 9/11, one of the things that we organized was to form up the Afghanistan Working Group to go to Moscow immediately. Basically. Mr.

Armitage wanted to have the most senior team possible from around the national security agencies. The idea that we had was to wow the Russians in terms of the high level of intelligence and the extent of the intelligence that we were willing to share, in order to get them to work with us and help us.

We had the CIA's head of counterterrorism, Cofer Black. We had a very senior general from DIA. I can't remember if we had somebody from the FBI. We had a lot of senior uniforms and stars all over the place. 9/11 happened on a Tuesday. By Friday we were in the air going to Moscow, if not Thursday night, I can't quite remember when it was.

The thing I particularly remember about the flight is that there were no planes yet flying. Commercial airline flights hadn't been allowed to restart yet over the United States. It was a very clear evening and we flew right over the World Trade Center in New York that was no longer there. There was a lot of smoke still coming up. It was a very dramatic flight, I must say.

A lot of the people who were part of the team went to Moscow separately. We had a little prep meeting ahead of time and Mr. Armitage's instruction was for each of the intelligence chiefs to be as forthcoming as possible. He went right down the ranks and everybody had a role to play, a piece of information to convey.

When the meeting with the Russians began, the U.S. side started. We had all the Russian counterparts on the other side of a very long conference table, with all their very fancy uniforms. Mr. Trubnikov was Mr. Armitage's counterpart, deputy Russian foreign minister, there. The response to the U.S. presentation from the Russian side was dead silence. There was no response whatsoever, everybody on the Russian side frankly looking stunned.

The kind of information that was shared was dramatic. A lot of it was information I didn't know. One of the reasons I didn't know it was, it was very up to the minute CIA operational information about which team were trying to get into northern Afghanistan to link up with the Northern Command, whose leader had just been assassinated, two days before 9/11, he'd just been killed.

Part of the conversation with the Russians, or part of the presentation, was, "We have this team going in this way, we have another team going in that way. The best way for them to get in is through Dushanbe in Tajikistan or through Uzbekistan or through one of the other Central Asian countries. We have very good contacts in each of these countries. Our teams are getting in. But if we need any help, we'll call you."

Again, the Russians responded in total, complete silence. I could see that they were extremely uncomfortable. The meeting broke briefly for lunch. We had already arranged to have a separate lunch with Mr. Trubnikov, Mr. Armitage's counterpart. Mr. Trubnikov, Mr. Armitage, myself and it must have been the U.S. ambassador to Russia.

Mr. Armitage said to Trubnikov, “What gives? This is supposed to be an exchange. Why aren’t you responding?”

He said, “Rich, please understand that this is very dramatic for us. We have never had American intelligence officials give us so much detailed information in such a short period of time, or ever, and we have no instructions. We know that the idea was to exchange information. We had no idea that you meant this kind of information, at this level of specificity and this level of secrecy. You have to give me time to get some instructions.”

There was a timing issue because the Russian foreign minister, Ivanov, was in Washington, there was going to be a meeting at the White House with the president within the hour and we needed to get some information back to them about what the Russian reaction was, or what had happened.

Which of course Trubnikov knew as well, but he said, “I’m sorry, I can’t give you a reaction. All I can say is it was extremely detailed. It was stunning in its detail and I have to come back to you.”

We got all that back of course to Secretary Powell. They had just made the same kind of presentation to Ivanov, the foreign minister.

I can’t quite remember if we got the reaction that night or the next morning, but the initial reaction was, “We’re positive, we would like to exchange information, but we can’t tell you anything yet, because it’s still too early for us. You need to give us a little bit more time.”

We learned later, again, Trubnikov told us this in subsequent meetings, that within the next few days there’d been a big meeting of the senior people with Putin and there’d been a big fight over the way to react to the U.S. on this, because of course the American president had already said, “You’re either with us or against us. There’s nothing in between.”

But we learned later that within a few days there was quite a big foreign policy battle played out in front of Putin as to whether Russia should side with the U.S., be with us, or should just say, “We’re not going to participate. You guys are all wet. We are going to go our own way.”

In the end it was Putin himself who decided, “No, I’m going to go with President Bush. We started a good relationship. This is dangerous for Russia. We are going to participate. We will use the Afghanistan Working Group forum to exchange information between Armitage and Trubnikov and we’ll go ahead.”

Before we went, we knew that there was going to be a problem about Georgia from the Russian perspective, because we had also said, “You’re either with us or against us and a

country that harbors terrorists, that's tantamount to being against us. If you harbor terrorists, you are a terrorist state."

We knew that the Russians would say this about Georgia, because so many of the Chechen terrorists were going from Chechnya down into a place called the Kodori Valley in Georgia and staying there over the winter and replenishing their supplies. Their families were there and all that kind of thing. Russia could easily use this as an excuse to attack Georgia and we wanted to be sure that we articulated this as a redline for the United States.

So in that initial presentation we said, "And, by the way, we agree with you that Georgia is a safe haven for terrorists coming out of Chechnya. This is unacceptable. The problem isn't that Georgia is giving them safe haven. It's that Georgia doesn't have the military capability to keep them out. And, oh, by the way, the Russian border guards haven't done a very good job of keeping them from crossing into Georgia, either. So there's a problem on both sides, here."

We said, "We will help Georgia be able to control its own territory by providing training to its troops. We'll come back to you with all the details, but that's our initial idea. We just want to tell you right now that we are with Russia about the importance of keeping these guys from getting into Georgia. We'll come back to you on the details of all this."

A lot more happened after that. We got into exactly the beginnings of the problems, the result of which we saw this past August (with a brief Russian-Georgian border conflict in August 2008), right after 9/11.

Q: Well, when you were setting up this thing of going to the Russians and letting them see the crown jewels, how about the neocons at the Pentagon and maybe at the CIA? Was this a State Department initiative, or were we able to do it all together? How did it work?

JONES: It was a State Department initiative, but we didn't have opposition to it, actually. The CIA, Cofer Black ran the counterterrorist group. He was with us in Moscow. He was very aggressive in a very macho way. He was saying things like, "We're going to go after these guys. We're going to kill them and we'll keep after them until we can see flies on their eyeballs" type of language, which was all very colorful.

The military, the DIA people who came along, were right with the program. Armitage had laid down the law about what he wanted and that's what he got. So there really wasn't an issue, at that point, at all, on the U.S. side. To a degree the Pentagon, at that point the Pentagon was as shell shocked as anybody about what had happened and was not trying to lord it over anybody on information or anything.

It was clear that we did not have enough information, that we had not shared information the way we should have. Of course, as we were doing all of this Russia work, others in EUR were reaching out to Brussels, Charlie Ries was in charge of that part, with the

Justice Department, the FBI, to get in touch with the justice and home affairs ministers in the EU to say, "We need to have a much better system for exchanging information, intelligence, et cetera, and law enforcement information." We were just beginning to hear from the Germans, from others, "Yeah, well, we've been watching this Hamburg cell." This was within the next few weeks. Switzerland, a lot of bad guys transiting Switzerland, with money here and money there.

None of this was being shared. The significance of it was not apparent to anybody. But as soon as 9/11 happened, we started seeing some of the links to who the 9/11 hijackers were, some of them had come from Hamburg, some of them had come through Switzerland, et cetera. Then we went to each of these countries and said, "Hey, what do you know?"

They said, "Oh, my God! We did know some stuff, but we didn't focus on it."

Q: You have a disaster. Was there a lot of finger pointing: "We were right and they didn't do their job" between the NSC, the Pentagon, the State Department?

JONES: I don't remember fingerpainting, I must say. It was all focused on "Gosh, if only we had thought more about exchanging information."

I was worried, frankly, about the Justice Department. I wasn't sure that the Attorney General was going to be with the program. He was not considered very good, I guess that's the best way to put it. But he was very amenable to working with the European justice and home affairs ministers. I actually had a very good friend who as part of the transition was still at Justice who was leading international work for the Attorney General. We talked to each other all the time about what might be done with Brussels and what might be done in Paris and Germany and places like that.

In that respect it worked quite well, as part of the positives of what came out of 9/11.

Q: What about all these offers of aid? Everybody was trying to do something, including swamping the blood banks in the United States, but all over, people, they wanted to do something and not much was asked.

JONES: Well, not only was nothing much asked, the offers were turned down to a great degree. Certainly, the foreign offers were turned down. It was not difficult because we were getting a lot of foreign offers that were genuine and in some cases the planes started arriving. We had to turn people back.

But in other instances, of course other countries had nationals, citizens who were killed in the World Trade Center collapses. We had a very hard time getting cooperation from the New York authorities and others about that as well.

We really had to work hard and really press the New York authorities for effective consular access for these other countries' Embassies to deal with the deaths of their citizens. We did a lot of that through the consular affairs people.

Mary Ryan was head of consular affairs and she really, and Maura Hardy who was her principal DAS, really took the lead in trying to find ways that the European embassies, in my case, could make contact with the New York authorities to get access to the remains or information or whatever it was that they needed concerning their own citizens who had been killed as well.

Q: You had the enormity of this thing and then foreign leaders had to go and lay wreaths at the World Trade Center site. This must have taxed you quite a bit.

JONES: To a degree, but that didn't happen for a while. One of the first things that we did, in collaboration with everybody, is to say that UN General Assembly leaders week, which is usually the last week, second to last week, of September, that can't happen. We can't have this disaster in New York and have all these foreign leaders come at the same time.

So that was one of the early decisions that was made with our colleagues at the UN, to say, "Let's postpone leaders' week until November," which is what we did. So the pressure of foreign leaders coming right away was greatly reduced by that. When they did come, there was an event at the World Trade Center, as I recall.

But one of the difficulties was the desire for there to be some foreign recognition of the grief that they wanted to share with the American people and the sensitivities of the families who had lost loved ones there whose remains hadn't been found yet, even, by November.

There was still a lot of excavation and all that kind of thing, so it was still a gravesite, really, for many, many, many families who still didn't know what had happened, necessarily, to their loved ones: had they died, did they just disappear, what had happened?

Q: Okay, then, it was business back to abnormal. What were you up to?

JONES: Well, the first set of issues was, "Okay, what is the U.S. response going to be?" As a couple of weeks went by without a U.S. military response we were getting more and more positive reactions from our European friends and allies, who were saying, "Glad the U.S. is taking its time. We'd still like to participate, if there's a way to participate." The message had already gone back loud and clear from Rumsfeld and Cheney that nobody need apply, but we were still keeping track of all of that.

We were all very eager to know when the U.S. military action in Afghanistan would begin. The Seventh Floor staff told us that we could not know in advance. I knew we

would have tons of work to do to inform and coordinate with the Europeans and Eurasians once the military action started, and I wanted to be ready. I had planned to go to Princeton on Sunday, October 7 to celebrate Courtney's birthday with her over lunch there and told Marc Grossman my plan. I asked whether there was a reason I shouldn't leave town. He told me to go ahead. As Don and I were driving up to Princeton that Sunday morning, my cell phone rang and Marc's senior staff member told me that U.S. attacks in Afghanistan had begun. He told me to go ahead with my plans in Princeton. I called Charlie Ries and Bob Bradtke and asked them to launch our coordination plans with our European allies and friends. Courtney had a momentous birthday that year!

There was still a lot of activity at NATO about Article Five. A decision needed to be made about that, because one of the decisions was to send a couple of AWACS planes to the United States to help monitor our airspace.

Then when the United States did attack Afghanistan on October 7th, almost a month later, there was a lot of focus on that, but still, again, it was a resurgence of offers from the Europeans: "Gee, we would like to participate. What's the matter with the U.S. that you don't want us to participate? What's the matter with NATO, that NATO isn't considered an organization any longer that the U.S. should use in a situation like this?"

So that was the beginning of the bad stuff, is the way I look at it, with particularly our NATO allies saying, "Okay, what about us? We want to participate. We consider this an attack on us as well, because of the NATO Alliance."

Then there was all of the "What's really going on in Afghanistan? Have we linked up with the Northern Alliance? Is the Northern Alliance coming down to Kabul? What's going to happen in Kabul? What's going to happen in Afghanistan? Who should take over in Afghanistan? What about the old king," Zahir Shah, who was based in Rome?

It was about at that time that the Germans stepped up and said, "We're going to host a conference, a big *loya jirga*," a big conclave of Afghan leaders and others to make sure there's enough money for rehabilitation, reconstruction and all that kind of thing. It will also make the political decisions that need to be made about the political future of Afghanistan. What happens when the Taliban is gone and al Qaeda is gone and the Northern Alliance has taken over in Kabul, what's the deal here?

The Germans had their big conference in December, I think it was and that's when Hamid Karzai was selected through this *loya jirga* process as being the new leader of Afghanistan. A lot of us who'd served in Pakistan knew Hamid Karzai quite well, because he was one of the Afghans that we dealt with all the time. So there was a lot of happiness that he was the one chosen, because he clearly was a very good guy.

Q: You were comfortable with that?

JONES: Absolutely. That he had as much support as he did was a good thing. That was a very big effort that we were involved in to a degree. The economic and business bureau was more involved in it, as was the South Asia bureau, because it was Afghanistan.

I thought it was a very good thing the Germans hosted, because it had them buy into a lot of the assistance that was going to be required. But there was still the issue of, okay, militarily what are we going to do?

That was fought out at NATO in the months to come, with a huge battle with Cheney and Rumsfeld over, "Yes, we want NATO to participate but who's going to be in command and how is the coordination going to go?" That's when the International Security Assistance Force was to come in. Who was going to chair, who was going to lead that? Well, the Turks were the first lead. That all came out of an initial visit that Secretary Powell took to Turkey not too long after 9/11.

Q: Well, did 9/11 really, at the time, were you aware that the battle lines were beginning to be drawn between the State Department and the Pentagon over how to respond to 9/11? Was this apparent at your level and your area?

JONES: It began to be apparent when we had that sort of curmudgeonly response on Article Five, which was agreed on September 12th. It was more and more clear with the aggressively negative reaction, "No coalitions! We're not going to go through all of that! That was nonsense! We're not going to do what we did in the Gulf War. That was too much trouble!" We all said and Linc Bloomfield in Pol/Mil said, "It's not too much trouble. We can organize this."

There were two other things that happened in that period of time. One was Putin came to visit Washington and Crawford, the president's ranch in Texas, in November. This occurred just after the leaders meeting in New York as I remember. The set up for this was interesting, in the following respect, in two ways:

One was President Putin had been invited to Crawford as a great gesture of friendship, of personal relations, et cetera It was well known that an invitation to the president's personal home was a much bigger deal than just being invited to the White House.

Well, in the preparation for the Putin visit -- there was a huge amount of substantive preparation with the Russians -- the Russians let it be known that for Putin's prestige purposes in Russia he really needed to also visit the White House, that it wasn't sufficient in their terms, that this wasn't a big enough deal to do Crawford in Russian terms. There had to be a White House meeting. We said, "Okay, fine, no problem. We can do both." That wasn't a problem with the Pentagon or the White House.

But the preparation for the substantive part of what we were going to do was a big problem with the Pentagon, because the Russians wanted to have a variety of discussions on arms control issues and the Pentagon didn't. We wanted to make some progress on

taking apart some of the nuclear facilities under Nunn-Lugar and under some of the other agreements that had been made. The Pentagon made it very difficult, because of the liability clauses that they insisted on, very difficult to make any progress on that. So we already knew in the runup to the Putin visit in November that we had a really, really big problem with the Pentagon and the Office of the Vice President on arms control issues.

In the meantime, quite separately, there was a big juggernaut working now to get rid of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. There was a big push for the notification of the U.S. getting out of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, to happen before the end of the year. I can't recall now why it had to happen before the end of the year, but it was just one of these things that these guys, I guess they came into office and as far as I could tell, that was their sole goal, was to get rid of the ABM Treaty.

So we knew we had a very, very big problem with the neocons on all the arms control issues, all of the weapons issues and related issues with the Russians, getting ready for the Putin meetings.

Q: What was your impression, during this time of great maneuvering and all, of Condoleezza Rice, as national security advisor?

JONES: Rice was positioning herself, she had been all summer—and I heard her say it—that she considered herself the executive secretary of the National Security Council, that she was not going to take a position, that she would report the positions of the various agencies to the president, but would not take a position herself. To me this was exactly the opposite of what the NSC should do, because countless times we were in battles with the Pentagon, always, over this issue or that issue, whether it was simple language on Balkans issues for NATO, or whatever it was. We could not get the NSC to play the role of adjudicating between the two agencies as to what the decision would be.

The result was we would have meetings of the principals or the deputies and a decision would be reached in the National Security Council. I would go back and we'd write up the instructions on whatever it was and we couldn't get the instruction cable cleared, even though it was what was agreed at the National Security Council, at the deputies committee meeting.

It would be that, well, the Pentagon didn't like the decision that was made. There were countless times, then and through the whole four years I was in that job, that I would call up Dan Fried, my counterpart and say, "Who's in charge here? Is Rumsfeld in charge? Does he get to trump what was decided by the National Security Council, or is the president in charge?"

There were many times that we knew from either National Security Council meetings which the president did chair or statements that he made in meetings with foreign leaders. I would say to Dan Fried at the NSC: "I know what the president said. You know what

the president said. Rumsfeld knows what the president said and he still isn't going to let us go forward with whatever the policy was that the president had enunciated."

"Oh, well, your job is to work it out with those guys. I'm just here as the scribe," is what Dan would say.

So Rice played at best a passive role at the National Security Council. That meant that issues languished. It was very difficult to get decisions. It was very difficult to get issues adjudicated. It was a mess.

Q: Did you feel that Dick Cheney was sort of teaming up with Rumsfeld and sort of able to pretty well trump any decision that was made?

JONES: Yes. We knew that was the case. There were plenty of times he would be in a principals committee meeting, the consensus would have been X from the National Security Council meeting. Dan Fried would send me, just for a sanity check, his decision memorandum from the National Security Council meeting and I'd fix it up or say it was exactly what my notes had. Then the final document would come out and it would be quite different.

And I'd call him up and say, "What happened?"

"Oh, well, when it went to the Office of the Vice President, it got changed."

"But that's not what the discussion was. That's not what the decision was. He can't change it willy-nilly."

"Well, he has and it's way above my pay grade."

So my job was just to make sure that Marc Grossman, Armitage and Powell knew that there was a big discrepancy between what they knew had happened at the meeting and what the meeting notes recorded had happened at the meeting. I would keep both sets.

Q: As time moved on, you were getting involved in Afghanistan, what was happening, sort of in your area?

JONES: Most of the focus in the late 2001, the early months of 2002, was on Central Asia There was so much activity, in terms of getting memoranda of understanding, initially written for access to bases, so that troops, materiel, et cetera could be transferred into Afghanistan by the U.S., by NATO countries, et cetera.

There was also at the same time a lot of discussion about how much money was going to go to Pakistan in support of their support of the war in Afghanistan. When the Uzbeks, in Central Asia, heard this, they came to us and said, "Okay, we want the same for access to our base at Karshi Khanabad" in Uzbekistan, south of Tashkent.

At the same time we were working very hard to get the Uzbeks to open a land crossing from Uzbekistan into Afghanistan north of Mazar-i Sharif, to get a lot of materiel, goods, humanitarian supplies, et cetera, into Afghanistan. It's the easiest way to get in, particularly to the area of fighting. So one of the biggest issues that we were involved in at the time was to negotiate a much more detailed memorandum of understanding with the Uzbeks about the assistance program that they would get in exchange for access to the base and in exchange for the opening of the land border across the Friendship Bridge, as it was called, from Uzbekistan into Afghanistan. This was the same bridge that the Soviet troops had withdrawn over when they left Afghanistan, to go back to the Soviet Union. So it was a famous bridge.

Secretary Powell went to Central Asia in December of 2001. We had him go to the NATO ministerial and the OSCE ministerial. NATO was in Brussels, OSCE was in Romania and we tagged onto that a trip to Turkey, which I have already mentioned. It was very important to get the Turks on board to lead the first NATO force in Afghanistan. We then had him go to Central Asia. And at the end of that trip we were going to tack on a trip to Moscow, Berlin, Paris and London as part of the notification that we were getting out of the ABM Treaty, so it was a difficult trip.

But I thought it was very important for him to go to Central Asia, because there was so much activity there, thanks to Afghanistan. I wanted it to be the way to get the Uzbeks over the line on doing the kind of work that they needed to do on human rights, economic reform, all of these issues, so that we could open the Friendship Bridge. Also, to give an invitation to Karimov, the president of Uzbekistan, to come to Washington, which is what he really wanted.

So we were in a funny situation going to Uzbekistan after Romania. I had a letter from the president inviting Karimov to Washington all ready to be handed by Secretary Powell to Karimov in the meeting, if he said the right things about opening the Friendship Bridge. I had actually handed the letter to Secretary Powell ahead of time and said, "I think you're going to know when he says the right thing, but if not, I'm going to signal you in some way to say yes or no, to hand over the letter." In the end Karimov did say the right thing and I remember Powell looking at me down the table and giving me a look. I signaled "Yes, yes, hand him the letter" and he did.

So that all worked. The bridge was opened and we got the humanitarian supplies across. But it was one of those dicey situations where we just couldn't tell for sure, was Karimov going to say the right thing, would he follow through appropriately, were there enough people there to help us force him to follow through? In the end it all worked.

We were also supposed to go to Bishkek after Tashkent, but there was such a terrible snowstorm we couldn't go to Bishkek, in Kyrgyzstan. We skipped that and went up earlier than scheduled to Astana, the new Kazakh capital. This was in December. The temperature outside was minus 31 Fahrenheit, which Secretary Powell I think has not

forgotten to this day. Nor has he forgotten the vodka lunch that President Nazarbayev hosted for him. He had a very good set of meetings with the Kazakhs, which was important because they weren't participating in the base access issues. Kazakhstan is just a little bit too far away from Afghanistan for it to work, but we really wanted them to step up and be independent of the Russians and yet still participate in intelligence exchange -- and the kind of work that we really needed them to do in the fight against terrorism.

We went from there to Moscow and that was a difficult meeting. Secretary Powell did it alone with Putin, with the U.S. ambassador, Sandy Vershbow, to give him the good news, for him the bad news, that the U.S. was going to walk out of the ABM Treaty.

President Putin's response was, basically, "What can I do? You've told me you're going to. There's nothing I can say. We've talked about it at Crawford. We've talked about it at the White House in November. I don't want you to do this, but you're going to do it anyway. I at least want to have a replacement treaty of some kind."

From him it was a very clear message that Russia sees its position in the world tied up in these treaties. Not having that means that their position is diminished in the eyes of their elites and in the way they believe they're perceived internationally.

Q: Well, how did you feel about the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty?

JONES: I could see the point that as a treaty, in terms of its function, it was probably obsolete. The international situation was such that you didn't need that kind of arms control treaty in order to maintain the arms control situation. But, for me, it wasn't so much the need to control anti-ballistic missiles. I very much could see that the Russians' ego was tied up in this treaty. I didn't see the need to get rid of it just for the sake of getting rid of it, as the neocons wanted.

The answer to Putin, when he would say, "I need to have the treaty to replace it," the answer had to be, "Yes, we'll work on it with you." We did get approval for that answer out of the Pentagon and out of the Office of the Vice President.

The meetings, then, with the Germans, the French and the British were *pro forma*. They knew it was coming, but we had to do a formal notification. They were unhappy about this. They couldn't see a big reason to get rid of it. They said, "Yeah, yeah, we get the substantive point, but it is part of the world order. Why get rid of it before we have something to replace it with?"

Q: The administration hardly got its feet wet before 9/11 hit. First, what was the impression of Afghanistan on the part of our European allies?

JONES: There was no disagreement at all that the 9/11 hijackers had based themselves, had come from Afghanistan and had been nurtured, if you will, or allowed to develop, by the Taliban. There was no disagreement in Europe over that, or Russia, for that matter.

Furthermore, there was tremendous support in Europe for the U.S. holding off an attack on Afghanistan, which it did for about a month. The attack on Afghanistan happened on October 7th, so a good four weeks, probably, after 9/11.

Q: What was the reason for holding off, from the European perspective?

JONES: From the European perspective, it was stay calm, don't have an emotional reaction, have a sensible reaction, get your act together, get our act together. The downside of that period was that the Europeans wanted NATO to have a role in whatever the retaliation was going to be for 9/11, were very unhappy that the United States was going to go it alone in Afghanistan, in particular because NATO had invoked Article Five, the attack on one is an attack on all and had already authorized AWACS to fly over the United States. That was a very big deal in Europe.

Q: How did you feel sort of the pressures within the administration went towards Afghanistan, vis-à-vis Europe?

JONES: At this point, of course, the Pentagon was big and had gotten much bigger. The interesting thing was that there had been a lot of chit-chat and talk in the media about Rumsfeld wasn't doing well, Rumsfeld wasn't consulting with Congress properly, and there was a lot of talk about Rumsfeld being on the outs, or being on his way out, until 9/11 happened. Then he was the big cheese.

So all of the work of getting militarily organized to go after the Taliban in Afghanistan was done by the Pentagon. Any effort by the State Department to participate in terms of helping to build a coalition, helping to get support of any kind, political or military, from the allies was rejected and it was rejected rather forcefully.

Q: How did this reflect on you, because obviously you had just about everything that could be of assistance, outside of our own forces, in your purview?

JONES: That's right. Well, there were two things. Not only did we have all of the possible assistance that we could have gotten in our purview, but we also had all of the access points to Afghanistan in our purview as well, the military access points.

So while the Pentagon was completely, totally, rejecting all efforts by any of the Europeans and NATO to participate or to offer assistance, the State Department, my bureau, with the political/military bureau, which was run by Linc Bloomfield, we put together a matrix of all of the offers of help that we'd gotten from every single country, of every kind, so that we at least knew what it was and could say, "Thank you for your offer, no thank you" once we got the whole thing thought out. In the end that's what we had to do.

But at the same time, we were of course getting offers and needed to have those offers from the Central Asians, because we needed access through their bases to Afghanistan.

Part of our conversation during the Armitage visit to Moscow right after 9/11 was that we needed access to Central Asian bases in order to regroup and send personnel and materiel into Afghanistan.

So during this month after 9/11 we had spent quite a bit of time negotiating with the Kyrgyz government for base rights in Bishkek at what's called Manas Air Base. We did the same thing in Tajikistan for base rights, Dushanbe being the closest of all of the airports in the region to Afghanistan, although it was the worst of the airports. We also ended up negotiating with Uzbekistan for use of the Karshi Khanabad base south of Tashkent, which had excellent access, not only into northern Afghanistan but also access by road down to the Friendship Bridge.

So as busy as we were fighting the Pentagon, trying to get them to accept some military help from all of these countries that had been offering assistance, we were also in the catbird's seat, as far as the Pentagon was concerned, negotiating the memoranda of understanding with the Kyrgyz, the Uzbeks, and the Tajiks for base access into Afghanistan. Also with the Russians, because the Russians were unhappy that we had such easy base access. They wanted to be the ones to decide whether or not we could get it, but when the Russians finally said, "Oh, yes, you can have it" we laughed to ourselves, because we already had the memoranda of understanding agreed with each of the countries.

We then turned around, because we did, in the end, bring in NATO assistance for various aspects of the fighting in Afghanistan. We then turned around and helped the Norwegians, the Dutch, the Spanish to negotiate and sign identical memoranda of understanding, MOU's, mostly with the Kyrgyz. We ended up using the Manas base more than any other base.

I was out in the region in January of 2002. I went to visit the various bases. I never got to Karshi Khanabad, but to the Manas base and the Tajik base outside of Dushanbe. Both were very rough. Of course in January in Central Asia it's awfully cold and snowy. But we had a huge area, and it has gotten bigger since then. Big tents everywhere. Heating was not bad. Temporary showers for everybody. It was pretty basic and in Dushanbe it was even more basic.

But there the French, in particular, were using the base. I was very impressed when the U.S. ambassador to Bishkek, John O'Keefe, took me around to a control tower where the Norwegians had set up shop, the Norwegian NATO troops. He walked in and started speaking Norwegian to the NATO commander there, because he had had a posting to Oslo. His Russian was excellent, so he was chit-chatting with all of the Tajiks and turned around and was speaking Norwegian with the NATO commander there, which was great fun. It was a terrific example of why language proficiency is so important in Foreign Service work.

Q: Let's talk about the major war that was going on, that is between the State Department and the Pentagon. Were you told, "Hands off, don't talk to our military," or were our military talking to you and saying, "For God's sake, we're trapped? We've got this crazy Defense secretary, but we've got to coordinate," or what?

JONES: Well, a couple of things happened. I knew particularly well Central Command, because I had been in the Middle East so many years. I knew the Central Command people quite well. Plus, Central Command in Tampa had been given responsibility for Central Asia as I left Kazakhstan.

So Tony Zinni, then the commander of Central Command, had come to Kazakhstan just before I left in '98, the marine general. So as Central Command was getting geared up for what was going to be the attack on Afghanistan, I was in touch with the political advisor in Central Command on a very regular basis. One of the things that finally Central Command was allowed to do by the Pentagon was to set up a fusion cell type of thing for all for representatives of each of the militaries that eventually participated or was interested in participating in some way in the war in Afghanistan.

So one of the things that one of my people did and I cemented, both with Tommy Franks at the time, General Franks and with the political advisor, the POLAD, who was a Foreign Service Officer embedded in the command, was to be in touch with them on a regular basis about when were the Belgians going to send a rep, when were the Norwegians, when were the Germans, when were the Russians, et cetera, and then what would the rules be for each of the military reps when they got down there.
I say that because it turned out that the Russian representative, the Russians were desperate to have a military officer down there and, true to form, the Russian military officer put on his spy hat and was doing all kinds of things that were completely not allowed, going into areas forbidden and not authorized for the coalition liaison officers.

So I ended up having to talk to the Russian ambassador on a regular basis, saying, "Either get your guy under control or he's gone."

Q: And what was the reaction?

JONES: The reaction was basically, "Oh, yes, yes, I understand, but you know they don't work for me."

Q: What happened, on that particular thing?

JONES: First of all, CentCom got very strict with him, knew to watch out for him. We just kept reiterating what the rules were and that they couldn't play spy games down there on us. So it worked out okay in the end.

The war with the Pentagon was a very severe war. It was constant. There wasn't a single thing that happened that wasn't a big fight. The rule that I had in my bureau is that by

three o'clock every day I had to know what every fight was that any office in my bureau was having with the Pentagon, the idea being I needed to know at three o'clock so I could start calling my counterpart to try to get it straightened out, so I didn't have to wait until seven o'clock to try to find him on the Beltway to sort out a problem.

The interesting thing was I could get no help whatsoever from the NSC, from Dan Fried, my counterpart. He agreed with me, with the bureau, on various cables and instructions we were trying to get out to NATO, to the EU, to coalition partners, whatever it was, but he was unprepared to weigh in with the Pentagon at any point at any time on any of these issues.

We also knew that the Joint Chiefs agreed with us. The Joint Chiefs would regularly clear an instruction cable, find out that the Defense Department side, the DOD civilian side, was refusing to clear, would withdraw their clearance and then I'd have to fight it out to get both clearances with my counterpart, J.D. Crouch. It was a very, very common occurrence that J.D. Crouch, the assistant secretary over there, would say to me, whatever it was, "I can't clear this. I can't approve this. It has to go to the Secretary."

A few times at the beginning I'd argue and say, "Jeez, why can't you? This isn't cabinet level material. This is something that you and I can agree on. This is simple guidance to our NATO ambassador for a meeting that's taking place tomorrow, so it has to go out. There's no question of it not going out." So I got so I got to bullying him, actually, would say, "Okay, you call your Secretary, I'll call mine. I'll call you back in 15 minutes."

Because I knew I could get to Colin Powell that quickly, if he was even remotely available. What we also knew pretty quickly is that even though the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Marc Grossman's, counterpart was Doug Feith and Rich Armitage, the Deputy Secretary, his counterpart was Paul Wolfowitz, neither of them had the authority or weight to approve any instruction. It had to go straight from the assistant secretaries to the Secretary of Defense. It could not be approved at a lower level and there was no point of even talking about it. So I'd let them know I was having a fight and I'd call Secretary Powell or send him an email, say, "Okay, here's what the fight's over." And he'd say, "Okay, I'll call Rumsfeld" and that always straightened it out. Not always on the first try. There were plenty of times that I had to get Secretary Powell to call Rumsfeld two and three times to get his okay and force him to tell his underlings that he had agreed to whatever it was that Secretary Powell was pushing for.

In every case it was something that had already been approved by principals, every case. It wasn't something I was trying to make up.

Q: What do you feel was the motivation? Was there a long-term strategy of eliminating the State Department on Rumsfeld's part?

JONES: It wasn't so much eliminating the State Department, it was eliminating the need to coordinate with anybody else at all, especially NATO. The anomaly, of course, was

that Rumsfeld had been the ambassador to NATO. But his idea about NATO was, "The U.S. is in charge, the U.S. is going to do what it God damned well pleases and that's the beginning and the end of the discussion. Whatever instruction we send is going to say only that," when usually we'd gotten something that was a little bit more palatable out of the principals.

Q: Well, let's talk about the NSC. Fried was your principal contact?

JONES: He was my exact counterpart. He was the director for Europe and Eurasia and he very specifically said, "Your job is to fight with the Pentagon. My job is to make nice with the Pentagon," which to my mind is the exact opposite of the way the National Security Council should run. But it was the instruction he had from Rice and we knew that.

Q: Well, what was motivating Rice? Did you feel that she was under, was it Cheney, was it just trying to duck responsibility, or—

JONES: My view was, having watched her chair some of the National Security Council meetings, principals committee meetings, was that she was afraid of Rumsfeld and Cheney, that she would not argue with them.

Even when she agreed with Powell and I have no way of knowing when she did, she would not carry the water for him to the president, or fight them off. To the point that there were countless times. I felt that the principals had made a decision, even with the president in the room, a National Security Council meeting where the president had made a decision, it was often impossible to get clearance for the cable that gave the instructions implementing what the president and the principals had agreed to.

Many, many, many, times the memorandum of decision that's drafted every time that there is a National Security Council meeting, deputies committee meeting, principals committee meeting, Dan Fried would write it up, send it to me for what I always called a sanity check, "Your notes the same as mine? Is this what happened? Anything I left out?," It was very collegial and I would send it back and then the final version that would come out would be different from what Dan and I had written.

The first few times it happened I called and said, "What in the world's going on here?"

"Oh, well, the Office of the Vice President changed it."

"Yes, but the vice president himself was at the meeting and he didn't say any of these things."

"Oh, well, he changed his mind" or "He didn't want to say it in front of everybody else and this is what he wants the decision memorandum to reflect."

I basically said, “So we’ve got two governments?” I used to say this all the time to Dan, “We have two governments here. We have the one led by the President of the United States and the one led by Cheney and Rumsfeld. Is that how I’m supposed to think about this?”

“Well, no, you’re being too harsh.”

But that’s what it was.

Q: Did you get any feel for George Bush? What was his role in this?

JONES: I didn’t have a sense from him of decision making, with a couple of exceptions, which I’ll explain. But I did know that the attitude on my Seventh Floor, the view of Secretary Powell, Deputy Secretary Armitage, Marc Grossman and others, was that whoever was in the room last with the president was the one whose view he agreed with. In other words, he didn’t have a firm idea about anything much, at least the issues that we were dealing with and could be swayed by whoever was in the room.

The unfortunate thing was that the attitude or the style, the policy style, if you will, of the top people was each one to sound more aggressive and more radical right than the other. I witnessed it a few times, but I had it explained to me several times by people who were there in the Oval Office or other places that each statement about what we should do was more aggressive and more unilateral than the last. That the only way to bring it back to a less unilateral and less aggressive stance was to be in the room alone with the president, who actually wasn’t that aggressive and wasn’t that unilateral, compared with Cheney and Rumsfeld. But he went along with whatever it was that anybody said.

So there were times -- Secretary Powell has talked about those in public, when he would get a private meeting, rarely, but it happened a few times, a private meeting with the president, to try to bring him back to a more reasonable position.

Q: Now, still sticking to the early days, on Afghanistan, what were you getting from your European counterparts? Were you trying to explain what the problem was, or were their political antennae out and picking this up, or how did this work?

JONES: They understood it to a degree. I was careful to explain it, to be honest and especially to my political director counterparts. Especially in the small group, what we called the quad, the British, French and Germans and to a degree the Italians, when we had the quint. I tried to be as clear as I could be about what the political difficulties in Washington were. I was clearer as time went on, when we got into 2002.

At the beginning of 2002 I thought all this talk about going into Iraq was nonsense and wasn’t going to go anywhere. I was absolutely dead wrong, obviously. But I spent quite a bit of time talking with my quad colleagues about how important it was that they

understand and that their ministers understand, their foreign ministers and defense ministers understand, just how bad the battle was between Powell and Rumsfeld.

Secretary Powell developed an extremely good relationship with Jack Straw, the foreign secretary of the UK, to the point that they, I don't exactly remember when it was, but they had a private line, so that they could have conversations that nobody else heard. As you know the secretary of state usually makes his phone calls to counterparts through the Ops Center, so that note taking can happen, interpretation can happen, so that there's a record of the conversation.

Well, it wasn't too long before Powell decided he needed a private line to Jack Straw, in order to be able to discuss, the difficulties he was having internally and to get Straw's help with Blair, Prime Minister Blair, who was one of the few people who could, we hoped and he hoped, speak truth to power, speak truth to President Bush.

Q: Did you have any dealings with the CIA, because they were running a good bit of the war in Afghanistan, weren't they?

JONES: To a degree, yes, but not so much because of Afghanistan, actually. I was in touch with my CIA counterpart, I had two CIA counterparts, because they weren't organized the same way that State was. So I had one for Europe and one for Russia and Eurasia.

I had more conversations with my Russia and Eurasia counterpart because of the access issues to Afghanistan at that point. It wasn't until later that I had more contact with my Europe counterpart, because of Turkey and trying to get troops through Turkey into Iraq. Of course that was the operational side, not the intel side. I don't think I had any contact at all with the intel side.

Q: You say operational versus intel. What do you mean?

JONES: CIA operations, they're the ones out in the field. They're the ones with contacts with foreign officials, their counterparts. They're the ones doing the actual work in the field, in Afghanistan or wherever it was. The Directorate of Intelligence, they're the analysts who sit back in Washington and analyze all of the reporting that's coming in from all sources.

Q: You had this State-Defense war going on. Was the CIA an ally or a factor or a foe or anything?

JONES: The impression I had at the time, I knew that George Tenet had an extremely good personal relationship with both Secretary Powell and with Rich Armitage and I know that they talked to each other all the time.

I would often be in the office of one or the other when Tenet would call and the impression I had throughout, until we had the disaster of the UN speech and the intelligence that went into that, was that George Tenet was very much on the side of reason, that he was very much on the Powell and Armitage track, to "Let's be clear about what we're doing here, let's be clear we know where the terrorists came from," as opposed to the cheerleading George Tenet that he ended up being.

Q: Early on, how about the French and the Germans, particularly? Were you seeing them looking at things with a different perspective than we were? This is before you get to Iraq.

JONES: Not early on. The only thing that went on intensively with them, as with the rest of the allies, was to find a way for NATO to participate and in a way that these governments actually could participate.

So for instance several of them needed a UN Security Council resolution. That was required by parliament, in some cases, for troops to be committed to a particular war zone.

The effort to get that Security Council resolution was very, very difficult, because of course the question was who was going to be militarily in charge in Afghanistan. The Pentagon wanted the U.S. to be militarily in charge of everything, including the NATO troops. They didn't want the NATO troops to be part of the U.S. group. They wanted them to be separate, but nevertheless still subordinate to the U.S. commander. So negotiating the UN Security Council resolution was extremely delicate and difficult, to come up with a formula that made the NATO group separate but nevertheless subordinate, to a degree, to the U.S. commander.

So that's how ISAF was born, the International Security Assistance Force, in Afghanistan. One of the things that Secretary Powell did very early on was to talk the Turks into being the first contributors and the first commander of that International Security Assistance Force, which he did on that trip to Ankara in December of 2001. The Turks were a great choice. They knew Afghanistan well. They'd had people out there doing police training, maybe, initially, I can't quite remember what it was.

I remember at the lunch at which Secretary Powell was talking with all of the senior Turks in Ankara about Afghanistan, about this. One of the people there was somebody that I had known for years who had just come from Afghanistan, had been there, at that point, a couple of months and knew a lot about what was going on there on the ground and how it was all shaping up and all of that sort of thing.

The other thing that was going on at that time was that the Germans were working extremely hard to come up with what should the political plan be for Afghanistan. If you remember the Germans then held, in Afghan terms, a *loya jirga*, a big convention, really, of Afghans and others outside of Bonn, in the Peterhof, that was held in December, finally, at which Karzai was selected by acclamation to be the next president of

Afghanistan. It was the beginning of a donors conference. Then later on another donors conference was held in Berlin that Secretary Powell went to as well, and I went with him.

So as much as various of our NATO allies were unhappy on the military side of things, they nevertheless were pitching in completely, finally figuring out a way to do the NATO command structure in Afghanistan. The NATO troops were not allowed anywhere near Kabul, either, which is where the U.S. was, so that was part of it.

But also, like I say, the Germans were very aggressive on the political side, appropriately so, to come up with a political leadership solution for Afghanistan for that time.

Q: How did you view Joschka Fischer at the time?

JONES: He and Secretary Powell had a fantastic relationship. It was a very interesting one, because of course Fischer had been on the ramparts in Frankfurt with Rudi the Red when Powell was—

Q: I interviewed somebody, a USIA officer, who said she had to go out the back window of a building that Fischer set fire to and never felt the same about him.

JONES: That whole issue with Rudi the Red and Joschka Fischer and the anti-war, anti-Vietnam War demonstrations. He knew of them while Secretary Powell was the V Corps commander in Frankfurt. I don't know that they actually ever met then. I don't think they did. But Secretary Powell and Minister Fischer often talked about how they had been there at the same time and they had this had this common history.

They had a fantastic relationship and thank goodness, because it carried through the extremely bad period that we had with Germany, between Bush and Schröder, later on. But Fischer was one of the ones that Powell could call any time and say, "Joschka, help me out here. I know that your public opinion is this. I know your government is that. But I need to find some way. Can you help me figure out how you and I can bring this together so that we don't have a big split?"

Now Fischer was a committed transatlanticist. He was one of the ones who desperately wanted to keep that transatlantic link intact and healthy, or at least healthy enough to survive whatever nonsense came along from the Rumsfeld-Bush-Cheney crowd.

So any time Fischer called, Powell would take his call. There was never an issue, whenever he was in Europe, he always had a chat with Joschka. They had a standing joke gift; they were always giving each other different kinds of beer. They really, really, were genuinely close, as much as they possibly could be.

Q: What role were the French playing at this time? Again, we're still talking about this Afghan period.

JONES: The French were working on how to manage the UN Security Council resolution that involved NATO. I don't remember them as being particularly difficult about it.

There was one thing that was going on simultaneously, however, that the French were very involved in and in a positive way. That was that as this whole buildup with Afghanistan was happening, there was at the same time—and the roots of it had been in the summer—a constant push from the Pentagon to reduce U.S. participation in the Balkans.

Secretary Powell had already come up with the "we went in together, we're going out together," mantra that he was able to make a U.S. policy. But it was a constant fight with the Pentagon to not allow them to whittle away at our various commitments in the Balkans, in Kosovo, in Bosnia, wherever it was.

The French were very sensitive about this. So when my French political director counterpart called, it was often that he was complaining about something that he'd heard rumored that the Pentagon was doing in the Balkans or about to do or whatever it was. It was always something that they were probably right, it was some nefarious thing that Rumsfeld was trying to pull without getting principals' approval for.

Q: Looking at that, our commitment, for the army the size we had, our commitment in the Balkans wasn't that great.

JONES: It wasn't. It wasn't great. The Rumsfeld attitude about the Balkans was tied up with the policy, if you will, that he came in with, which was to reduce considerably U.S. basing, U.S. troop deployments in Europe. That was one of the reasons he was so unpopular in Congress, the whole rebasing and reducing. It was a domestic policy, as well as one that pertained to Europe.

But what the Europeans were extremely intent on, as far as they were concerned, particularly committed transatlanticists, is that you can't have a NATO deployment without U.S. involvement. To have it be seen as legitimate and it be seen as robust. For me it was kind of an interesting idea, because I hadn't grown up as a big NATOnik, as I called it. I was very interested in this almost schizophrenic idea, on the one hand, questions about do we really need NATO and on the other hand, yes, we need NATO and the U.S. has to be a robust part of it for it be legit. That was not only from some of the committed transatlanticists, but that was from people who lived in the Balkans, too: "We don't want NATO if the U.S. isn't going to be in there with them."

Q: Yeah, I remember my ambassador when I was in Yugoslavia one time came from talking to Tito and Tito was a firm supporter of having the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. It was an important factor. It seems like this whole Rumsfeld worldview is really an aberration, I think, more than anything else, looking at that.

JONES: Well, the interesting thing for me was that as much as one could agree that we didn't need to have heavily armored units in Europe any longer. We didn't need to fear the Soviets coming across Eastern Europe, although there's a question now about that. So the transformation to lighter, well equipped units, special forces units, all that kind of thing, was certainly logical. But what people objected to so much is that all of this was done without any consultation, without, "Okay, what do you guys think? Is this the way to go?"

That was where the objections were. It was the unilateralism part of it. Frankly, that's what Congress objected to, too, the *diktat* concerning rebasing troops within the U.S., wherever all these bases were. That's why people were so upset with the Pentagon.

That was one of the very, very big issues that was a very big part of the discussion throughout this whole period of "Oh my God, what are we going to do about Afghanistan?"

The other item on the agenda in the NATO group was what to do about NATO enlargement, because the next enlargement was coming down the pike. There had been the first enlargement after the breakup of the Soviet Union, with the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary. There were ten countries lined up to get ready for the next NATO enlargement. So when I started as assistant secretary the big question was how many? Is it going to be a big enlargement or a tiny enlargement? How much can NATO absorb? What are the implications in Congress, because after all, the Senate has to ratify the new NATO agreement for an enlargement, so they have to be completely on board.
All of the other NATO members need to be on board and each of the countries has to be prepared in all of the ways that is required for NATO membership.

That was a very, very, very big issue. The reason it was a big issue was that it was clear to us that the only country that was really going to enforce the requirements for "Are you prepared?" was the U.S.

So I had three deputy assistant secretaries who had countries in their purview that were in the ten: Bob Bradtke, who was my DAS also for all NATO issues, Heather Conley for a lot of the Eastern European countries and Janet Bogue, who was the DAS for the Balkans, where there were a couple of countries that were in the ten. They regularly would form a team with the Pentagon and with others and go to each of the countries that were preparing for NATO accession and go through the lists of membership requirements. We did assessments all the time. We had very formal assessments of where were they and then the team would go out and say, "Okay, you're not really doing very well on anti-corruption," or "You really need to do a lot more on minority rights," particularly in the Baltic States, where the minorities were Russian speaking populations.

So the irony was that in order to get NATO membership for the Baltic States, they had to treat their Russian minorities much better than they had been. They couldn't by *diktat* say, "You can't speak Russian anymore, you have to speak the national majority

language." They had to do language training programs. They had to allow Russian language newspapers.

So the irony was that the Russian populations were treated much better by all of these countries as part of getting into NATO than they would have had they not been on the track to NATO. I used to love to tell that to the Russians in Moscow when they would get snippy with me about the Baltic States.

So the agenda that I had with all of my European counterparts in NATO was the Balkans, "in together, out together," NATO enlargement, how big and then also Afghanistan, what are we going to do there and of course eventually it was also Iraq.

The other issue that we had, although there weren't too many NATO countries that were really paying attention to this, was Georgia. The reason I mention it is that what we did then, we now see, continues to have relevance today.

When we went to Moscow right after 9/11, one of the things we were very concerned about before we went was we knew that the Russians believed that Georgia was harboring terrorists who were going back and forth from Georgia up into Chechnya, in the Kodori Valley. So one of the things that we said in Moscow was, "We know that we've said if any country that harbors terrorists is also a terrorist country and should be treated as such, but with the exception of Georgia. We know that these guys are going back and forth. We are going to make it possible for the Georgians to take control of their territory, in a way that they haven't been before. Their military's been too weak. We're going to do training of the Georgian military and we're going to equip them, so that they can secure their borders and make sure that these guys can't go back and forth. And, oh, by the way, your border guards have a role in this, too. Your border guards have to be good enough not to let these guys leave in the first place. So you can't just say this is all Georgia's fault that these guys are going back and forth."

The Russians initially, in the first conversation, we just said it's a redline. Then later, when we had the train and equip program ready, Mr. Armitage and I sat down with his counterpart, Mr. Trubnikov and the Russian ambassador, the four of us over dinner in the Pentagon City Ritz Carlton. We explained to the two of them what the program was going to be, how many Americans were going to do the training, what kind of equipment we were going to use, how long the training was going to go, we gave them every possible detail. We said, "Now you need to report this back to Moscow. If you have any further questions you need to talk to us about this, because we know this is going to be sensitive, so talk to us. We're telling you everything. We want you to keep up this conversation with us." About six months later or so, we had the train and equip program organized. In the meantime I'd been talking to the Russian ambassador, updating him on various aspects of it.

However, without coordinating with us, the European Command issued a press statement saying that the training was going to commence. It was meant to be coordinated with us,

because I wanted to tell the Russians before the press statement, saying, "Okay, the press statement's coming out. Make sure you guys are ready." Well, it came out and the Russians raised a gigantic stink. There was this huge, "Oh, my God!" statements out of Moscow. So Armitage called up Trubnikov, his counterpart and said, "What's the deal? We told you guys all about this. We updated you along the way through the Russian ambassador and we told you all about it. How can you raise this stink now about this, especially in public?"

Trubnikov said, "Yeah, but it was secret. We didn't tell anybody in Moscow about this." We said, "Yes, it was secret, but it was secret to be distributed to the Russian government. It was secret because we didn't want to make it public, but it was not secret between our two governments. You should have told everybody."

"Oh, well, we didn't. I was afraid to."

That was an extremely instructive moment for me. What I should have done is not only tell Trubnikov and the Russian ambassador here, but I should have gone to Moscow and just had meeting after meeting after meeting in the foreign ministry, to make sure that they all knew about it, too.

Q: Including the ministry of defense. Were they clued in on this?

JONES: Well, they were supposed to be, because they were part of this whole discussion we'd had. The ministry of defense had representatives at the meeting when Armitage met with all of them in September and had said, "Georgia's a redline. We're going to come back to all of you on what we're going to do about training Georgian troops."

But nobody told them. So that was a very instructive moment for me. I couldn't depend on a channel. We thought, "Okay, we've got Trubnikov, he'll tell everybody and we're done."

Q: Well, let me just pass on the baton to the next generation. How do you deal with them?

JONES: You just do a lot more talking with a lot more people. What I should have done is said, "We're telling you now, Mr. Trubnikov and Mr. Ambassador. I'm going to go to Moscow in a month. Who do you think I should tell in Moscow? What would be the right array of people to tell in Moscow?" To put them on notice that they could not keep it to themselves. That's what I would have done, in hindsight. It would have been a better thing to do.

Q: One of these lessons of diplomacy.

JONES: Yeah, that you can't trust your channels.

Q: I'm sure there were Europeans and Russians trying to figure out how to deal with our Secretary of Defense. You couldn't really trust what came in there. How did you find Armitage as a supervisor? How did he operate?

JONES: I think he was fantastic. He was the best deputy secretary of state, probably ever. I can't think of anybody else who could have been better, for quite a number of reasons and I'll list them.

The first reason was he was very, very close to Secretary Powell, so that if you told Armitage something, you could be certain it went to Powell. There was one instance when that didn't happen. The Secretary was surprised by something, even though I'd been briefing Armitage all along. In one instance he didn't pass it on to Powell. So that was also an important lesson. But he was great that way.

So I quickly learned that what I needed to do on any substantive thing I was working on is to brief Powell, Armitage and Grossman all at the same time and they were perfectly happy to have me do it that way, they were extremely supportive.

They had a meeting with Grant Green every evening, sort of a how are we doing today?

Q: Grant Green being?

JONES: Grant Green was the undersecretary for management and had been at the Pentagon with Powell and Armitage, who was also fantastic.

So they all knew everything at all times. If it was a management issue I would tell Grant Green and Armitage and Grossman. I always told Marc everything, because he was my direct boss.

So, number one, Armitage was great that way. Number two, I could trust him on all the bureaucratic infighting. If we took something to Armitage for help, he would either say, "Drop it, it's not worth the fight" or he would say, "I'm on it!" and he would be. He'd report back to you religiously, "Okay, I called" so and so "And this is what he or she said and the next step is this, back over to you." Or, "I called" so and so, "This dog won't hunt. We're done."

It was fast, it was efficient and he and Powell, but he in particular, would say, "The reason you have us is to help you fight the fights. Do not let things languish. Do not let the bureaucratics get the better of us here. That's the classic bureaucratic way to fight is to just not do something. Don't let that happen. Bring it to me and we either make it happen or we'll agree it can't be done." So that was number two, the interagency bureaucratics.

Number three, he was extremely good on all the budget issues. He was responsible for sorting through all the budget stuff and making all the budget decisions for the State

Department. He took that responsibility extremely seriously. He was the one who had a budget examination for every single bureau and every single undersecretary once a year. When we were ready with our bureau program plan, we'd send it forward with all of the positions we wanted, the rationale, the money that we wanted for programs, for operations. Then he would call us forward. I would be there with all of my DAS's and I would have three minutes to make a presentation on what did I want and why. Then he would fire questions at us.

It was scary as hell, but it meant that we had to know our business, we had to know exactly why we wanted each thing, it couldn't be a big bunch of blah, blah, couldn't be a big bunch of fluff. We had to be ready to answer any question, although I could defer to any of my experts, my DAS's. I did regularly, which I wasn't sure if I should. But it turned out that was what he preferred, to see that the whole team was integrated and functioning well. We regularly had budget fights with other bureaus for this money and that money and he would make a decision and tell you why he'd done it. You either won or you lost, but at least the decision was made, nothing languished forever, which had happened with previous people.

The other reason I loved working for him is that he valued honesty. He wanted to know what was going wrong, what was going right. If I needed help with an ambassador or with some personnel issue or something or other, I could take it to him and say, "Ambassador" such and such in such and such a place "is driving me crazy. This is what the problem is. I'm going to tell him that you're briefed on this and that if he doesn't shape up, you're going to call him. Is that okay?" It was always completely fine. I didn't do that very often. But he would, again, always say, "If you've got a problem, if you don't bring it to me, it's your own fault."

Q: You were dealing with an area, Europe, which is loaded with political ambassadors, always has been. I've had some, all of whom I've admired, at some distance. But how did you deal with not very well qualified ambassadors, because you had some ambassadors who got the job because they were contributors or political players. How did that work?

JONES: I had 54 ambassadors in my bureau. I think of the 54 I had 28 who were political, just over half. Most of them were excellent. Most of them were good at their work, they were committed to doing a good job. I pretty quickly figured out how to work with them, the kinds of things I had to say to them in order to get them to understand how serious their responsibilities were.

The first thing I learned to say to them, because many of them would say to me, "I've bonded with the king, I've bonded with the prime minister." I realized that for many of them they thought that was the end of their job. So I very quickly learned to say, "I'm so glad you've bonded with the prime minister. What have you done for the American people with that prime minister today?"

I learned that many of them were afraid to do anything negative. They didn't think that they could. So I quickly learned that I had to say to them, number one, "They all expect you to speak for the president. They know that they're not going to like what the president says, but you must speak honestly for the president, you must speak for the American people, you must speak, in other words, the talking points that I'm giving you, you've got to use them."

Q: And, particularly in Europe, it was a very difficult time.

JONES: Absolutely.

Q: We had an administration which was in confrontation with, I'll use the Rumsfeld phrase, "the Old Europe." That developed later, but it still was a difficult

JONES: It was difficult. What I said to them is that all of these guys expect you to represent the United States and they know they're not going to like what you're going to say. But your job is to find a hook, with all this bonding you've done, to keep the conversation going. If they react badly, you have to get to the bottom of why. What would they do differently?

So that when you write your cable, you don't just say, "I got a blast," you say, "I got a blast because they want this, this and this done instead." I said because I can use that and Secretary Powell can use that to try to get some of these policies changed. If we get enough blasts back from close allies on this issue or that issue, we can use that to formulate a change in some of the nonsense coming out of the Pentagon or out of Cheney's office.

So they sort of got that, because as much as these guys were dyed in the wool Bush supporters and very loyal to Bush, they were horrified by what was coming out of the Pentagon and out of Cheney.

So they were almost instant converts to, "Oh my God, this is terrible! Let's fix it!," in terms of the way the words were coming out of Washington.

Q: Could you use them, particularly the political ones, because they had clout within the Republican Party? Were they helpful to you to get things done?

JONES: This was interesting. They were constantly calling me up to say, "Oh my God! This is terrible!" And I'd say, "Call Karl Rove. Tell him!"

"Oh, I couldn't do that," they would say. "That's why I'm calling you."

I'd say, "I can't call Karl Rove. You can. So why don't you call Karl Rove?"

Q: Karl Rove being?

JONES: The political director at the White House, sort of the most powerful guy.

But the other thing I would tell them, though, is if they have a policy issue that is a specific policy issue, like you want a White House appointment for your prime minister and you call Karl Rove about that, Karl Rove's going to call Condi Rice, Condi Rice is going to call Dan Fried, Dan Fried's going to call me. So, you might as well call me first. Don't think you can get one up by calling Karl Rove about straight foreign policy mechanics, if you will, like a visit or something that's just straight policy.

But they were surprisingly chicken about giving bad news themselves to the White House crowd. They were happy to have me give the bad news to Powell, but they weren't so prepared to do it themselves. There were a few political appointee ambassadors who'd gone to Europe for a grand European vacation, a couple like that who just wouldn't stay at their posts. Every time you turned around they were asking to leave post.

I very quickly started a policy of keeping records. I had my executive people do it. Every time an ambassador asked to leave post, because they have to have permission to leave the country. I just kept track of how many days they were gone on official business, how many days they were gone on personal business and had a very good record of all that, so that I could explain, when I would go to somebody and say, "I really would rather have, this is the time to make a push for a career person to be ambassador to Slovakia, a career person to be ambassador to the European Union, because look, this guy has been gone more than he's been there, in terms of getting work done."

There were others who were there not for a grand vacation but to push one issue. There was one woman in particular who was pushing breast cancer awareness. Absolutely appropriate, no problem, but as I kept saying to her, "You can't do it to the exclusion of having a discussion about troops going to Afghanistan from your country, or participating in the Balkans, or what about NATO enlargement?" She would get those instructions and have the DCM do that. She would only do her issue. You've got to participate in all the work of the American people, I would tell her

But I found that the talking point that worked the best, as I said earlier, is, "What have you done today for the American president?" or if somebody had really overdone being gone from post so much, I would say, "So what do I do when President Bush calls Secretary Powell and says, 'Why is so and so not at their post? What am I supposed to say? That you're out buying antique cars? So maybe you don't want to go away this weekend. Maybe, since there's an EU summit in your capital, maybe you'd like to be there this weekend."

It was a challenge, with some of them. Some of them were fantastic. A lot of them were fantastic.

Q: Again, we're still talking about this early period, when people were still adjusting to the confrontational stance of our administration towards Europe. How about the Congress and all? How was this playing?

JONES: With Congress, we did extremely well with Congress. The instruction that we had from Secretary Powell and Deputy Secretary Armitage was that we should offer to brief Congress on absolutely everything, well before Congress asked to be briefed on it, whatever the issue was.

They said, "We never want to hear that a congressman learned about something in the media that they should have been briefed on by the State Department. The only complaint we ever want to hear is that they're offered too many briefings, not that they haven't been briefed."

So, again, I had one of my offices keep track of our Hill briefings. I told everybody, "I want you to brief all the time. Any issue that comes up, you talk to me about it and then you talk to the congressional staff about it, whatever it is. Let the congressional relations people know that you're talking to them and also let so and so know, so that we can keep a record of it, so that if Armitage ever calls me up to say, 'Beth, so and so is complaining that you haven't briefed him on such and such' I can say, 'Mr. Armitage, I have a list right here of the number of times we've briefed this staff member and that staff member and that staff member, that staff member.'" So that worked extremely well.

Both of these were very sharp departures from policy from the Madeleine Albright years, when nobody was allowed to brief the Hill on anything.

We had the same instruction on the media: brief the media on background, don't do anything on the record without checking with Richard Boucher, who was the assistant secretary for public affairs and the State Department spokesman, but you can brief all the time, just don't get in any trouble and it worked great.

Q: Why had Albright been so leery of the media?

JONES: I honestly don't know. The idea that I kept hearing was that there's only one State Department spokesman. We all could agree with that. But we also thought that it would be appropriate to make sure that people understood the background of various issues. All of the State Department correspondents understood the reason that all of us would want to go on background. But the Albright team basically didn't trust us. That was the only conclusion anybody could draw; they didn't trust us to do it right.

And the Hill. And Congress. The only person who could brief was the head of congressional relations. They never briefed, or briefed very rarely.

Sometimes you'd get permission on something that was a bit esoteric they didn't feel like briefing on. But their habit was to turn down requests for briefings and hearings, et cetera, whereas under Armitage and Powell the default was to brief as much as possible, in open session, background briefings, whatever it was. Armitage when he traveled, often would take a senior staffer from Congress with us into the meetings, on the trip, on all the behind the scenes stuff, one of the appropriators. So they had a fantastic relationship.

As a result, every time Secretary Powell went to the Hill, he would get more money than we'd asked for.

Q: Incidentally, speaking of money, one of the great complaints I heard in my brief foray into Kyrgyzstan and the people who were out there was, this is in the Clinton Administration, there was no money for these embassies.

How did you do, moneywise, particularly in the former Soviet Union?

JONES: When Powell came in we did much, much better. First of all, the embassies had already gotten bigger. They had all been opened on no money. That was a legitimate complaint in the beginning. It was a decision that was made by Baker and company. We would go to the Hill and ask for no additional money to open 14 new embassies, which is nuts.

But there was a philosophy back then that the Foreign Service was comprised of "We'll all eat coal" kind of people. We wouldn't ask for more money. We could do everything with no money. We were all so brilliant and wonderful. We should get used to being the poor cousins.

Whereas when Powell came in, he said, "That's nonsense! We should have places where people are safe to work and live. They shouldn't be freezing cold," which is what was happening in these places. "There has to be staff to staff these embassies. You can't just have eight people in these places. There was a tremendous amount of work to do," which is how the Baker team had opened these embassies.

So the first thing that Powell did was to put together a Diplomatic Readiness Corps, which was to add several hundred positions (I've forgotten how many), at least on a temporary basis, for lots and lots of places that needed support staff, primarily: support staff, consular staff, some reporting positions, to try to get back to a decent way of operating, so that people had offices and had computers. That was another one of his big things, that everybody should have a computer on their desk and that everybody should have unclassified access, as well as classified. This would allow everyone to get to the web. There were plenty of embassies where there was one unclassified computer. So nobody got on the web, because you had to line up to get anything done.

The attitude about the State Department was that we were at war with the Pentagon, as you mentioned. We had only one war inside the State Department, which was a little

unusual. We felt that every day we would sally forth from the State Department and battle all over town on behalf of our various policies and then we'd come back in and regroup. I had a little meeting in the evening, to review "What happened today and how awful was the Pentagon today."

Inside the building there was tremendous collegiality. It was promoted to be collegial with each other. Powell and Armitage had picked extremely collegial people to lead the other bureaus. So even when I had a substantive battle with the democracy and human rights people over a human rights report here or there, I could nevertheless have the battle without having a personal fight with the assistant secretary. So we'd battle it out in front of Powell over a decision on a waiver or something or other and then go off to dinner together.

There was one exception: John Bolton.

Q: I was going to say "Let's talk about John Bolton." Who was he, at the time?

JONES: John Bolton was Under Secretary for Arms Control. He was very powerful in that position. He was the mole inside the State Department for the Pentagon, is the way we felt about it. He pushed one particular policy extremely hard during the time I was there, starting pretty quickly. That was what was called Article 98.

Article 98 was an article of the Rome Treaty, of the treaty against war crimes and genocide, that permitted countries who had been signatories to the Rome Treaty to make an agreement with another country to opt out of prosecuting citizens of that country. So it was in the interests of the United States, according to Bolton, for the United States to sign an Article 98 agreement with every single signatory of the Rome Treaty, so that if an American military person ended up in Andorra or in Mozambique, that person could not be arrested and prosecuted for war crimes and genocide or whatever because the United States was not a signatory of the war crimes treaty. There was intense pressure by Bolton for the United States to sign an Article 98 treaty with every single country in the world.

There was tremendous resistance by many, many, many, many countries to doing this, because there was a sense that Americans shouldn't be exempt from being able to be prosecuted for war crimes.

The argument that Bolton made was that U.S. law was so robust that should anybody actually have committed, or be accused of committing, genocide or war crimes, that the U.S. would prosecute them.

A lot of us had a huge argument about this with him. We said, "Yes, but contractors seem to be exempt from this," contractors in Afghanistan. Of course, their number got bigger in Iraq. "No, no, no, no, they're not exempt" was the answer from Bolton

Well, we all know now, they are exempt and this is exactly why you have Blackwater, this is why the Abu Ghraib thing happened the way it did, et cetera. We didn't know that then, but we were still fighting it.

I led the fight of the geographic bureaus. I wrote a paper, with some lawyers and with a lot of people. All the geographic bureau assistant secretaries signed it. It was a memo to the Secretary saying, "We object to the policy of pursuing Article 98 agreements with all of our countries" because, because, because and I listed some of these things. I lost the fight, basically. I was the one who argued it out with Bolton in front of Marc Grossman. I lost the fight because I didn't have enough legal background myself, especially on the contractors. I said the contractors are excluded. "No they're not." "Yes they are." "No they're not." "Yes they are." I'd been told that they're excluded. I didn't have the legal knowledge to argue my position particularly well, other than to make a flat statement. So I lost the fight and we were forced to pursue Article 98 agreements.

Well, in the meantime the EU as a group had said, "No member of the European Union may sign an Article 98 agreement with the United States, because the EU as a group has agreed on a common foreign and security policy that says 'We are signatories of the Rome Treaty and we are not going to exempt the United States,' end of story."

So I not only led the fight against Bolton, but I was the bad geographic bureau head that had the EU, this gigantic group of countries, that refused to sign Article 98 agreements. All of the countries that were EU wannabes, who were working to get into the EU, all of the Eastern Europeans, were now very leery of signing Article 98 agreements with the United States. They didn't want to get crosswise with EU law and have that slow down their applications for EU membership.

Before the EU passed this edict about its common security and foreign policy, a couple of the Eastern European countries negotiated Article 98 agreements and agreed to sign them. Then in the end there was such an uproar from the EU they didn't sign them. So I was not only in the doghouse, I was drowning in the doghouse, as far as Bolton was concerned. So that was a very big fight.

The other big fight I had with Bolton was over agreements with the Russians for access to nuclear sites that were required for the cooperative agreements that we needed under Nunn-Lugar. And the fight was all about the liability requirements. The Bolton crowd wanted liability requirements that exempted any American who was participating in the work in some way, even if it could be shown that the American had engaged in sabotage.

It was an extremely broad exemption for Americans that the Russians just wouldn't accept. All of us basically agreed with the Russians that they shouldn't accept this sort of a broad thing.

I never got that done. That agreement wasn't signed until about three months ago *i.e.*, in 2008. I never could overturn that problem, but it was another fight that I led.

Q: You have a feeling he was taking this stand in order just to avoid having an agreement?

JONES: He would have been perfectly happy to have the agreement, because the agreement would have not reduced any U.S. action whatsoever. That was the theme of the Cheney-Wolfowitz-Feith crowd, all the neocons wanted no agreement, preferably, or to eliminate all agreements that tied the U.S. hands in any way whatsoever.

So as we were moving into all of the business of doing Article 98 agreements while trying to get NATO troops into Afghanistan. The U.S. was pulling out of the Balkans. All of these fights were all in place by the fall of 2002.

On top of that, they (Cheney-Wolfowitz-Feith group) were the ones who were pushing hard to get the U.S. out of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which is what we announced in December 2001 and accomplished in June 2002.

Q: What were you getting from John Bolton, how he ran his staff, because later there were a lot of leaked stories about him being a very difficult person to work for.

JONES: Everything we heard was that when he would have his staff meetings, everybody standing up, he was abusive. Several of the people who worked for him were people that had worked with him for a long time. They were just as abusive to everybody else as he was to them.

I spent a lot of time with the various assistant secretaries, just because we had to get things done. I would work extremely hard with Linc Bloomfield, who was the assistant secretary for political-military affairs. I was constantly calling Linc and saying, "Okay, I know that Bolton wants this and this. It doesn't make any sense, for these nine reasons. Is there any way you can see that we can walk this tightrope, to get done over here what we need to get done, and walk through the minefield that John Bolton is setting up for us," either with Article 98 agreements or pulling out of the Balkans or whatever it was.

Linc tried very hard to be very helpful, because he basically agreed us that this is no way to run a railroad.

There were times when I was able to work collegially with John Bolton. I always asked to meet with each Under Secretary before the D Committee meetings – the meetings to decide which career officers the State Department would nominate to the White House for ambassadorships. John always agreed to meet with me on this topic, and seemed interested in my comments on who I was recommending for my EUR posts.

Q: How about the other mole, Liz Cheney?

JONES: She was in the Near East bureau. She was a deputy assistant secretary there. I had no dealings with her, with one slight exception. I can't remember why I had to deal with her, but it was towards the end of my time there.

It was very difficult for the Near East bureau. Bill Burns, who was the assistant secretary, used to come down to my office on a regular basis just to vent when different things would happen. There were always VP Cheney jokes. They couldn't tell Cheney jokes at their staff meetings. We could. Things like that. But I didn't have much of sense of how difficult it was, other than what they told me. I had no direct dealings with her on any substance, really.

Q: Were there either political or career Cheney-ites larded throughout the Department?

JONES: No, there weren't, other than Bolton and a couple of people on his staff.

Q: So you knew what you were dealing with?

JONES: The other people who were political appointees were not at all in the Bolton mold. They were very loyal to Powell, they were very loyal to Armitage and were great to work with, as far as I was concerned. Two other people were difficult, but they weren't difficult because of Cheney, they were just difficult because they were difficult.

One was a guy named John Miller who ran the trafficking in persons office, was a former congressman. The sole reason to be at the State Department, it turned out, I finally figured out, was to find ways to sanction the Netherlands for having a red light district. He had an entire policy built around naming and shaming all these other countries. He and his staff were extremely difficult, extremely difficult to work with. They would come up with all kinds of things to put into the trafficking in persons report that they had heard from this NGO or that NGO. They heard often from NGO's who wanted to trash the U.S. government so that they could get more money for their NGO's, so that *they* could fix the problems they cited.

Miller's office constantly had bad information, or unbalanced information. I used a tactic with him when it came time to fight out what would go into a report, the final report that went to Congress. That report made judgments about which tier, which group, each country was in. Which tier you were in meant, if you were in Tier III you were sanctioned, resulting in all your money could be taken away from you from other assistance programs.

So my tactic was to fight him out, in person, on every single one. That forced him to know enough about every single country, so that I could shame him into not sanctioning so many of my guys. He, of course, had his staff argue with me about it. But I made it a policy that I got up to speed, which was not easy, on all of these very esoteric stories, so I would know any dumb issue that was going to come at me from this guy.

In a couple of cases we had to take the fight to Armitage. I took it several times to the under secretary who was Miller's boss and she wouldn't make the decision. So it went to Armitage if I really wanted to fight which tier a country was being put in to fight out the sanctions.

The argument I made on sanctions was "I can agree with you that Georgia or Greece or Uzbekistan hasn't done the right thing about educating women who have been returned from being trafficked. But by putting them in Tier III you are taking away any possibility I have, because you're cutting all the assistance programs, to fight corruption, to use the counterterrorism tools, to fight for free media, to fight for good governance, to fight for better streets. You're taking away every tool I have to do anything else, just because they haven't done enough training for returned prostitutes, or returned trafficked women and that's not right." That's why I fought it tooth and nail.

The religious freedom guy was also difficult to deal with. He was also a Johnny one note. I just did the same thing with him. I'd just fight out the report with him. At least there weren't sanctions associated with the religious freedom report.

Q: On the trafficking, it was particularly bad in that era, wasn't it, because the former Soviet Union having fallen apart, this was a great opportunity for the pimps of Western Europe and elsewhere to recruit women to come in. So the place was flooded. I don't know how it is today, but it was a real issue.

JONES: It was a genuine issue. Nobody had any qualms about that. It was absolutely a genuine issue. What I had a problem with is he would overstate the problem in the Netherlands, and kind of ignore the problems everywhere else.

Q: How about the Reeperbahn *in Hamburg?*

JONES: Well, yeah. It was all about the red light district in the Netherlands. I had no problem with insisting on programs, insisting on calling it like it was, but I did have a problem with enforcing sanctions. I just fought him on it. "Put them in Tier II and a half, whatever it is, but do not put them in Tier III." I won on just about all of them.

Q: There is this problem, of course, of true believers and sometimes these are handy places to put political supporters. It sounds very easy from the White House point of view, but then those of you have to deal with them.

JONES: Every administration has them, it wasn't peculiar to these guys.

Q: We're getting ready for a new administration. This seems to be a more experienced transition.

JONES: This current transition is experienced and the group is very, very collegial. Now whether it will continue to be so collegial I don't know. But the policy groups have been extremely collegial. There's a real premium put on that.

Q: Let's talk 9/11, Iraq as a menace and all this. You've dealt with the area. How did you feel about that at the time?

JONES: 9/11 was clearly Afghanistan's fault, there was no question about that in everybody's mind.

We knew fairly quickly, some of us did, that the administration had Iraq on the brain. This has been in all the newspaper articles, too. On the Saturday after 9/11, when the Cabinet all went to Camp David and had a big briefing and discussion, Wolfowitz and Cheney and Rumsfeld all said, "Iraq, Iraq, Iraq." The CIA briefer, Cofer Black, said, "No, no, it's Afghanistan. Iraq has nothing to do with it. Saddam didn't have any of these guys there."

But they started pushing it then. We didn't think too much about it, frankly, for six, seven months or so. They kept talking about Iraq and intelligence kept showing, State Department intelligence kept showing, that there still wasn't any connection, no connection, no connection, no connection. So we weren't particularly worried about it.

It became an issue in the summer of 2002, probably because the Cheney people were talking about it so much. But also, at the point, by the middle of the summer, Chancellor Schröder of Germany, who had met with Bush in probably May of 2002, when Bush went to Berlin. In those meetings Schröder had apparently said to Bush something like, "You got to do what you got to do, I'm not going to get in your way" when Iraq was under discussion.

He then turned around and decided that it was a good thing for his own reelection campaign to trash Bush for the Iraq business and for talking about going into Iraq. It was a very, very nasty campaign against Bush. That's what got Schröder reelected and that was the beginning of the big problem with Bush and Schröder.

Q: Before we talk about Iraq itself, for the first couple of years George Bush and his administration were taking this unilateral approach and it was pretty obvious at times and this must have caused all sorts of problems in your area, these are people who are used to a more collegial approach, we'd been very careful about this over the years.

JONES: Well the first thing that happened, in spring of 2001, was when Bush said he wasn't going to sign Kyoto and was not going to get involved in climate change. Climate change wasn't really happening and all of that. That already had a very bad effect in Europe. I think we already talked about what a bad effect it had for Bush's first two trips to Europe, in the spring of 2001.

Then the administration, led by Bolton, made a big effort to "unsign" the Rome Treaty. Clinton had signed the Rome Treaty on genocide and war crimes and now the U.S. was going to unsign it. Nobody ever heard of that procedure, but the administration was being so aggressive about this that it was done, finally.

So with those two things, Kyoto and the Rome Treaty, the U.S. was already in extremely bad odor for being unilateral and as being declarative in its policies.

So when Bush and company started talking about going into Iraq, first they'd been talking about "We're going to do Afghanistan without you guys." They backed into ISAF, the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, which involved NATO. But there was still very much the unilateralism kind of talk.

Getting out of the ABM Treaty was next in late 2001. 2002 is when we start talking about Iraq to a great extent. 2002 is when Schröder had his reelection campaign.

Q: But during the election campaign, who was our ambassador in Germany and what sort of things were you all doing to say, "Cut out this crap?"

JONES: Dan Coates was the U.S. ambassador to Germany. He'd been a senator who had not run for reelection. He had been interviewed for Defense Secretary and didn't do well enough.

So he was ambassador to Germany. I know he had a lot of conversations with his German contacts, along the lines of: "Jeez, guys, do you really have to talk this way?" But there was a big disconnect between Joschka Fischer's foreign ministry and Schröder's chancellery. As much as Coates would go in to talk to Fischer and even talked to some of the people in the chancellery, it didn't really help, didn't really do very much.

Q: Were we responding, saying, "Well, screw you!" on things?

JONES: This was one of the times where we tried to be rather calm about it, saying, "Look, this is an election campaign, he's saying awful things." I would call up my German political director counterpart and say, "Come on, this is ridiculous! No matter how much you don't like what Bush is doing, you can't have an ally saying this kind of thing." We tried very hard not to make this public and the White House agreed.

The White House said, "We're not going to get involved in this election campaign. We don't like it, but we're not going to get involved in a big public back and forth on this."

Occasionally, we would jump up and down. The justice minister, I think it was, said something really outrageous about Bush and the Nazis in the campaign. She actually got fired. But she didn't get fired until after the election, so it wasn't perfect. So there was a little bit of that. But we succeeded a bit in taking the high road on that one, for what it's worth.

Q: Okay, back to Iraq: when did you begin to realize that this Iraq invasion proposal was serious?

JONES: Here's what happened: I went to a conference in Europe that was hosted by my German colleague with a bunch of think tank people. There was a huge difficult discussion about Iraq and the administration.

We were under Chatham House rules where I couldn't be quoted. I said, "Look, it doesn't make any sense to invade Iraq. I do not believe that the U.S. administration's going to do this. Yes, there's a lot of talk about it. There are some things that we can do internationally, through the UN, et cetera, to force Saddam to come clean on his declarations about weapons of mass destruction and chemical and biological weapons. Besides that, even if worst comes to worst and we do end up invading and Powell isn't able to keep them from doing that, at least we have what we call the Future of Iraq project," which I described.

It was a big, big project that we'd launched several years earlier, getting experts, Iraqi exiles, Americans, Europeans, et cetera, in every possible field, to study every field, whether it was irrigation or the constitution or higher education, so that when the day came that Saddam was no longer there, there'd be people who had at least thought about these issues who could go in and do these things.

That was in July. In August Secretary Powell was also thinking about this. He asked to see the president and made a big pitch to the president that if we were going to go into Iraq, that we had to have a UN Security Council resolution that would permit us to do that. He argued that that was a requirement, that we couldn't do this unilaterally. We'd gotten very bad press for being as unilateral as we were in Afghanistan and that it was just impossible to do it again.

So he got permission from the president to do that. Within days Vice President Cheney made an extremely aggressive "We're going into Iraq" speech, a big speech about how Iraq was responsible for 9/11, Saddam was responsible for 9/11. It was all nonsense.

So, knowing that Powell had gotten the okay to go to the Security Council, what the heck was this? We quickly learned that Cheney had given the speech without anybody knowing he was going to give the speech, but that was typical. To make a long story short, by the time we got to the UN General Assembly, in September, the Leaders Week, it was critical that the president, in his speech to the UN General Assembly, make some reference to going to the UN and that we would be working with the Security Council to put forward a Security Council resolution on Iraq.

Well, it got to that part of the speech and it wasn't in there, he didn't say it at the point where he was supposed to say it. What happened? It turned out that Bush realized it wasn't in and ad libbed it. Somehow it wasn't in the text that he had, on his teleprompter

and he inserted it a sentence later. But at least he said the right thing, he knew it was a big controversial thing. Powell had gotten him to reconfirm that yes, yes, we're going to the UN. So that was saved by the bell there.

So from then on, from then until November, Secretary Powell was engaged in great detail in getting the Security Council resolution negotiated. Now, the big problem, of course was that the Cheney-Rumsfeld crowd didn't want anything in the Security Council resolution that would tie our hands in any way, which was an impossible situation.

But Powell became the negotiator-in-chief of the Security Council resolution. The fellow who was the acting assistant secretary for the UN, Bill Wood, was constantly telling stories about what this was like. He'd be at breakfast on a Sunday morning with a friend and Secretary Powell would call him up on his cell phone and say, "Bill, what about if I add a "to" here and an "and" there? Would that be okay?" in the resolution.

I remember Bill saying to me, "What am I supposed to tell the secretary of state, that he's wrong? I don't think so!" I said, "But you can, if you think it's wrong."

He said, "I know, I know, but he was right. His suggestion was perfectly fine."

But the biggest difficulty that he had was negotiating with the Germans, who were on the Security Council then and the Russians. He was constantly on the phone with Joschka Fischer. He would get Fischer's approval for this language or for this concept.
Powell liked to work in concepts. As people would nickel and dime him on words, he'd say, "No, no, tell me what you're trying to get to. What is it you're trying to achieve here? You tell me what the concepts are that you're trying to get to." He did that with the Germans, with the French and the Russians.

The French were difficult, too, but it was difficult with the Germans in particular. We knew from other sources that the German ambassador to the UN was defying instructions from the foreign ministry and would be much more difficult on the Security Council resolution than Joschka's instructions had been. He was separately getting different instructions from the chancellery, as it turned out. It took us a while to figure this out. But I would call up my counterpart and say, "Come on, you guys! Don't you know this is happening?" Well, they didn't know it was happening. I said, "You need to look into this. You need to find out what's going on here, because your guy in New York—" and they were of course campaigning to be on the Security Council as a permanent member.

I said, "You are not going to get yourselves a permanent seat on the Security Council if you're going to behave this way. If you have Joschka Fischer telling the Secretary of State one thing and your ambassador doing something else, what are we supposed to think about how reliable you would be if you were a permanent member of the Security Council?"

Q: Was there any concern about, Germany, Russia and France were all panting, it seemed to be, to do more trading with Iraq, or violating the sanctions, or not?

JONES: I don't remember that being a big issue. It could have been, but I don't remember it as an issue. It was mostly they wanted to give the UN inspectors more time, France in particular. France was leading that charge. The Germans, to a degree, as well.

The British, of course, were trying to help us out. They were trying to negotiate this thing with us. It was a very big effort.

Q: Did you find yourself plotting with the French and the British and the Germans, how to counter the Department of Defense regarding the UN, or not? What were the dynamics?

JONES: I wasn't involved in the UN negotiation in particular. I would follow up. We didn't want to have too many negotiators involved, obviously. But Secretary Powell regularly said to his French and German counterparts and maybe the Russian, "I need this because I'm under such pressure from Cheney." He would be really clear about it. It was all Cheney, more than even Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz.

Q: How did you feel about the UN inspectors? Nothing really was turning up. Of course, it turned out later that there really weren't these weapons of mass destruction.

JONES: Yeah. Powell was very supportive of the inspectors, wanting them to do the best they could to find things. There was great skepticism about the inspectors from the Pentagon. They said that the inspectors were just trying to whitewash the Iraqis, which I didn't think was true. I'd spent so much time with the whole IAEA inspection team that I thought that they really would try hard to find things if they possibly could.

So by the time Powell gave his speech in the UN, by then there was great skepticism even about the chief UN weapons inspector, was he trying to whitewash it for the Iraqis? But we had trusted Americans on the inspection team. You remember that David Kaye was assigned to go out there to be an inspector. He couldn't find anything, came back and said so.

Q: Did you feel there was a major operation to impugn all these people, in other words a disinformation campaign within our government to knock down anybody who was opposed to going into Iraq?

JONES: What that was focused on the IAEA and the UN, which is not too surprising, and on the EU and to a degree NATO. I guess this was because the thing that was going on at the same time as Powell was negotiating in the UN Security Council for this resolution was that the French, the Belgians and the Germans were pushing hard for the EU to have a stronger military.

So there was this big fight between the transatlanticists in NATO and the EU for the paramountcy of NATO. All of this resulted in what became known as the Chocolate Summit. It was held in some town in Belgium by these three countries to devise a statement whereby the EU would take the lead on a more regular basis on military operations.

This all happened right around Thanksgiving. We were negotiating with the other members of NATO about what the statement should say and what could go into the next ministerial statement, et cetera. It was highly controversial and very, very worrisome, well beyond the Pentagon. It wasn't just a fight with the Pentagon. People who understood NATO better than I did were very worried about what the implications of this were, because it seemed to undercut what we called the Berlin Plus arrangements.

I remember the timing in particular. I remember being on the phone negotiating part of the statement with my British counterpart from London as I was trying to get the turkey out of the oven on Thanksgiving. My whole family had come for Thanksgiving dinner.

In the summer of 2002, there was a lot of discussion about what to do about Iraq. There was a confrontation building, really, between Colin Powell and the rest of the administration, particularly with Vice President Cheney, about whether or not the United Nations should have any kind of role in the decision about Iraq.

What I was hearing from my political director counterparts all over Europe was that if it came to the U.S. requesting assistance from many of them for action in Iraq, their constitutions, in many cases, or their parliaments required Security Council authorization. I was feeding this back to Secretary Powell. The record now shows he had an early August conversation with the president about how to proceed, in which he laid out the importance of keeping our allies with us, in the event we decided to pursue the war on terror in Iraq. From everything I understand from the published record and the media and from what we understood in the building, he had gotten authorization from the president to proceed with the United Nations, that it was important to get a Security Council resolution that would authorize the U.S. and a coalition to go to war in Iraq.

What then happened, almost immediately, also in August, was a speech by Vice President Cheney in which he was extremely aggressive about Iraq. He said Saddam Hussein was supporting terrorism, that he had nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. I can't actually remember if he said specifically that we're not going to the UN, but the implication of the speech, in any case, was we're not seeking authorization from anybody to do anything we want.

It was very much Cheney philosophy, Cheney ideology, neoconservative ideology, that the U.S. must do whatever the U.S. believes it should do, without reference to any international body or any other ally.

Q: Would a speech like that, in normal circumstances, have been vetted in the State Department or somewhere?

JONES: Normally in the U.S. government when there is a speech that touches on foreign policy it's at least agreed among the cabinet officials and the president.

This kind of disconnect was extremely unusual. The speech had not been shown to anybody in the State Department, certainly not Secretary Powell. Whether President Bush even knew the speech was being given I don't know and I don't know if anybody knows. My guess is he did not.

This was in the period where all of us believed that Cheney was the second president, "the other president," he was often referred to that way by us, "the second government of the United States." It was very disconcerting for all of us to hear this big, very clear, disconnect or understanding that there was this big disconnect in the White House, between what President Bush had told Powell, as we understood it and what Vice President Cheney was saying in his speech.

This was all going to come to a head pretty quickly, however, with the president's speech at the UN General Assembly during Leaders Week, which takes place about the third week of September.

There was a lot of activity on the part of the State Department, particularly by the Secretary and others in his office, to make sure that the president's speech included reference to the United States is going to seek a UN Security Council resolution to authorize it to proceed to follow Saddam Hussein's terrorist activities,.

To make a long story short, it was unclear to us until the words were spoken whether or not Bush would actually say the words. As I recall the back and forth, sometimes the sentence was in, sometimes it was out of the speech. Each time the Secretary saw it he would constantly work to get the sentence back in.

It was really only one sentence. As I understand the story, when the teleprompter had the speech up in front of the president as he was giving the speech at the UN General Assembly in September, that sentence actually was missing. But it had been such a controversy the president knew perfectly well it needed to be in there, he ad libbed the sentence back in during the speech.

Q: Was the sentence eliminated by some munchkin from Cheney's office?

JONES: I don't know who did the eliminating. The players at the time were Cheney and Scooter Libby. Whether it was somebody else in the Vice President's office, I don't know. But it was not something that was an issue with my counterparts in the NSC, for instance. It wasn't an issue with Rice, so far as I know. She didn't play a strong role at all. She

never played a strong role in trying to adjudicate this issue. It was between Powell and Cheney, really and the president.

Exactly how the back and forth went, I don't know the details of it. But I do know how hard and long Secretary Powell worked to make sure that the speech had that sentence in it and the context was less aggressive and more reasoned. He had used the argument with the president to good effect that we could not do this alone, we should not do this alone, we needed to have our allies with us, that it was very important for the Security Council to have a role in this. In the end he won that fight.

Q: Did you have any feel that within the European bureau there were Cheney allies?

JONES: No. There were none in the entire State Department, with the exception of John Bolton.

Q: And Cheney's daughter, I guess.

JONES: And Cheney's daughter was there, too, right. She was in the Middle East bureau, working on Middle East peace process issues, so she wasn't so much involved in the Iraq stuff, actually.

Q: And did you find yourself relating, or not relating, with John Bolton?

JONES: I had a tremendous amount of interaction with Bolton, not over Iraq, Iraq wasn't my issue, other than how to manage it with the Europeans. But I had a huge amount of interaction with him over the Rome Treaty, over the treaty on war crimes. That's a whole separate story that was very, very troublesome.

Q: The principal people who were going to play a role as far as putting troops in or giving support were the Europeans, of course. And what were you getting as we're leading up to this from your embassies and visitors back and forth on this?

JONES: From the embassies and directly. It was very, very difficult with all the Europeans. Even the European governments who were in support of President Bush and in support of wanting to stick with Bush over Iraq, the publics in every European country were very much opposed to going to war in Iraq. It was a very big issue in the UK, in Spain, in Belgium, in Germany, in Italy, in every country possible in Western Europe.

In Central Europe the publics were less opposed and the governments were therefore much more enthusiastic about participating with the United States in Iraq. So, for example, there was strong support, even among the publics, from Poland, from Albania, from various countries.

Q: In a way, of course, this is early days and these were the new boys on the block wanting to be close to the United States in this first test.

JONES: That's right. In several cases, of course, these countries already were members of NATO and wanted to demonstrate that they were already good NATO allies and could step up when it came to military action and military participation. In the case of many others they wanted to be members of NATO and wanted to demonstrate as members of Partnership for Peace that they could step up, that they had capabilities, that they could contribute to war fighting as potential NATO members.

So the incentive for the prospective NATO countries was extremely strong and to a degree almost unfair, where the sense was so strong that they needed to participate without questioning whether it was a sensible policy.

Q: Did you find that you were almost having to, not only on this, but maybe there were other subjects, with these newly liberated countries, having to dampen down their enthusiasm on things? Were they almost kind of pushy new members of the club?

JONES: I don't know if I would say that they were pushy. They were very outspoken and they were outspoken in terms of their skepticism about why the German government under Schröder, for example or the French government under Chirac would be so negative about this kind of thing.

One of the themes that came forward among the Central Europeans regularly was "the United States was one of the only countries in NATO that stood with us against the Soviet Union during the Cold War." This we got particularly from the Baltic States, because the United States was the only country that never recognized the Soviet takeover of the Baltic States, whereas the Europeans had. They said, "Because the United States stood so strongly for freedom, this is what the United States is doing all over again in Afghanistan and Iraq. We should support them because they were the beacon for us and we need to help them be the beacon for the Iraqis."

Q: How did the Iraq thing play out, vis-à-vis Germany and Schröder?

JONES: It was very, very problematic. There were a few things that happened. For instance, in May of 2002 President Bush visited Schröder. Before the official program started, they had coffee in the evening after Bush arrived and had a private conversation.

I was not in the conversation but I got a report about the conversation, in which I was told that Schröder had said to Bush, "I'm not happy about this move to Iraq, not happy with your determination that Saddam Hussein has nuclear weapons. I'm not sure we agree with that, not sure we agree that 9/11 came from Saddam Hussein, but I will you tell you that I know you need to do what you have to do and I won't get in your way."

Now, whether he used exactly those words of course I have no idea, but that was the implication of the conversation, as I was briefed about it. That was okay. Basically it was

to agree to disagree, “I’m not happy about what you’re doing, but I’m not going to get in your way.”

Later in the summer, by July, Schröder was very heavily involved in his reelection campaign and was doing badly. He brought out very strong opposition to the U.S., to Bush, very strong opposition to going into Iraq, as a platform in his campaign. He found that it was very popular, his numbers were going up in the polls as a result of this. He pushed it very, very hard. President Bush felt that he had been betrayed by Schröder. That was the reason for the extremely bad blood between the two leaders.

Q: How did that translate, here you are assistant secretary, did this translate into anything other than acceptance?

JONES: Here’s how we managed it, because it took a very conscious set of ideas on how to manage the relationship, given that Schröder was in an election campaign, was using anti-U.S. statements, anti-Bush statements as a lever for his popularity. So a couple of things happened. I don’t actually know whether Rice called her German counterpart, my recollection is she did, but I wouldn’t swear to it, to say, “Gee, can’t you tone this down a little bit?”

Certainly Secretary Powell called Foreign Minister Fischer to say the same kind of thing, “Gee, I understand he’s in an election campaign, but, gee, isn’t there any way to tone this down?” Fischer, of course, was in a different party from Schröder, so his maneuverability was a little bit limited. But nevertheless the agreement that I had with Secretary Powell that we worked out, that I coordinated fully with Dan Fried at the NSC, was that it was up to us to maintain a relationship with Germany, that we couldn’t just let the two presidents sever the relationship, understanding an election campaign is an important thing to deal with.

So we said to the Germans, “We’re not going to come out hammer and tongs and slam Schröder, but, please, can’t you get him to tone this down?” I did this with my German counterpart, the political director, Secretary Powell did it with Fischer. W had Dan Coates, the U.S. ambassador to Germany, do it with anybody he could find, to say, “Tone it down! Tone it down!”

The worst thing that happened, though, was the justice minister, the German justice minister, in a speech in Germany as part of the election campaign, made some reference to President Bush being as bad as the Nazis. I can’t remember the exact reference, but it was a very, very negative reference. It was over the top. Each of us went to our counterparts saying, “Okay, this is ridiculous. That is way over the top. Schröder really needs to repudiate this” which I believe he did “And fire her.” The message we got back was he would repudiate the statement, distance himself from it and fire her, but he actually didn’t until after the election. So he only did half of what he said he was going to do. But that was a pretty big problem.

Now he won the election easily. There are a couple of interesting points here. One was that the president said, several times over the course of the next couple of years, that even though he and Chirac never agreed about Iraq, that Chirac at least always told him the truth. The reason he said that was because he felt he had been two-timed by Schröder, that Chirac never said to him, "I'm going to counter you" or whatever, which President Bush thought that Schröder had done. So that was one interesting aspect to this.

The other, as we got into the negotiations for the Security Council resolution after the president's speech during Leaders Week in September, we knew that the German ambassador, the German perm rep in New York, was undercutting the Security Council negotiations. They were on the Security Council, as the European representative.

So what would happen is that Powell would talk to Fischer, get Fischer's agreement to language for a revision of the Security Council resolution and work with that with the Russians and with the other members of the Security Council. We would then be given to understand that the German ambassador would be calling all the Nonaligned Group and rallying opposition to the language that Fischer had agreed to.

So I was in the position, then, of having to call my German counterpart, the political director, to say, "There is a big disconnect between the German foreign ministry and whatever is going from the chancellery to your ambassador in New York." We had pretty good chapter and verse about what he was doing and what he was saying, to try get them to get on one page. You can't say one thing to Powell and have your ambassador in New York do something else.

But that went on for months, to the point that at one point, eight months, maybe a year later, his name was floated as a possible next German ambassador to Washington. I went back to my German counterpart and said, "You really ought to put his name forward. He really did a bad job, as far as we were concerned. It may not have been anything that Fischer knew about. We kept telling you guys about it. But he is in extremely bad odor in Washington, even with people like me, for having been so dishonest about the German government instructions in New York."

Q: Were you getting any feedback? Was this on instructions, representing a point of view or was this personal, or what?

JONES: We assumed that he was getting instructions from the chancellery that were not coordinated with Fischer, that the foreign ministry was giving instructions, which is what the foreign ministry is supposed to do. They were being countermanded by the chancellery. Of course the ambassador was listening to the chancellery, not to the foreign ministry.

Q: What was your evaluation of Schröder at that time?

JONES: My sense of him was that he was focused on domestic politics, he was probably historically opposed to war, as the majority of Germans are, ever since the Second World War, that he was afraid of Putin, he was nervous about Putin, afraid of Russia, as many Germans are, not unusual. So we had not only the whole issue about Iraq and not wanting to participate and wanting to give Saddam Hussein a bye and all that kind of thing, but we had a big issue with Schröder and with Germany over everything that was going on with Russia.

We had very, very hard time getting the Germans to work with us on Russia issues, where it came to Georgia, Balkans issues, where Russia had a say either in the Security Council or in the Balkans themselves. So it was a very, very difficult situation. Now the interesting thing was that Powell and Fischer made a very big point of solidifying their relationship. They had an initial relationship, if you can call it that, when Secretary Powell was the commanding general in Frankfurt and Fischer was with Rudy the Red, in the big German opposition to the Vietnam War. Powell knew about them, of course. When Fischer became foreign minister and Powell became secretary, they talked about probably having been in Frankfurt at the same time, albeit after the heyday of Rudi the Red. It was a way of bonding for them. We got through it, our countries have grown since then. They became very close, honestly very close and talked a lot.

As Secretary Powell did with many of his foreign minister colleagues, they would often have to talk about how to manage the relationship between the two countries when the heads of state and government, respectively, weren't doing very well together.

Q: It's often the case.

JONES: Often the case, even with Jack Straw, the British foreign secretary. Secretary Powell and he often discussed not how to get Blair and Bush to get along, because they got along famously, but how to get Blair to say some of the things to Bush that Blair was saying to Straw about the U.S., that he needed to tell truth to power. Was there a way that each could persuade their leaders to have a more honest conversation about their actual beliefs?

Q: Sometimes, of course, in foreign policy and I'm sure it works in other cabinet level positions, that you can have a secretary of state trying to get his counterpart in another country to turn around and get his leader to tell our leader some hard truths. Coming from a subordinate position, it's hard to do.

JONES: One of the other things that happened was not only was Secretary Powell working with foreign ministers to tell truth to power to Bush, but as he was getting complaint after complaint, really aggressive complaints, about U.S. policies of various kinds from his European counterparts. He would go into the Oval Office or into a principals committee meeting or whatever and explain that there was a really big problem with x or y, whatever it was, it wasn't just Iraq.

The other people sitting at the table, Secretary Rumsfeld, Vice President Cheney, National Security Advisor Rice, others, would say, "Oh, we haven't heard any such thing from our counterparts." So Powell at one point came back to me and said, "There I am, standing alone, hand wringing on behalf of all these guys. The defense ministers aren't calling Rumsfeld. Get this fixed, Jones," he would say to me.

So I called up my political director counterparts and said, "Hey, come on, you guys! What's going on here?"

They said, "Oh, my God!" and they checked. Several of them came back to me and said, well, their defense minister actually had tried to talk to Cheney and Cheney wouldn't take the calls. So I said, "Okay, from now on, I need chapter and verse. Find out each time your defense minister has tried to call Rumsfeld or Cheney or anybody and hasn't had a call returned. I need to know that, so that the next time Powell is confronted in the Oval Office by Rumsfeld or Cheney or Rice saying, 'Oh, we haven't heard that from our counterparts' he can say, 'Yeah, you haven't heard it, because you won't take their calls' and he needs to know date and time."

That's what we did. They would feed that back to me and I'd give it to Powell. I don't know that it changed very much, but the neocons had a very interesting way to deal with people. Cheney was perfect at it, Bolton was good at it, Rumsfeld was. They were so aggressive in terms of their language that people wouldn't talk to them. They wouldn't come back at them. They'd just say, "Oh, my God, you can't talk to that guy" and they'd just walk away.

So they actually had a way of never hearing the complaints. President Bush did the same thing and so did President Putin. He knew how to do that, too.

Q: Let's talk about the relationship, leading up to Iraq, with Chirac and with France.

JONES: De Villepin was Chirac's foreign minister. Secretary Powell had done what the French and the Germans and the Spanish and the Belgians and the British and others had wanted, was to say, "Okay, we're going to negotiate a Security Council resolution." They did actually work with Powell to come up with the language that they needed in order to say, "Okay, we can participate." It was an extremely difficult negotiation. The most difficult people to negotiate with were de Villepin, the French official and Ivanov, the Russian. In both cases, probably Ivanov more than de Villepin, Powell worked with them to get them to tell him what their politics were that they needed to address.

He would constantly say, especially to Igor Ivanov, "Don't dicker with me over the words. Tell me what your problem is, what your philosophical, political problem is you're trying to address here and let me help you with the words. I'll tell you what my political problem is. I've got Cheney back there biting me in the ankle at all times about the language, Rumsfeld to a lesser degree. So I have political problems that I need to deal with. But I need to understand yours to figure out how we can parse this, so we can get to

Security Council resolution language that everybody can agree to, even though we all know we're going to interpret it slightly differently, because that's the nature of Security Council resolutions."

So he worked and worked and worked. It was late November, as I remember it, before we actually got the first Security Council resolution on Iraq. Our delegation to the UN in New York and Bill Wood, who was acting assistant secretary for international organizations, did a lot of the early negotiations and the intermediate negotiations. But Powell was the one who actually did a tremendous amount of negotiating himself, on the phone, in person, whatever.

Powell worked hard to get the kind of resolution that would keep the alliance together. That was his primary goal, to try to retain some allies for the United States, despite the efforts by Bush and Cheney to blow off every friend and ally we ever had.

Q: Were you conveying to your counterparts and all sort of the dirty linen, Cheney, well you had to,

JONES: In the following respect: I would say to them something along these lines: "I know you know that the State Department is in a persistent battle with the other foreign affairs agencies, particularly with the Pentagon and with the White House, about foreign policy issues. We are the ones trying to retain some kind of relationship. But in order for us to fight them, we need you to speak up about the issues that you're most concerned about. You can't just tell Powell what the problem is. You've got to have the defense ministers telling Rumsfeld. You've got to have your national security advisors telling Rice. It can't just be all of us soft power kind of people trying to keep this together."

We talked about it all the time. Every single conversation I had with them was, "You've got to understand what's going on back here. I need you to help in the following respect: if you can give us this kind of language, maybe we can get back to" whatever it was.

Q: We know Rumsfeld, being a neocon to his eyeteeth, but what about Condoleezza Rice? She would seem to be more open. Was she getting things from other national security advisors, the equivalent and was she a passer on?

JONES: I don't actually know too much about it. I know that she did take calls from other national security advisors, particularly the French, to a degree the Germans, certainly the British. What I don't know is how tough they were with her. I don't know if they were really giving her the unvarnished truth about just how much they hated what the U.S. was doing.

I think I mentioned this earlier, I saw this happen with heads of state and government. They'd get in front of Bush and they wouldn't say anything about what they didn't like about our repudiation of the Kyoto Treaty. Schröder never brought it up, the first meeting he had with Bush, even though all of Europe was protesting that the U.S. had walked

away so vividly from the climate change effort. It was stunning. It was a real insight to me just how timid other governments are in the face of the United States at those very senior level.

One of the few people, I think the only person, who I know spoke truth to power was when the NATO Secretary General, George Robertson, was very clear with Bush about just how upset NATO members were with the Iraq policy.

There were repercussions. I heard about it immediately from the NSC, "Oh, my God, can you believe he was so outrageous?"

I said, "All he's doing was telling the truth. Finally, someone has, pardon me, the balls to tell the truth in the Oval Office, from another country. Secretary Powell has been trying to tell him, with as much vivid description as possible, but his word isn't sufficient. The president has to hear it from others and finally heard it from George Robertson."

Q: Well, let's go back to Chirac and France. How did that—

JONES: Okay, so finally Powell negotiates the Security Council resolution in November. The way it ends is that, what he had to agree to was language that seemed to require a second Security Council resolution before actual war in Iraq was authorized by the Security Council. The U.S. chose to interpret that language as authorizing but not requiring a second Security Council revolution That was persistent fight, then, through the rest of November and December and January, early January.

The Secretary was in New York for a meeting called by the French in January . The meeting was to discuss terrorism, it was on Martin Luther King Day, which was a day off here. Powell, as you can imagine, had a lot of engagements on Martin Luther King Day, as he always did, to participate in various events.

He tried to turn it down the French request for this meeting, tried to say, "We don't really need another meeting in New York." De Villepin insisted and said, "We're not going to talk about Iraq, we're going to talk about the global war on terrorism." At that point Powell said, "Okay. I guess I better go." I went with him on that one.

The meeting was about the global war on terrorism, it was a perfectly reasonable meeting about what the international community could do, et cetera. Powell came out of the Security Council and as always there was a press stakeout. He went to describe the discussion, no problem, went off, left, went off to the lunch being hosted by the Secretary General.

Villepin stepped up to the microphones after Powell had left. He said something along the lines of "Yes, we discussed the global war on terrorism, but what I'm really here to tell you is that it is absolutely required that there be a second Security Council resolution. France is absolutely opposed to war on Iraq."

It came across as a very sharp, very clear repudiation of what Powell had just said and of what the agreed understanding was about the next Security Council resolution. Powell was livid. He felt he had been lied to by Villepin about what the purpose of the meeting in New York was, that he had been completely undercut. The phones were ringing from the White House, "What the hell are you doing in New York? Why did this happen?"

From then on Powell had an extremely difficult relationship with Villepin. He basically took him to the woodshed later, which is a different story later on.

But that set the stage for France basically saying, "We're going to fight you on a second Security Council resolution." The U.S. didn't want one. The British, Blair insisted he had to have a second Security Council resolution in order to participate, that parliament required a second Security Council resolution. Various of the other Europeans who wanted to participate, the Danes, the Dutch, the Poles, others, said, "Yes, yes, it's—

Q: Was this a stalling tactic, hoping

JONES: Yes. Powell nevertheless went ahead and tried to get a second Security Council resolution. He really, really worked it hard. It went back and forth and back and forth. The assistant secretary for Africa went to Africa all the time and talked to various of the African presidents and heads of government, talked to their witch doctors, to make sure that they voted with the U.S.,. In the end it became clear that we could not get the votes that we needed for the second Security Council resolution.

This was after weeks of negotiating. Powell had to go to Jack Straw finally and say, "You know, Jack, I don't think I can get the second Security Council resolution that Blair needs. I'm really sorry, but if we put it to a vote, it will go down and we don't think we should do that, because the vote count we have right now is that we aren't going to win." Jack Straw went to Blair. Blair said, "Okay." He then made a speech in parliament which was quite famous, actually, at the time, where he had to basically turn his parliament around to get permission to participate with the U.S. in the Iraq War, this was now in February. He succeeded, in spite of not the second Security Council resolution.

Germany wasn't on the Security Council anymore by then, it would have gone off, and we would have had new countries on the Council. But the German ambassador was still doing nasty things in New York to rally the troops against the second resolution.

So at that point the antipathy in the Pentagon towards France and from the Office of the Vice President was tremendous. Instructions went out from the Pentagon, "Stop all cooperation with France. Stop all meetings with the French military." That's when French fries became "freedom fries." There was just a huge uproar all over the United States about "it's not French toast, it's freedom toast."

The French ambassador kept calling me to say, "This is outrageous" and I said, "I know it is. I'm sorry. However, what Villepin did to the Secretary Powell is completely unacceptable. You all have to know that Powell is up against it, in terms of what he's trying to get done here. What Villepin did to undercut him undercut every possibility that we ever had to negotiate an end to the Iraq business without going to war. Frankly, by the way, American attitudes about France and the United States is your problem, not my problem. My problem is French attitudes in France about the United States. Your PR outreach in the United States is your issue. I cannot proselytize in the United States on behalf of France. I work for the American taxpayer, not for the French taxpayer."

Q: What was your judgment, at the time, of Villepin? Was he just a sneaky operator?

JONES: He was highly political. He was in it for his political future.

Q: He was later prime minister.

JONES: Yes, he was later prime minister, but then first he became interior minister. He was considered by many of us to be a media hound. He was constantly publishing books, we don't think he actually wrote them, about French history and French grandeur and French this and French that. He came across to us as not a serious person, frankly.

Q: What about the British connection, because Blair and Clinton had gotten on so well that it would seem Blair and Bush wouldn't, but then—

JONES: We wondered about this at the beginning of the administration. What happened was Blair was invited to Camp David very early on and the story that's told and I believe it is that prayed together, Blair and Bush and that's what solidified the relationship.

It was that simple. Blair was able to talk in ways that appealed to Bush, very steadfast ally in the end, et cetera.

Q: Was Powell able to use Blair to get some home truths in to Bush, or not?

JONES: Certainly that was the effort. It was a very, very strong effort on the part of both Secretary Powell and Foreign Secretary Jack Straw. How much that succeeded I can't honestly tell you. I believe Blair tried, he would have tried, but he could have been so soft spoken or so gentle about it that it fell on deaf ears or it wasn't clearly understood.

We saw interesting evidence of it much later, towards the end of my time as assistant secretary, when there was a meeting in Ireland between Bush and Blair, when the British were in the chair of the EU. We went there also to celebrate an agreement on Northern Ireland which Richard Haas negotiated. In his remarks President Bush said that he knew how hard Prime Minister Blair had worked on the Northern Ireland agreement and that he, Bush, who was just about to go to Sharm el-Sheikh, and was going to work just as hard to get a Middle East agreement.

That indicated two things to me. One, that Blair had gotten through to Bush just how hard he had worked on this and it wasn't an easy thing. But my other thought was, "There's no way that Bush is going to work as hard as Blair worked." He just doesn't have the time to work that hard on the Middle East.

Q: We're still talking about Iraq. How did you look upon the Bush-Cheney equation?

JONES: My sense at the time was, whether or not it's valid, was that Cheney was calling the shots, that occasionally Bush stepped in, such as when Bush actually said, "Yes, we're going to the UN for a Security Council resolution on Iraq," which was against Cheney's position. But the juggernaut effort to go to war against Iraq was being pushed extremely hard by Cheney and to a degree by Rumsfeld. Rice was just along for the ride, she thought, okay, fine, but wasn't prepared to make an independent judgment.

Q: Did you have a relationship with Rice?

JONES: No, not really. I worked for her for one month at the end of my four years. She knew who I was, I was in all the meetings, that sort of thing. But I wouldn't say I had any kind of relationship with her at all, no. I didn't try to. It wasn't my place to. It was all through Dan.

Q: It was possible that since she was very much a Soviet hand, you might have had some connection.

JONES: Nothing like that, no. In fact, I completely disagreed with her on Russia. Powell and I both did. She was way, way, too soft.

Q: Well, let's talk about the Russians, the Russian equation and some of the people there. How was this going?

JONES: My attitude about Rice developed after the Iraq War started, as we got into issues such as the Rose Revolution in Georgia, the Orange Revolution in the Ukraine, as Putin began to reduce democracy, as Putin decided to appoint governors rather than have them elected. It became clear to me as we were developing policies in the State Department in concert with our embassy in Moscow and with the Europeans to push back on a lot of this, that we had a very difficult time with Rice and with her Russia guy at the NSC to do very much at all.

They were of the view that we shouldn't push the Russians, that they needed more understanding, that this was all very difficult for them, that silence was a better tactic. Whereas my view was, as much as I agreed that we didn't want to do a lot of this in public, that we nevertheless need to push back very hard in private. We needed to do it with one voice, that it couldn't be just the embassy in Moscow, me with my Russian

counterpart, Secretary Powell with his Russian counterpart, the foreign minister, that it had to be coming from the White House as well.

The irony is that this is the only issue on which Cheney agreed with the State Department, that we needed to push back on the Russians. What we did disagree on was how to do it. He would make speeches that were very aggressive, whereas my view was that we should be extremely aggressive, but in private, very aggressive in private, but go easy in public, because we knew that "face" was such an issue with Russians.

My mantra always was I want to have a conversation that allows a second conversation and a third conversation in order to make some progress. I don't want to have a public statement that makes us feel good, but ends the conversation with the Russians.

Q: Did you feel that Bush, we talked about other foreign leaders coming and speaking very softly to the president of the United States. How about Bush, particularly with the Russians? Did he speak forcefully? Did you get any feel for him? And at this level, does anything happen?

JONES: Frankly, President Bush behaved exactly the same way as the foreign leaders. He was lame, in the face of others. Even with somebody like Schröder he wouldn't really say anything that was direct, or complain about his positions, or anything like that.

There was one important conversation with President Putin. I was not there but, of course, saw the report of it, in which we actually got the president to say to Putin, "We're concerned about the direction that democracy is taking in Russia, the direction you're leading the country, in terms of democracy, such as the move to appoint governors rather than have them elected."

Putin pushed back very hard, citing all kinds of instances where this European country and that European country appoints governors. Of course it's a totally different issue with them, but pushed back very hard.

My frustration always was we could never get the president briefed up enough to have what I always called the second sentence, the pushback sentence. Instead, rather than say, "President Putin, I completely disagree. Those examples are not the same as the situation in Russia. The reason it's important that Russians elect their governors is x and y." His response instead was to say, "Gee, you know, you make some interesting points. I wish I could appoint my governors, too."

At that point, nothing that Powell said about anything along the lines of "Gee, we're concerned about the direction democracy is taking" or human rights or whatever it is, it was no longer credible.

Q: It sounds like these heads of state meetings ended up as more social events than anything else.

JONES: I wouldn't say that they were social. What they do is they go through a list of agenda items that they've agreed to ahead of time. They each say their piece, they make their points, but they don't actually get into a give and take conversation.

Not with Bush, because he didn't know the issues well enough to have a comeback. He didn't ever know the second sentence, as I say. Whenever there was a lull in a conversation with a head of state or government, President Bush's line, without exception, in any conversation that I participated in, was, "So, how's your economy?" Every time, that was his fallback. Then whoever he was talking to would go on for twenty minutes on their economy and the meeting's over. Very frustrating.

Q: Did you get feel from people who were dealing with this about how Clinton handled these meetings?

JONES: I participated only in very few of those, right at the beginning, because I was working for Secretary Christopher. That was my opportunity to participate, at that point. The only other time that I participated in a few meetings with President Clinton was at Camp David II, when I was PDAS in NEA.

President Clinton had a second sentence, third, fourth and fifth, nine other paragraphs. He could engage, he knew the issues, he argued back, he was forceful, he was engaging. It was night and day to President Bush, night and day.

Q: Was this intellectual?

JONES: Absolutely, it was intellectual, it connoted curiosity. President Bush was never curious about anything. He could care less about any of these issues, that was my belief. He just wanted to get through it and wanted to leave the hard work for everybody else.

Okay, fine and that's fair, to a point. He should not be negotiating details of the Middle East peace process. That's something that the foreign ministers, the secretary of state, should do, Dennis Ross should do, the others. But occasionally you have to engage in these subjects. Whereas President Bush, for example, at a dinner with President Chirac, the first dinner, lovely setting, twenty of us at dinner, Dan Fried and I were the two note takers for the American side. President Chirac launches into a discussion of Lebanon. Very appropriate, there was a huge uproar in Lebanon, I've forgotten which uproar it was. Of course France has a big stake in Lebanon, big history in Lebanon. It was a social occasion, but he was interested in this. With a different American president it would have been a lively conversation.

Instead, President Chirac dominated the conversation. He went on about Lebanon, paused in order for President Bush to respond. Nobody said anything. Bush didn't say a word. It was a disaster of a dinner, as a result, from my perspective. The dinner was delicious, but

we got no work done and no engagement in any issue that mattered, no follow up possible.

Q: What does this do to the soul of a Foreign Service Officer? You strive, you get to really the top, there you are, giving advice and all and you've got a passive president?

JONES: Well, it does a couple of things. Certainly under Secretary Powell it really reinforced the importance of our jobs. It really reinforced the importance of our service and that what we do for a living is so critical.

We would say that to each other and we would say it to our foreign counterparts. "Yes, we know that our two presidents can't stand each other. My secretary of state, your foreign minister, are doing their level best to keep this relationship on track, because after these guys leave office we need to deal with these issues."

But part two of it also was, "Yes, we disagree about Iraq or we disagree about Kyoto or we disagree about the Rome Treaty, but let's talk about how we're going to collaborate in the Balkans. Let's talk about how we're going to enlarge NATO. Let's talk about how the U.S. can support the enlargement of the EU."

Because during this entire four year period when we were at loggerheads, huge demonstrations in the streets all over Europe, when the president of the United States couldn't go anywhere without gigantic security closing down entire cities, we nevertheless enlarged NATO, enlarged the EU, agreed on all kinds of things on the Balkans, solved the Macedonia problem, got very close to solving Cyprus, all kinds of things were possible, because of Secretary Powell, the leadership of the State Department and the career service.

In the end, also, with the political appointee ambassadors who were in Europe, understood completely that they had a near disaster on their hands if they did only what they heard the White House pontificate on. Many of these political appointee ambassadors who were very close to Bush, very close to Karl Rove. They told me they were, I had no doubt that they were. They would sit me down, after they had been out there for a year or two years and say, "Beth, this is a disaster in the relationship! What are we going to do about it?"

I'd say, "You need to call Karl Rove, call Bush. You can call him, more than I can!" "No, we can't do that! We're not going to do that. You need to fix it!"

I said, "We're trying, but we need your help." A lot of them were great and they really got it about how important it was to do the outreach and say, "Yes, we know we disagree on Kyoto but the United States still believes in conservation" or whatever it was.

Q: Did you find with Bush and his supporters and obviously Cheney and all a major aversion to going to Europe, because if you're going to a place where people are going to be throwing mud at you, you don't want to do?

JONES: No, not at all, because they knew they were right. If there were demonstrations in the streets in Europe, the hell with them, they were wrong. So if they want to demonstrate, fine, but we know we're right.

We don't care what the public thinks. We know that we can talk to Aznar or we can talk to Berlusconi or we can talk to Blair or whoever and we're right. So there was no sense of maybe there's an issue we should think about here. It was completely closed off, in terms of receptivity to any idea that there might be a way to manage this in a better way.

Q: Did you see a change in Powell? You think he understood what he was getting into when he got the job?

JONES: I am certain that when he was selected and appointed as secretary of state he didn't realize, nor could he have, just how adamant Cheney and Rumsfeld and others were going to be about some of these issues. The first, I think, he realized that it was going to be tough sledding, well, there were a couple of times.

One big time was the repudiation of Kyoto that happened without reference to the State Department, when Congress sent a letter to the White House, the White House replied to the letter, Cheney replied to the letter, saying, "We are going to repudiate the Kyoto Treaty," without checking, without a single reference to the State Department, never mind that Kyoto is in a foreign country. "Well, this is a domestic issue." No, it's not. That was number one.

Number two, the other incident where I know that he and Rich Armitage and Marc Grossman knew that they were going to have a tough time was when the U.S. plane collided and had to make an emergency landing in China. There was very strong aversion on the part of Cheney and Rumsfeld to negotiating with the Chinese, to trying to sort this out in any way, to trying to figure out how to get the crew members and the plane released.

When agreement was finally reached, I remember hearing that the Pentagon and Office of the Vice President were completely upset that we had "given in" to the Chinese in some way. Powell and Armitage came up with some extremely artful language that was an apology but not really. It was one of those perfect diplomatic agreements that you need to have in order to sort something like this out. They just got ahead of the neocons.

I think after that whole thing, they knew they were going to have a problem, but it didn't get to be as serious a problem as it did when we got to the Rome Treaty with Article 98, and when we got to 9/11 and North Korea. There's the North Korea problem in there, too.

Q: Within the press corps, particularly the permanent press corps assigned to the State Department and maybe some columnists, were those who were calling it right, that you feel, in a way, could be, used, again, is the wrong term, but to try to get the word of what you're trying to do out?

JONES: I'm not sure I know. I didn't really focus on that kind of thing. Certainly when I got calls from the media -- and I always checked with Richard Boucher about should I be talking or not -- certainly I would be very clear trying to explain what we were trying to do, including "We've got to keep these relationships alive, so that we've got something to work with when these guys are out of office."

I know just from overhearing or it being mentioned in the senior staff meeting that there was a lot of toing and froing between the State Department press office and the White House press office about who could be on the Sunday talk shows. There were times when I would hear, "Oh, the White House wants Powell in the freezer, doesn't want Powell talking, can't have the State Department out there."

There was a particular point when Powell was on the cover of *Time* magazine and the headline was "Where's Powell gone?" We were all horrified, because we knew that we were having a really hard time with the Office of the Vice President, the White House and the Pentagon. We knew that Powell was really having a difficult time, having been undercut on North Korea, the Middle East and these other things. The story was all about how everybody was so high on him when he came in and now he can't do anything. He's been undercut. He hasn't got enough power. He's not part of the in crowd in the administration, et cetera.

When the article came out, with Powell on the magazine cover, the very first day, at the senior staff meeting, at the end of the staff meeting, everybody was about to leave. Secretary Powell said, "Oh, by the way, I have something to add" and he held up the *Time* magazine and he said, "You probably haven't seen this yet, but let me tell you what this is. I've been around Washington a really long time. I know how personal politics works in this town. I know that sometimes you're up and sometimes you're down, but you're never down for that long and you're never up for that long. And when we have cover stories like this it's part of the deal, we take our lumps and we take our kudos and we just keep marching on. Because we know that we're doing the right thing. We know that we have all the support we need from the White House. W know that everybody in this State Department is here because I chose them. That includes you, John Bolton."

Powell said it right to him. He turned to everybody else and said, "John Bolton was not thrust upon me. I chose him to be part of this team and, John, I know you will behave as part of this team. I want everybody to take a deep breath. We're not down, just because *Time* magazine says we are. We know what we're doing. We're doing the right thing. We're going to keep on doing it. I want everybody to remember that. Tell the troops this and let's move."

I took down what he said verbatim and I went right down to my EUR staff meeting with all my country directors and said, "Okay, boys and girls, here's the word from on high. This is how we're going to behave. We know what we're doing. We're doing it right. We've got great leadership and we're going to keep marching on, because we know what the right thing to do is." It was great, a good lesson.

Q: Well, it's when you have somebody who's used to dealing with the troops.

JONES: That's right, when you have great leadership. You don't let something like that go by and let everybody wring their hands.

Q: How about the Rome Treaty and Kyoto?

JONES: The problem with the Rome Treaty was the same problem that the Clinton Administration had identified, which was that the war crimes tribunal the Rome Treaty set up had no way for any government or international organization to reach in to provide political guidance to the tribunal, to the judges once they were selected, et cetera. Whereas any of the tribunals set up previously, whether it was the Hague Tribunal on the Balkans or Rwanda Tribunals on the genocide there, every so often the UN Security Council could vote to continue or vote to change who the judge was, the primary justice It could vote to change the precepts of the tribunals, for instance.

Whereas with the Rome Treaty there was no way, once it was set up, for anybody, the UN, any country, nobody, could reach in. What this meant was that American citizens and American troops could come under the jurisdiction of the Rome Treaty, could be prosecuted under the Rome Treaty, without any reference to the U.S. constitution or to the U.S. courts or to the U.S. government. That was unacceptable to the Clinton Administration, unacceptable to Congress, unacceptable to the Bush Administration.

There was really no change in the attitude about it. The Clinton Administration had tried to negotiate a way to reach in and failed to be able to do that. Even though Clinton had signed it as a measure of "Yes, we believe that there should be an international tribunal against genocide or against war crimes, but the way this treaty is written we can't ratify it."

By the Bush Administration "unsigning" it, it gave the impression that we thought it was okay to engage in war crimes and it was okay to engage in genocide.

In addition, a law had been passed by Congress that any country who was not a member of NATO who did not sign an Article 98 agreement by x date would lose any U.S. assistance. This was particularly difficult for me, because I had so many countries, Baltic States, Central Europeans, others, who were hoping to become members of NATO, weren't members of NATO yet. We had huge assistance programs helping them in order to become members of NATO. If they didn't sign Article 98 agreements they were going to be stripped of their assistance.

In the meantime, they, of course, most of them, also wanted to be members of the EU. Some of them already were members of the EU and were forbidden by the EU to sign Article 98 agreements. There was this huge donnybrook with Europe about NATO and about signing the Article 98 agreements. We were disadvantaging ourselves in wanting to upgrade the capabilities of NATO aspirants through this requirement to sign Article 98 agreements.

I argued that if they didn't sign the Article 98 agreement in time, we should give them a bye, or we should give them a waiver of this requirement that they lose assistance. Basically, I lost the fight. It was awful that the NATO aspirants were going to lose their assistance. I was very surprised that I lost the fight, because I knew that Marc Grossman and others really didn't want to have this kind of fight with the NATO aspirants. But I lost it. It's now in Bolton's book, I'm told, I haven't read the book, as his big win. Of course, we know now that we were completely correct that it's very difficult to prosecute contractors in the United States for war crimes. We saw that with Abu Ghraib. Contractors have not been prosecuted for those kinds of criminal acts. They're just now finding a way to prosecute some of them. It was exactly right to be skeptical of this contention by Bolton that U.S. law was sufficient in order to protect against war crimes and genocide.

But that was only one of the many fights I had with Bolton, one of a variety of issues.

Q: Did Bolton have a committed staff or was Bolton a one person operation?

JONES: He had a committed staff. He had a few people on his staff who were as difficult as he, very nasty. At one point he was so angry at me he threw things at me, in front of a lot of other people, Bolton did. At another point we were arguing in front of the Secretary, who told us to take it outside, which we did. Bolton really started screaming at me, which the Secretary heard. It was over the draft of the Moscow Treaty, the replacement for the ABM Treaty. He was awful, but I felt strongly enough about these issues that I did fight him. I wouldn't give in to him. I didn't always win. Sometimes I did.

Q: In getting into a fight over issues with the vice president, with Bolton, who had strong ties in Congress and all that, did you find that your position was being weakened, just as a Foreign Service Officer, or was Powell your shield and spear?

JONES: Secretary Powell, Rich Armitage, Grant Green and Marc Grossman were our shield. Every time I got into a fight with Bolton it actually strengthened my hand in the building and with others in the administration, frankly, who were just as eager to get into this fight but couldn't. For example, the Joint Staff, could never get into these fights, even though they agreed with us completely.

But we had the feeling every day we were safe and secure inside our building, thanks to Secretary Powell and Rich Armitage and Grant Green and Marc Grossman. They completely protected us.

We protected them, too. We fought hard for them. There was a very strong feeling that we were as one in the building. Even when I had issues with the human rights bureau or with the religious freedom people or with whoever else it might be, it was a friendly fight, compared to the war that we were having with the Pentagon.

Q: Let's go up to Secretary Powell's going before the United Nations. I remember I listened to it and I was sitting with Robert Strauss in his office, I'd been interviewing him. We just stopped the interview and listened, fascinated.

What was the lead up and how his speech went and how it played?

JONES: Here's how it developed: it was clear several weeks before that the vice president wanted him to make a speech to the UN that rallied the troops, rallied the countries for war in Iraq. I think Secretary Powell had a choice at that point. He knows he had a choice at that point, I believe, whether to do this or not.

The story I heard was that it had even been put to him by Cheney, "You're way up in the polls. Let's use some of that capital you've got, some of that political capital, put it to good use for the president."

Secretary Powell believed that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction, we all did. Several of us were concerned that the intel we were seeing was the same intel I had seen when I was principal deputy assistant secretary in the Near East bureau three years before. It was the identical information. We thought, "Gee, isn't there anything new that reconfirms this kind of thing?" But there wasn't. So that was the one part of it that we were a little bit nervous about.

However, we also knew from scuttlebutt in the hallway, that the text for Powell's presentation had already been written by Scooter Libby and the guys in the Office of the Vice President. It had been sent over to Powell. We heard in the hallways, that it was a pile of junk, that it was full of unsubstantiated intelligence. It was way over the top, really way over the top in terms of Saddam Hussein's participation in 9/11, responsibility for 9/11.

So Powell turned the text over to Wilkerson, his chief of staff, Larry Wilkerson, former colonel and said, "Go to the CIA, scrub this thing, get rid of all the garbage. Everything I say in here I want George Tenet to personally tell me he knows to be a fact, that he's checked it, that he's got several sources, et cetera." And, again, from the stories that I heard, some of it directly, was that Wilkerson spent day and night over there for a couple weeks going through all this stuff, getting rid of a huge amount of the nonsense from the Office of the Vice President (OVP).

OVP kept trying to engage and sometimes tried to participate in these sessions. My understanding was at the time that Powell basically said, "Look, you want me to give this speech, I'm going to give it. But I'm going to give a speech that I believe in. So I'm rewriting it and I'm going to show it to you when I'm ready to show it to you." Because there was a period of time I think that Scooter Libby and others were over at the CIA as well arguing to keep stuff in that even the CIA said was garbage and couldn't be substantiated, should be out.

I also noticed from the scheduling people that Powell spent a lot of time over there himself, particularly towards the end, to have George Tenet look him in the eye and say, "I know this to be the truth," especially when he went through some of the things that now we know are not true.

So the bottom line is that I firmly believe that Secretary Powell did everything in his power, he went way beyond what he should have had to do in order to make sure that every single thing he said was true, had been substantiated, every way from Sunday.

I went with him on that trip because so many members of the Security Council were Europeans. I was one of the people sitting behind him at the Security Council meeting that day. He also insisted that George Tenet go with him, to demonstrate that George Tenet, the Director of Central Intelligence, had a part in this. His physical presence that day was a way to signal substantiation of the intelligence that Powell was explaining.

Secretary Powell was very persuasive, no question about it. Everybody says he was very persuasive. It worked, Cheney's idea that Powell should do this worked, no question about it.

I also happened to be, this is jumping ahead, traveling with Secretary Powell on very small plane going to New York sometime later when he got the first word that some of this information he had used in the speech was not true, when it first came out that Curveball was not telling the truth, had made all this stuff up. A lot of it was coming from Chalabi's people. It was all fabricated in order to get the U.S. into the war. Secretary Powell was extremely, extremely unhappy that he had been snookered like this by George Tenet and by Cheney.

Q: How was Tenet viewed, before the other side came out? Was Tenet viewed as a solid intelligence operator, or not?

JONES: There were two categories of people that I knew of who had views of Tenet. One was the Seventh Floor of my building, who liked him a lot and collaborated with him openly and well. They had a very good relationship. They told each other the truth. So that this had happened, this Curveball thing had happened and George Tenet hadn't been level….

Q: Curveball, the?

JONES: German source.

Q: The major source of much of this information.

JONES: A German source where there is controversy about whether the Germans had really warned us that he wasn't a very good source.

Then there were people in the CIA who were awfully concerned that George Tenet was a bit too political for them, that he'd departed from his intelligence roots a bit too much. They worried that he wanted too much to be welcome in the Oval Office and wanted too much to be a pal of the president's. They were worried about that.

That's turned out to be what happened. That worry was a valid one, it turns out.

Q: You came away from the Powell preparation and speech with a positive feeling?

JONES: I did, because I knew that Secretary Powell had done everything he possibly could have, way, way beyond what a lot of other people would have done, to be absolutely certain, to get George Tenet to tell him eye to eye that what he was asking Powell to say was absolutely true and could absolutely be substantiated. Powell insisted to have the other people in the room who could substantiate that this piece of intelligence came from this source and this source was a good source and that it was substantiated by a second, et cetera.

So when people like Tyler Drumheller, who I knew very well, say that he tried to get word to Tenet that Curveball was bad and all that, I think that's very self-serving on Tyler's part. He could have called me. He said he couldn't get the word to Tenet. He could have called me to say, "Get the word to Powell." I talked to Tyler once a week, if not more often. So I don't respect Tyler for that. That just was an overstatement of his effort to get the truth out before the speech was made.

Q: We had a hell of a lot of troops, turned out to be not enough, but we had people sitting out in the desert or something for too long. Was this beginning to weigh heavily, what are we going to do with these troops?

JONES: The troops issue was a really important one, actually. There are a lot of parts to this story, a lot of which I was involved in because there was a very big effort to get the Fourth Infantry Division (4th ID) into northern Iraq through Turkey, which was my responsibility. Why not tell that story first, because it leads to answering your question, which is exactly the question?

In the summer and the fall of 2002, Turkey was leading up to elections. The Cyprus negotiations were very much under way. In the early fall, about the time of the UN

Security Council meeting, at the beginning of the meetings, the religious party in Turkey won the elections. A man named Erdogan, who led the party, was actually under indictment, so that he could not actually lead the government as prime minister ye. The fellow who became the foreign minister was the chief political actor in Turkey.

During this period, the Office of the Vice President and Wolfowitz at the Pentagon were insisting on demarche after demarche after demarche, instructions, representations to the Turks, through Embassy Ankara, that they give permission for the 4th ID to go through Turkey. We at the State Department kept saying, of course we were very much touch with our ambassador in Ankara, Bob Pearson, who said, "Hello, guys, there is no real government here. Yes, I can sit down with the acting foreign minister or the acting defense minister or the army chief of staff and say, 'We want the troops to come through.,' But there's nobody here to make a political decision to say yes. So quit asking us to give this demarche." I would say to Bob Pearson, "Oh, I know, I've been trying to tell Wolfowitz this and J.D. Crouch, who works for Wolfowitz."

Q: Wolfowitz being?

JONES: The deputy secretary of defense

Q: And a neocon.

JONES: And a neocon who's very close to Cheney. People like Wolfowitz kept insisting, "Oh, I'm the best friend of Turkey in the administration, I know that they can make this decision. They're just blowing smoke."

This went on for quite a period of time, all the way through the fall, when finally Erdogan's legal situation was cleared up. Very much at the end of the year, maybe it was in January, he became prime minister. But even then he hadn't chosen a cabinet yet. It was still this very big uproar. We were still pushing hard, pushing hard, pushing hard from the Office of the Vice President for Turkey to make this decision. At one point Eric Edelman, who was the Foreign Service person working in the Office of the Vice President, called me and said, "Okay, Beth, I have a cable of instructions to dictate to you for Bob Pearson."

I said, "What are you talking about?"

He said, "The Vice President has just told me the instructions he wants Bob Pearson to deliver to Erdogan."

I said, "Come on, Eric, you know that he's not going to do this, he doesn't have a cabinet, he's not going to say yes." In any case, I finally said, "Okay, I'll do it."

Of course, every time something like this happened I would brief Powell, Armitage and Grossman. This time I said, “Okay, we’ll just send it and take care of the aftereffects later.”

So there I am taking down dictation from the vice president of the United States to send off to Bob Pearson, which I did. The day after Christmas, that same period of time, it had been agreed that Wolfowitz would go to meet with the Turks, to issue the same instructions and try to get a decision. Marc Grossman, who previously had been ambassador to Turkey, went with him, to make sure he wasn’t too ridiculous in the kinds of things he demanded.

In the meantime the Turks had said, “Okay, you want us to do this for you. We see how much money you’re giving Pakistan to side with you on the global war on terrorism. We want the same deal.” So in the midst of all of this we had Turkish delegations coming to Washington to negotiate with us what their package would be, for the military, for economic support, IMF approvals, et cetera. So there was all of this going on at the same time.

Another thing that was going on at the same time was the Cyprus negotiations, which were stuck because the Turkish Cypriots in northern Cyprus were getting instructions from the recalcitrants of the old Turkish administration saying, “Don’t agree, don’t agree, don’t agree.” We were, in the meantime, talking with the foreign ministry, we in the State Department and Bob Pearson, our ambassador and with others, saying, “Erdogan and company need to get the Turkish military to say to the Turkish Cypriots to back off their refusal to agree to some of the things that the UN negotiator, de Soto, is negotiating.” That actually worked, we actually got the Turkish military to give an instruction to the Turkish Cypriots to make an agreement. So we were actually doing very well with the Turks on the Cypriot negotiations. We were still having a big problem with the whole issue of the troops transitting Turkey to Iraq, which was much more controversial of course.

As the Turks kept saying to us, “You want us to agree that troops should stage in Turkey to go into Iraq when you keep telling us the U.S. hasn’t even made a decision to go to war with Iraq. Yet you’re asking us to make the decision before you actually do.” It was actually a very good point.

The other thing that was going on with Turkey was that at the same time the EU was deciding at their Copenhagen summit in December whether or not to give Turkey approval for the next step of EU enlargement. The Turks had to accomplish certain things for the EU, such as Kurdish language television and radio, such as a couple of human rights reforms. Erdogan’s party had actually passed a huge package of very progressive legislation which spoke to virtually all of the EU demands.

So there we basically had this incredible perfect storm of issues with the Turks: Cypriot negotiations where we needed the Turks to be more forthcoming, which they did; the EU

negotiations, where we really were pressing the Turks to comply with what the EU wanted and we were pressing the EU to say, "Okay, if the Turks do this, you've got to give them the next step. You can't just say, oh, well, that's not good enough."

Even though they were passing the right kind of legislation, the Turks were saying that "The EU's being so mean to us, maybe we won't take 'Yes' for an answer." So I was beating up on my Turkish counterparts in the Turkish foreign ministry and others, saying "Take yes for answer, for God's sake, if the EU summit says 'Yes,' even with a couple of little conditions, say 'Yes,' work with that. Don't get on your high horse like you usually do as Turks and say you won't accept their conditions. Conditions can always be worked out over time."

The bottom line was we moved forward on Cyprus, we moved forward on Turkey's EU membership. We were still stuck on the troops issue when Wolfowitz and Grossman went to Turkey over Christmas. They didn't get anywhere, either. Wolfowitz hit a blank wall just like everybody else had. He couldn't believe that he couldn't make it work with the Turks. In the meantime we had actually made some concessions and agreements with the Turks to give them the kind of financial package that they needed. In the meantime the Turkish economy is going down the tubes, banks are failing, there are corruption charges. It's a big disaster. So the U.S. package was quite a good one. It shored up the Turkish economy to a very great degree.

We moved forward into March, this is after the first Security Council resolution, after it was agreed there would not be a second Security Council resolution on Iraq. Finally Erdogan was prime minister, finally he had a cabinet and he finally says, "Okay, now I can put the vote to the Turkish parliament about whether to allow the 4th ID into Turkey to go into Iraq."

In the meantime, the 4th ID is out in the Mediterranean, circling, in ships, for weeks and weeks and weeks at a time, while we are negotiating status of forces agreements and all that kind of thing. They take the troop transit issue to the Turkish parliament, they're convinced they have the votes, but because they're such a new government, what they forgot to do was check what the law required.

This was on a Saturday. When I first heard from Bob Pearson about the vote, he said, "The Turkish parliament has approved." I called Powell, told him. Pearson called me back in about 45 minutes and said, "What they forgot was that because there were 13 absences, that those actually count as negative votes, so the measure did not pass." It didn't pass, not because the Erdogan government didn't want it to, but because the Erdogan government was so new it didn't understand that it needed to make sure that all of its guys were there to vote for the troops to go through. So in the end the 4th ID did not go through Turkey. I think it eventually went through southern Iraq.

But all through this entire period Tommy Franks, who was the Central Command commander, based in Tampa (he eventually moved out to the Gulf) had been calling me

to say, “Beth, can you please invite me for a conversation in your office about some of the NATO issues that we need to talk about. Let’s discuss how to get the troops through Turkey and some other things that CentCom is involved in with the various countries that have offered troops and have representatives down at CentCom. You’re my cover to go see Powell and Armitage to talk about the fact that there aren’t going to be enough troops there. I can’t get Rumsfeld to approve more troops. I need their counsel and help, but I will not get permission from Rumsfeld to go to Powell and Armitage. But I will get permission if I tell him I’m coming to see you.” He did that twice, if not three times.

Q: Did he come up?

JONES: Yes he did. He sat in my office. We had a nice conversation and I escorted him up to Powell’s office.

Q: So the government works. But this shows not only how to deal with a new Turkish government not sure how to do it, but you also have to deal with Rumsfeld, who—

JONES: Who won’t listen to the warfighting general. In the meantime Eric Shinseki, the army chief of staff, has already made his comments in Congress that x number of troops need to go. He’s basically already been fired. Tommy Franks is trying to get more troops in. I don’t know what his book says.

Q: One last question on Turkey: was there any chance of going for a second vote, once they got their act together?

JONES: That’s a good question. I can’t quite remember why we didn’t push for a second vote. One thing I should mention is throughout the entire fall and well into the war, I called Bob Pearson every morning about 5:30 am my time to get from him what was going on in Turkey that day, mostly on the troops issue, the 4th ID.

I would send an email to Secretary Powell and Rich Armitage and Marc Grossman every early morning about what Bob Pearson said was going on in Turkey. That gave them a leg up over Rumsfeld and Cheney and Rice, well, Cheney and Rice, with whom he had a phone call every morning. I did this for months and months and months. Tt was all worded very carefully, my daily early morning emails to them, because of course, I sent them from home on my personal email account to theirs.

Q: It really was Byzantine, wasn’t it? Well, with Turkey, why not? But our policy here.

JONES: This is way we had to operate, because we were up against it. As I used to say to Dan Fried, even when a principals committee meeting would agree on a policy and I couldn’t get Pentagon clearance because Rumsfeld refused to clear a cable related to that policy, “When is the president of the United States, when is Condi Rice, going to stop this second government we’ve got going here, the second presidency that’s going on, that repudiates decisions in meetings in which they were present?”

Q: Today is February 27, 2009. You had other things going on, too. One was the Rose Revolution in Georgia. What was that all about and how did we view it?

JONES: The Caucasus? We actually had a relatively similar view about the three Caucasian countries, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia and the five Central Asian countries. They became independent all at about the same time. We instituted similar assistance programs in each of the eight countries at about the same time, focused on military reform, economic reform, political reform and social reform. They each had similar relationships with the Russians, as they moved from being part of the Soviet Union to being independent states.

The difference with the Caucasus countries, of course, is that they were closer to Europe, so they had a stronger idea of a European future for themselves, including possible EU partnerships and eventually EU membership. All of these countries were already in Partnership for Peace, the NATO association, right after independence. They were all working in Partnership for Peace exercises and institutions to varying degree. A particular problem of course was between Azerbaijan and Armenia, because of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue that erupted after independence.

Q: You might explain what that was.

JONES: After independence there was a battle over a particular part of Azerbaijan called Nagorno-Karabakh, which is where Heydar Aliyev, the president of Azerbaijan, is actually from. A lot of prominent families were from that part of Azerbaijan.

Armenia attacked that area, took it over, I'm probably describing it more in a one-sided way than I should, because of provocations that led to the attack. That area has been occupied by Armenia ever since. There have been negotiations sponsored by the OSCE, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, from the time of the fighting in the nineties. The three cochairs of the negotiation are Russia, the United States and France. They call themselves the Minsk Group, it was a group that was formed in Minsk by chance, at an OSCE meeting. So the continuing confrontation, shall we say, over Nagorno-Karabakh caused difficulties between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the OSCE to the point that it was difficult for there to be joint training exercises in one country or the other to which nationals of the other country should have been included.

We were constantly trying to sort out those kinds of issues, which was a very important element of our policy. Of course, one of the big elements in the NATO Partnership for Peace is that we all work together for a common good. There's not meant to be competition at all in the Partnership for Peace, certainly not in NATO.

So after 9/11, because of the strength of the Armenia lobby in the United States, Armenia was able to prevent the assistance program that we had in place for all of the Central Asia and the Caucasus countries from being used in Azerbaijan.

But after 9/11, when it became so very important that we really ramp up our programs with all countries, particularly on counterterrorism, on border controls, on intelligence exchanges, on law enforcement exchanges, we worked extremely hard to get rid of this prohibition on assistance programs for Azerbaijan. Failing that, we tried to at least get waiver authority, so that we could use the waiver authority to begin these programs.

The Armenian lobby in the United States was dead set against any assistance going to Azerbaijan regardless. We were able to launch a very effective campaign on the Hill, in the media and, frankly, with the Armenians in Armenia to say, "So let me understand, you, Armenia, would like to assure that terrorism is allowed to run rampant in the Caucasus, because you are refusing to permit us to do any programs to close down the borders of Azerbaijan to terrorists and criminal gangs that are able to access these territories rather freely without the kind of assistance that the U.S. can provide?"

Using those kinds of talking points we were able to overcome the Armenian resistance and we were able to get waiver authority for Azerbaijan.

Q: Did the Armenian lobby, which is terribly powerful in the United States, did that play any role in this?

JONES: The Armenian lobby was very strong. They were actually more opposed to eliminating the aid prohibition or providing waivers than Armenia itself was. We generally found that to be the case, that the lobby in the United States was more aggressively against Azerbaijan or against a solution in Nagorno-Karabakh than Armenia was.

Q: This, again, is so often the case, where immigrants carry old grudges a lot longer and they're not really looking for a solution, because in many ways these old grudges give them a sense of cohesiveness around the bars of Glendale or wherever it is.

JONES: Right. The other factor that I always thought exacerbated the problem of the Armenian lobby in the United States is that there were competing Armenia lobbies in the United States. So each one was trying to gain more adherents and therefore greater funding from Armenian-Americans by trying to out radical the other. The tougher one could be against Azerbaijan or against a solution in Nagorno-Karabakh or whatever it might be, they felt the more successful they could be.

So my strategy was to get the Armenians in Armenia to call off the dogs in Washington of the lobbies. They did. We finally were able to get waiver authority to institute, implement, some of these border controls, law enforcement, intelligence exchange, all of these kinds of programs, democracy programs, anticorruption programs, all of the things that had been completely lacking in terms of programs we were able to do in Azerbaijan and were really necessary there.

Q: Well, what were our concerns there?

JONES: We had very big concerns about terrorist organizations, criminal gangs, criminals involved in proliferation of nuclear materials, being able to smuggle material, weapons, people, trafficking of persons across the Caspian and across the Caspian through the Caucasus into Europe, into the Mediterranean and into other parts of Europe, into Turkey, wherever it might be.

The more we could erect appropriate barriers—so that people could get through who were legitimate but at least they would be checked at the borders—we felt the safer these countries would be and the safer the United States would be, particularly after 9/11 in terms of counterterrorism.

We also wanted to be able beef up the Caspian naval patrols of various countries. We had already done a big program upgrading Kazakhstan's abilities to deploy fast customs patrol boats in the Caspian. We weren't able to do the same thing with Azerbaijan because of this legal prohibition on aid. We worked very hard to get be able to institute those kinds of programs in Azerbaijan as well, to be able to go after criminal gangs and others that were involved in terrorism.

Q: Was there any opening towards solution over the disputed territory?

JONES: There were. At the beginning of the Bush Administration we got very close to an agreement, actually, between the Armenians and the Azeris in negotiations sponsored by the Minsk Group in the Florida Keys. It was led by our Minsk Group colleagues and various of my colleagues in EUR were very closely involved in that. It involved the president in the end. An agreement was actually written out for how you might solve a lot of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Right of return and internally displaced persons issues were sorted out, various programs were to be funded. But in the end both leaders went home and hadn't really done enough groundwork at home. It foundered on "Oh, public opinion won't let us do this." In other words, they didn't have the political will to do what was necessary.

It's not as though that led, then, to fighting. It's just meant that the Minsk Group had to go back to the negotiating table with these guys and try to come up with a way to get them to lay the political work at home to permit an agreement to actually take hold. We're not there even now. That hasn't happened.

Q: And this at least to a certain extent lanced the boil, as far as they weren't fighting each other?

JONES: To an extent it did, but every time elections came up in either country, which they did periodically, this would be one of the big issues: how tough are we going to be on Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh, how tough are we going to be on Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh?

It was a constant irritant. When I'd go to visit, which I did regularly, all the conversations were about Nagorno-Karabakh, even though my agenda was to do a lot more on military, integration with the Partnership for Peace, these kinds of things, especially with Armenia. Armenia was still getting so much military assistance from Russia,. We needed to be absolutely certain that what was going on with Russia was not in contravention to the Conventional Forces in Europe agreements that had to do with how much the old Soviet forces could be in the border zone to Europe. Armenia was one of the big areas affected. That was one of the other big issues that we were constantly talking about with the Armenians.

Q: Were these countries in the OSCE?

JONES: They were definitely in the OSCE. They were all in Partnership for Peace.

Q: Partnership for Peace was a way station on the way towards NATO, wasn't it?

JONES: Well, it wasn't meant to be a way station on the way to NATO membership. The original concept of Partnership for Peace was to give these countries a way to associate with NATO without actually being members. It came to be seen very quickly by the Eastern Europeans as the track to NATO, absolutely.

But as the Eastern Europeans were using it as a track to NATO, we constantly referred to it and worked with it as not necessarily a track to NATO. We wanted to keep these other countries, who may never be interested in joining NATO, interested in participating. We didn't want them to think that somehow they were second class citizens or shouldn't be interested. We saw this as a way to expand the area of peace and security in Europe, by getting greater participation.

It worked extremely well, in the Caucasus, but especially in Central Asia. These countries were so eager to participate in international organizations of any kind, including with their military, as a way to be engaged with the rest of the world They'd been isolated from it for so long when they were part of the Soviet Union.

Some of the Central Asia countries saw the upgrading of their military as a way to take part in UN peacekeeping operations, too. Providing blue helmets (i.e. sending soldiers to participate in peacekeeping missions) is a big source of income for these countries as well. Certainly in the nineties that was a very big draw. By the time we got into the new century, some of these countries had pretty good oil and gas income, so the income from peacekeeping operations wasn't so key. But they did still want to be engaged in organizations that they considered to be a ticket to a seat at the table with the big kids, if I can put it that way.

Q: Well, how did the Russians deal with this, because, obviously, too close to NATO was too far from Russia, in a way?

JONES: Right, during this period, in 2001-02, we've talked about how the Russians behaved after 9/11 with the Central Asians. We were constantly talking with them about the fact that they were also in Partnership for Peace, that we needed to work on counterterrorism measures among all of us anyway, including through Partnership for Peace and including through other organizations. It didn't have to be exclusive to NATO or NATO associated organizations; any organizations working on counterterrorism would be a good thing.

After 9/11, in the conversations we had with them in the week after 9/11, we talked to them about our view that any country that wasn't participating in fighting terrorists, if they were giving any kind of refuge to terrorists that they would be seen as being against us. You're either with us or you're against us.

But we quickly realized, we realized immediately, that the Russians would take this as *carte blanche* to attack Georgia, which was seen as harboring terrorists out of Chechnya, through the Pankisi Gorge. In that first presentation we did with the Russians we were especially careful to say, "This does not include Georgia. We understand that there are terrorists going back and forth between Georgia and Chechnya. We are going to work with the Georgians to upgrade their military so that they can prevent these guys from coming through Georgia and so that the Georgian military can clean out the Pankisi Gorge and not allow these guys to overwinter there," which is what they were doing. But we also said, "Oh, by the way, don't forget, as we give training to Georgian border guards. Russian border guards have something to do with this, too. There are two sides to a border and the Russians are letting them through. So you can't blame all of this on the Georgians."

The Russians took that on board, in the sense that they didn't object to it at the time. But then when we came back to them not a lot later and explained to them, "Okay, here's what we are going to do with the Georgians. We're going to do a train and equip program. We're going to equip them with rifles, not much else, maybe a few vehicles. We're going to train them to operate together on a domestic basis, at home, in order to clear out the Pankisi Gorge."

The Russians then came back to us after the training. We did complete transparency with the Russians about there would be this many trainers, there were like sixty Americans. There would be this many weapons and this many troops would be trained during this period of time. We'd give them the exact dates. We'd tell them exactly which base they would be in, et cetera, which was just outside Tbilisi, not even near any Russian border. Then there were some incursions next to Abkhazia and in Abkhazia by the Russians next door to the Kodori Valley. The Georgians of course sent some of these troops over there.

Well, the Russians came back and said, "Uh, uh, you can't have those Georgian troops going over there. They're only supposed to be for the Pankisi Valley." We said, "Wait a second. You're right, we focused on the Pankisi Valley. But we said we are going to train

Georgians to be able to take control over their own territory to prevent terrorists from coming in and from establishing camps in Georgia proper. That is a safety issue, it is a security issue for Russia. You don't want to have Georgia unable to prevent these kinds of things from happening on its territory."

They insisted that this wasn't part of the deal. We said, "We're very sorry. What Georgia does with its troops inside Georgia is not your concern. That's not something that Russia gets to control." So that was the beginning of the go-around that we had with Georgia, which had repercussions eventually.

In the meantime, we were working very hard with all the Caucasus countries and the Central Asians on democracy, human rights, free media, anticorruption, et cetera.

Shevardnadze was the president of Georgia. During this period we were doing all kinds of work to help him pay for heat for people in the winter when it was very cold and the price of heating oil went up, et cetera. We had all kinds of programs to help pay for that and not let people freeze to death. Nevertheless the American electricity company that was there, AES, was not getting paid. It was not getting paid because of corruption. Mostly it was friends of Shevardnadze, including Shevardnadze's sons-in-law and other family members who owned the big factories who were getting all this electricity for free and weren't paying anybody for it.

So there was this very big corruption issue. As time went on in 2002, early 2003, parliamentary elections were coming up in Georgia in November 2003. There was a lot of concern on the part of the opposition leaders in Georgia, parliamentary leaders, opposition leaders, that they were not getting equal access to television for their campaign messages, that the federal election commission was being unfairly stacked against them, that the local election commissions were stacked against them. There were also local polls done that resulted in information that Shevardnadze's approval rating in the country was two per cent. It was incredibly low.

This was throughout the spring of 2003. It looked increasingly, after we'd done a lot of work with him over the winter of 2002-03, helping Shevardnadze, introducing social welfare programs, et cetera, it became clear that he was not taking on board what a big problem he had.

Q: At this time, Shevardnadze was a name to conjure with in the United States during the Bush I Administration. He and Baker got along. How stood this, within your bureau but also within the government, as this was developing? Was the bloom really off the rose?

JONES: It's an excellent question, because Shevardnadze had a very positive image throughout Washington, throughout the United States and in Europe, especially with the Germans. The Germans saw Shevardnadze as having been the Soviet era foreign minister who had basically worked through with them what resulted in the reunification of Germany. There was a tremendous amount of sympathy for Shevardnadze. There was a

tremendous desire on the part of the American body politic, not just the administration, but Congress and everybody else, to see if there wasn't a way that we could get Shevardnadze to understand what a big problem he had and to help him work through it, to be the statesman and do the right thing.

Q: But the problem was of his making?

JONES: The problem was of his making. There was no question about that. Nobody questioned that. Nobody thought that somehow the State Department was being mean or unfair or that the information was slanted or skewed unfairly.

So there was a very big effort on our part in the Europe Eurasia bureau to think, "Okay, what do we do? What's our game plan for getting Shevardnadze to understand what a big problem he has and to put in place a system to allow free and fair elections to take place for the parliamentary elections to take at the end of 2003 in Georgia?" The thing we came up with was, "Let's get somebody who Shevardnadze loves and trusts to be the emissary from the president of the United States to have a quiet word with him to say, 'Edvard, you've got a big problem. Here's some ways that we might be able to sort this out.'"

We had a few suggestions. Jim Baker was the main suggestion we had. That was agreed in the interagency level and he agreed to do it, former Secretary Baker.

Q: It certainly would make sense.

JONES: Absolutely. He was wonderful in agreeing to do it. We left the timing up to him. We had a few ideas about the kinds of the points he would make.

He wanted to go to Georgia basically over the Fourth of July in 2003, so we got an air force plane. A colleague from the NSC, Matt Bryza, went, I went and the Georgia desk officer, Julie Fischer, went. The three of us plus Secretary Baker went to Tbilisi. On the plane, we had a bigger confab. Secretary Baker was really wonderful. We said, "It's not just a question of talking points with Shevardnadze. We've got to rally the opposition to be united. We've got to find a way to get the opposition to Shevardnadze to agree on the way forward."

We had quite a few ideas, but Baker put it together in a way we ended up calling the Baker checklist. The Baker checklist consisted of what we hoped would be an agreement between the opposition and Shevardnadze on what would happen with the federal election commission, how would that be divided between the Shevardnadze people and opposition people, access to the media, all the issues that we knew were difficult issues leading up to the elections.

While we were in Tbilisi, Baker and the rest of us met with each of the opposition leaders, we met in a group, we met with some of them separately, we met with Shevardnadze several times, we presented the Baker checklist, we negotiated parts of it.

Basically the Baker checklist that we had developed on the plane was pretty much what was agreed by both sides. It wasn't completely agreed right away. After the Fourth of July weekend Baker asked me to stay behind and continue the negotiations with the ambassador, Dick Miles, which I did

We did end up with an agreed list signed by both groups. We met with the federal election commission. Names were put forward as to who would be on, how many representatives, what it would all mean, et cetera.

So we go forward, with this all in place. Dick Miles, who's the ambassador, presses this very hard quite successfully. In the meantime Dick has pulled together a group of ambassadors and others who were involved in democracy kinds of issues, the British, French, German ambassadors, the UNDP resident representative, the OSCE ambassador, people like that, who met on a weekly basis, if not more frequently, to check on how was it going, who should be pushing whom to do what, how was the opposition holding up their end of the bargain, is Shevardnadze holding up his end of the bargain, are there other things that we can do with the federal election commission, et cetera. So it was all very aggressive and positive.

What then happened was, the elections took place. But the elections were basically stolen by Shevardnadze and his guys. It was hard to know how much of it was actually dictated by Shevardnadze. It could have been just some of the people around him who just decided they were going to steal the election. They basically concocted a way to change the elections results from the provinces as they reported to the center.

There were OSCE monitors, there were exit polls, the U.S., the EU, the OSCE had funded a huge operation at the time of the election. With the exit polls, it was very clear immediately, the public knew that the election had been stolen. Very quickly there were people in the streets. At one point Shevardnadze went to parliament to make a speech and was shouted down. He had to be rescued by his security people because there was such an uproar in the parliament. The opposition leaders, Saakashvili in particular, were very vocal and very successful.

In the meantime, Shevardnadze is holed up in his residence. Secretary Powell was on the phone with Shevardnadze, on the phone with his Russian counterpart. He got on the phone one Friday night as things were really heating up in downtown Tbilisi. Number one, we didn't want anybody killed. We kept pushing Shevardnadze, "Make sure you don't bring out the military, don't bring out the police, don't start shooting people in the square. This should be a peaceful situation here. It needs to be sorted out, yes indeed, but let's not start shooting."

So one of the things that happened as we were working the phones, Baker is calling Shevardnadze as well. He participates even after he gets back from the Fourth of July trip.

Powell gets hold of Igor Ivanov, the Russian foreign minister, on what turns out to be a Friday night in Moscow. Ironically, he finds Igor Ivanov in a Georgian restaurant in downtown Moscow, eating dinner with Putin. Powell explains why he thinks it's very important for Ivanov, Igor Ivanov, the Russian foreign minister, also to go to Tbilisi and see if he can't be on the scene, to calm things down and help be a mediator in all of this. All through this we wanted to make sure that the Russians were part of the process. "All we're asking for Georgia is that they do what you guys did in Russia, they have a free and fair election."

The funny part of the story is that poor Igor Ivanov is at a Georgian restaurant and probably had plenty to drink on a Friday night. But he does get on a plane, he gets on a plane that night, goes to Tbilisi, goes to the parliament and sees that it's an impossible situation, really. I think he had some encounter, not a negative one, with various opposition leaders. He could see that things were going badly for Shevardnadze. He went to Shevardnadze's residence and talks him into resigning. Now whether Shevardnadze would have resigned even if Igor Ivanov hadn't gone there, nobody knows. But he then calls Colin Powell and says, "Okay, I have a statement here. Shevardnadze has resigned."

In the meantime, we have been talking among the diplomatic group and with the opposition: if it comes to resignation, what kind of outcome would follow?

We had been promoting one where Shevardnadze doesn't go to jail, his leading family members don't go to jail, that he is allowed to stay in Georgia, he doesn't have to flee. We were pushing that there is an honorable future for him in Georgia and that's agreed. Shevardnadze still lives in Tbilisi, so that's all stayed in place.

So Igor Ivanov does this, goes back to Moscow and tells everybody what's happened. I in the meantime the Rose Revolution has basically happened.

Then it becomes, okay, which one of them is going to be the president? How's this all going to work? One of the opposition leaders, Nino Burjanadze, also very well known to all of us, became the acting president for a period of time. She had been head of the parliament and that's what the constitution called for. So until there could be a presidential election, it was agreed among the opposition leaders that Saakashvili would be the one that all the opposition leaders would put forward as a presidential candidate.

Then we started a lot of the programs to go after, even more aggressively, corruption, economic reform and all the kinds of things that were very necessary. The Georgians were very aggressive about asking for considerable assistance, because they wanted to be sure to demonstrate to the population that they were different from Shevardnadze, which we completely agreed with. Dick Miles, who was the ambassador and Lynn Pascoe, who was the deputy assistant secretary, were extremely successful in working through the entire interagency process, with our assistance coordination operation in the Europe-Eurasia bureau. They were very aggressive about finding the money and getting it into the Georgia assistance program.

There were a few other things that happened. One of the leaders of one of the breakaway autonomous republics, whom Saakashvili went after, hightailed to Moscow. That was a very quick exit for him, which emboldened Saakashvili considerably at the time. So one of our big talking points from the State Department and from Dick Miles to the new Georgian leadership became "Calm down! You're not going to use the military to try to take over South Ossetia and Abkhazia. It's a much bigger issue than the autonomous region whose leader had fled. So think in terms of economic reform as a way to attract those in the breakaway regions to want to participate in the new Georgia. Stop rattling your sabers. Knock this off and work on economic reform." I tell that story just to illustrate that from the time Saakashvili came into office, he was actually inaugurated in early 2004, we had to restrain him from attacking South Ossetia. That was something he was bound and determined to do from the day he came in.

His inauguration was kind of interesting. Secretary Powell went, I was with him. Igor Ivanov went. The inauguration was held outside. Saakashvili inaugurated himself, basically, just read the articles out loud. First they played the national anthem and raised the Georgian flag, the new Georgian flag with the big cross on it. Then the next song that was played was "Ode to Joy" as right next to us the EU flag was raised, right in front of the Russian foreign minister. The rest of us were thinking, "Woooo, that's a little aggressive for the first hour of Saakashvili being in office." Again, this is just to illustrate the mindset of Saakashvili at the time. So that was the Rose Revolution. Then later in the year were the elections in Ukraine that resulted in the Orange Revolution.

Q: You were there when people were dealing with him, I'm sure you dealt with him, too, with Shevardnadze. How did you view him, at this particular point in time?

JONES: Shevardnadze I viewed as a revered, respected statesman who had played a historic role in the Soviet Union, who had courageously taken over in Georgia after some early, very difficult years, coups, countercoups, that sort of thing.

But he ran out of steam. That's the way I looked at it, as a leader. He was captured by his wife, his wife's family, his daughters' husbands, so his sons-in-law and the wife's family, which we see in many other places as well, who were very involved in business, took advantage of Shevardnadze being the president to be quite corrupt, there was no question.

Q: Makes you think of Indonesia and Suharto.

JONES: Right, one thinks of Indonesia and Suharto, one thinks of even Kyrgyzstan, same kind of thing, same thing about Kazakhstan, not so much the wife's family, but certainly the sons-in-law. With Shevardnadze, there's no question he would have known that this was going on, not least because people like me told him. We knew and he did not feel he could do anything about it. The other thing that was very unfortunate is that his wife, it turned out, had some sort of mental problems that resulted in her berating him all night long. So the poor man had no sleep. He was always tired, always exhausted. So we came

to understand that he just couldn't make a good decision, because he was so exhausted all the time. There seemed to be no way that he could get any rest from this very difficult domestic situation in which he found himself.

When it was clear that he was basically too tired to rule anymore, that he couldn't and wouldn't control any of his family and others of the big business people around Georgia, when it became time for him to go, there was no sense in the United States, in the policy group, that somehow we should make sure he got to stay on as president or anything like that. We wanted to find a graceful exit for him, where he would not be jailed, would not be prosecuted, the sins of his family would not be visited on him in some way. We wanted that he would not be held responsible for his family's misdeeds.

Q: Did the Russians ever accuse you, say "Well, he's your man?" Actually, he'd been their guy.

JONES: He had been their guy, but at this point they reviled him. They hated Shevardnadze. As there were various efforts to try to sort out the South Ossetia problem and the Abkhazia problem, they would be extremely caustic about Shevardnadze, almost to the point of calling him a traitor, especially under Putin, when Putin came in. Putin made it very clear that he had no time for Shevardnadze whatsoever. In retrospect is interesting, of course, because Putin hates Saakashvili even more.

One thing I should add is that when Secretary Powell went to Georgia for the inauguration of Saakashvili, he also called on Shevardnadze. He went to see him as an old friend, which was completely appropriate. Nobody batted an eye, in the body politic in Georgia. It was considered appropriate to pay one's respects to the president emeritus.

Q: Back to the training of troops and this would apply not just to Georgia but Armenia and some of the other places, I would think that our military system is so much different than the old Soviet system, the lack of effective noncommissioned officers sticks out, but the hazing of recruits and all this, I would think this would be very upsetting to the Russians looking at people coming and saying, "Okay, we do it A way and you do it B way," this would be hard for the officer corps within these small countries, too.

JONES: Well, here's what happened. It's an extremely interesting question. What you say is exactly right, because all of these militaries were fashioned after the Soviet military. All of the officers had been part of the Soviet military initially. Many of the recruits had been as well. But one of the things that happened with all of the post-Soviet militaries, including to a degree in Russia, was recognition that they needed to do a better job of taking care of the recruits, they needed to do a better job of training, they needed to reduce, at least, the hazing.

One of the strongest voices in all of this was the mothers. There's actually a very strong group—almost a lobbying group—in Russia of the mothers of recruits. They became

very strong because of Chechnya, but they really pressed hard for information about what had happened to their kids after they were conscripted.

Q: Kids were committing suicide or disappearing.

JONES: They would just disappear. They might come back from the war and they might not. The parent had no idea what had happened to them. As a matter of fact, I think the mothers actually got going during the Afghanistan War, when it was still the Soviet Union. When the breakup of the Soviet Union came, the mothers just became a stronger force and had a louder voice. I can't say that identical institutions or organizations cropped up in each of the successor states, but the idea or the attitude that recruits should be treated better was something that was incorporated quite early in the new thinking of many of the new militaries.

Certainly in Kazakhstan that was the case, where successive ministers of defense asked the United States for help in forming what they always called a "sergeants corps," the noncommissioned officers that you mentioned. That was something that became a standard element of the military reform that NATO, through Partnership for Peace, instituted in each of the militaries that became part of Partnership for Peace. They worked to establish a sergeants corps, with specific training and recruiting of people who could become these sergeants. Stories that we heard even not that long ago of recruits freezing to death in a train in Russia going across Siberia, those kinds of things were really big, nasty, negative issues.
When the U.S. did the train and equip program in Georgia -- this was after having already done a lot of the military reforms that brought in the beginnings of a sergeants corps. IMET (International Military Education and Training) financing was put in place for each of these countries. As people were promoted to the noncommissioned officer rank, this kind of system would be standard.

Q: Were you seeing changes in the Russian military? Were they taking this to heart too?

JONES: They were. It was a bigger issue with the Russian military, but there was much greater attention being paid by Sergey Ivanov, who was the Russian defense minister during my period of time. He would talk at length with Secretary Powell in our bilateral meetings about these kinds of military issues, because he knew he had in Secretary Powell someone who knew these issues absolutely cold, having been an officer in the military for so long.

They would talk about housing for the military and their families, they would talk about training issues, talk about how to treat recruits, talk about pressure from the mothers to know where their sons were, to know what happened to them. They would talk about how to end hazing, what do you tell people to end bad treatment of each other.

They would have some long, detailed conversations, not only with Sergey Ivanov. In various of our visits some of the old Soviet generals whom Secretary Powell had known

when he was, as they would put it, "facing each other across the Fulda Gap in Germany," would meet for lunch in Moscow to talk about those days They would also talk about how the military was reforming and talk about what other kinds of programs might be appropriate.. Russia was in Partnership for Peace, too, so that they could take advantage of some of these programs, too. For me it was fascinating to have this be an additional part of the conversations that I was privy to.

Q: I interviewed Admiral Crowe and he talked about the deputy defense minister who committed suicide and he told Crowe that the great strength of the American military was its noncommissioned officers, which is true.

JONES: It is true. Two different Kazakhstani defense ministers, when they went to the United States, one of the things I asked was that they be taken and shown what noncommissioned officers were responsible for. I asked that they be briefed by NCOs, told by NCOs what they were responsible for, shown the weapons and the people that they were responsible for. I said, "Do it with no officers around, so that they can see that they perform independently as senior leaders, not under the direction of some officer, because that's the way our system works."

They always came back, the Kazakh defense ministers, incredibly impressed. They would make a special point of telling me all about it, as though I didn't know.

Q: How did we deal at this time with Chechnya?

JONES: It's a good question. Chechnya was a very, very, very difficult issue. The fighting had been very, very hot, up to the time that Putin came in as president.

Q: He came in when?

JONES: He became prime minister in 1999, and acting President when Yeltsin resigned in December 1999. So he became president the first time in early 2000, the actual election would be in April, in the first half of 2000.

He was a new president just as George Bush was a new president, although Putin had been in office a little bit longer than Bush.

Putin came in. His campaign was to end the war in Chechnya. He ended the war in Chechnya by having his military be incredibly brutal, but the fighting basically ended or it was reduced pretty early in 2001, as I remember. However, there were still very serious human rights abuses, incredibly serious human rights abuses. The local gendarmerie, the local Chechen militia, were treating Chechens horribly. These were the Moscow-supported thugs, really, is what they were. So there were all kinds of Russian human rights groups who were in there trying to at least report on the unacceptable activities of the Russian-supported political leadership of Chechnya. The OSCE, for its part, had a group of monitors in Chechnya as well, as did other international human rights

groups, so there was a lot of information about what was going on there and huge complaints.

As Putin became stronger into 2002, 2003, gradually these groups were thrown out, or they withdrew because their people were kidnapped and never seen again. OSCE monitors were thrown out. At one point, by the time of the December OSCE ministerial the Russians were saying the OSCE can't go back in, no more monitoring. And oh, by the way, we're not going to pay our assessment for the OSCE budget because of this, because we don't like things the OSCE is doing.

It came to a head in 2004, but it was an issue that was very hard to grapple with. Number one, there were so many other issues to grapple with with the Russians. It was Putin's issue, so the only person who could actually engage Putin effectively on Chechnya was President Bush.

Secretary Powell, when he would engage Putin on this, or others in the Russian government, which we always had him do and he always did, he would get a long dissertation from Putin that would sort of wipe out the rest of the meeting. We had to be very careful when Secretary Powell mentioned it, because it would take up the rest of the meeting and get nothing else done if you mentioned Chechnya.

President Bush, when he mentioned Chechnya, would just let the tirade go on, he would never come back with what I would call the second sentence.

Q: You've mentioned this.

JONES: The second sentence problem.

But it was a tough one and in fairness, Putin did go on about it. But an effective president would have interrupted him, said, "This is not going to help Russia's reputation. Let's talk about how you and we can better support the OSCE negotiators who are trying to work on this."

Q: Well during the time you were there, did you see a settling down of Chechnya?

JONES: It was settled down in the sense that there was not outright warfare, but it was a terrible, terrible situation for Chechens that lived there. At one point Putin actually visited Chechnya, visited Grozny and expressed himself surprised at what a terrible situation he found there. How can the president of Russia explain that he had no idea that Grozny was basically leveled, thanks to Russian air attacks and Russian tanks? How is that possible? But that was kind of funny stuff that was going on. But to be honest in the global war on terror and all the focus on Afghanistan and Iraq, Chechnya didn't have nearly the attention that it had had before 9/11.

Q: Did we see, though, because it was in your bailiwick, this as being a training ground or what have you for enraged Chechens coming out, doing stuff against us, because we were looking for terrorists?

JONES: Well, yes and no. It raises a very important point that I've neglected. One of the things, as part of our collaboration with Russia in the global war on terrorism, one of the issues was to list who was a terrorist organization. There was a U.S. listing of possible terrorist designations. Then we would take it to the UN, where they would put them on the terrorists list (a process authorized by 9/11).

As part of our collaboration, the Russians kept saying, "You've got to put these guys, these Chechens, on the terrorist list." We said, "We'll look at it." But we said, "They have to be genuine terrorists and here are the criteria." The U.S. and UN criteria were very similar. "They can't just be people that you don't like politically. They have to actually be engaged in terrorism under these definitions."

So the Russians gave us a long list. We did work through quite a number of them. There were quite a number who did go on our list completely legitimately and the UN list. We always considered a deliverable, which ones can we actually put on the terrorism list in time for the next meeting with the Russians?

At the same as we were putting some of these guys on a list, we were also training and equipping Georgia to keep these guys from being able to use Georgia as a sanctuary. We kept telling the Russians, "You need to bottle these guys up in Chechnya, too, oh by the way. You can't just complain that the Georgians aren't pushing them back. You guys need to do some of this work as well. But as you're doing it, we need to have some sort of a political process in Chechnya that allows Chechens to have a say in this. It can't just be these thugs appointed by Moscow." Well, the bottom line was it really was always the thugs appointed by Moscow that were in charge there. Every so often one would get assassinated and then the son of that guy would be appointed as the new leaders. It was a very, very nasty situation that still isn't better.

In the meantime there was the incredibly nasty terrorist attack on the theater, the Nord-Ost Theater, in Moscow.

Q: During a children's play.

JONES: Right, a children's play, I think it was even a Sunday afternoon, done by Chechens, many of them women, who infiltrated the theater with explosives, who were suicide bombers, basically, explosives tied to themselves. The standoff went on for quite a long time. The way the Russian security forces ended the problem resulted in far more deaths than might have been had they handled it in a way that was less aggressive.

What they did is they poured in gas that knocked everybody out, knocked out the terrorists but of course knocked out all the theater-goers, too. There was considerable

evidence that the gas was poisonous, number one, and number two when they did it they didn't have nearly enough ambulances around to take people away to bring them out of the gas, the theater-goers, especially the children. So there were a tremendous number of deaths. It was completely disorganized. The families didn't know where their loved ones had gone, nobody knew how many people had been killed. It was a mess.

But no question it was a terrorist situation, very badly handle. In a similar way in 2004 there was the Beslan school incident, in North Ossetia, next to Chechnya, in which on the first day of school, September 1, all of the kids and their parents are in the school. It is attacked by armed terrorists, insurgents of some kind. Again, because of the way the Russian security services handled attacking the attackers, many more children and their parents and the teachers were killed than might have happened had there been a more organized, responsible and practiced way to handle this kind of thing.

So, again, two terrorist incidents very badly handled. A lot of sympathy for the Russians, but a lot of questions about why in the world are they not doing a better job of this kind of thing.

Q: I was just wondering about this. The things that you've mentioned, obviously sometimes we screw up, too. We've had the siege of the cult group in Waco and all, but at the same time there seems to be more of an effort to deal with it in more sophisticated terms. Was there a feeling that the Russians don't have a fine hand in these matters? Is this the Russian soul, or is this the government, or what?

JONES: We saw how unprofessionally, I think is the best way to put it, the theater "rescue" had been done and the Beslan school "rescue" had been done, which basically resulted in two massacres, more than anything else. The questions we asked ourselves at the time was whether there was any way to include first responder training in Partnership for Peace exercises.

Was there some vehicle that one could use to help all of us understand better how to manage these kinds of incidents? People weren't saying "Oh my God, the Russians are so awful" as much as they were saying, "This could happen anywhere." The Russians should have some lessons learned, certainly. Various governments, various countries, have had different kinds of experiences on how to manage these kinds of potential mass casualty terrorist incidents. Is there a way that we can come up with a tabletop exercise, actual exercises? What are some of the ways that we can learn from these and use the structures that we have, Partnership for Peace being an obvious one. But the Russians were always wanting to introduce more security issues into OSCE, so, fine, let's use the OSCE.

We were not in a situation with the Russians where they were as closed a society, the way they are now, although that was beginning to start to happen.

There was a tremendous amount of discussion back and forth. So, for example, when the Beslan school thing happened the first thing that we did, we spent a lot of time talking to the Russian Embassy, getting hold of Embassy Moscow, "What do you need? How can we send it? What's the fastest way to send it? What's the list?" I got on the phone with all of my guys and said, "Okay, these are the medicines, these are the beds, these are the tents, these are the blankets! Get this stuff out there!"

And we did. The very first response was, "What do you need? We'll get it there fast!" to the point that the Russians really couldn't use it, because it got there too fast. They weren't organized for it. The atmosphere, the political atmosphere, was rather collaborative, still. It was still very much, "Oh, my God, these terrorist incidents are terrible! It's an awful thing!"

We had the Madrid train bombings in between, as well, so these things were already happening. The London Underground, this was all in a way related.

One of the things that we kept trying to add to the agenda with some of the bigger issues, the global issues, was HIV/AIDS. We are argued that that was the kind of issue that went along in any case with the global issue of terrorism and fighting terrorism. Russia was home to some very serious problems: a huge HIV/AIDS population and growing, very little recognition among the Russian elites that HIV/AIDS was a problem. This was very frustrating for the activists in Russia who were trying to work on problems like that.

We also worked hard to get them get them involved in the international conversation about SARS. SARS was a very bad health problem that broke out in China.

Q: It was a poultry-borne disease, but a disease that passed on to humans and killed people.

JONES: Killed a tremendous number of people. There was quite an epidemic in China. It hit various parts of Asia: India, as I remember. My daughter, Courtney, was doing her junior year abroad in Kunming in China, so was there when SARS broke out. It was less prevalent where she was, fortunately. She has some interesting stories about the instructions the students were given – to stay outdoors – when the instructions were given to a huge packed auditorium at the Kunming Normal University where she was.

We knew that life expectancy in Russia was decreasing under Putin, even though he was getting a lot of credit for having created a situation in which Russians had a better life. In fact, that was not true, if you look at empirical studies of it. In terms of demographics, there was a very serious problem with a reduced birth rate. Sociologists in Russia and around the world were concerned about what was Russia going to do for a work force, what was Russia going to do even for a military, because there were not enough kids being born.

Q: Was this a problem of women, as in, say, Japan, because they were kept out of the work force, deciding they could do better on their own by not having children?

JONES: What I understand was behind it more in Russia, women in Russia do not suffer discrimination in terms of entry into the work force or access to the professions. That isn't actually an issue. A lot of people have written and thought about it in terms of -- was this an indication of lack of faith in the future. There had been such ups and downs on the financial side in Russia after the big financial crisis in 1998.

Of course, Russia, during this period of time, during the first years of the twenty first century was doing very well because of the price of oil, the price of gas. That was filtering down, so there was an increase in the middle class. But it wasn't translating into people having more than one or maybe two children. There certainly was a squeeze on housing in Moscow, but not elsewhere. There's some very interesting demographic studies done about what was it about the Russian mindset, the Russian psychology, that was causing the reduction in the birth rate. But it wasn't so much that women wanted to chuck it all.

Q: In the State Department, we always deal of course in present day situations. But when you look at China and Japan and Russia, particularly, long-term trends are so important. What was happening out beyond the major cities, because life had been primitive?

JONES: Life had been very hard. Life continued to be very hard in a lot of places. Even during the period of time where Russia had a gigantic income from oil and gas, there were still plenty of villages with no sanitation, no running water, unpaved roads, difficult access to electricity, water, all that kind of thing.

We tried to engage Russian officials on HIV/AIDS, on ways that we could collaborate. We kept trying to find areas that we could collaborate on that were positive. The Russian bureaucracy, the Russian government absolutely refused to engage on HIV/AIDS in Russia. They said, "We'll of course cooperate with you on HIV/AIDS in Africa, but we don't have a problem here, so we're not going to cooperate with you here." The same thing with SARS and avian flu and some of these other health pandemics. We were fairly certain, from some written materials from Russian scientists that they might actually have some breakthrough vaccinations. The Russians absolutely refused to share. It was a very, very difficult conversation.

Q: You have any idea what was behind this?

JONES: From everything we could understand, on HIV/AIDS it's "We're not a Third World country. How dare you come in and think that you could help us on something that number one isn't a problem and number two we know perfectly well how to manage, if it were a problem." On SARS and vaccination against avian flu and some of the other pandemics that we were worried about, they basically just still thought of themselves as

being in competition with the West. They certainly didn't want to give up their secrets that they had worked so hard to develop.

The idea that Russia could be a greater power by participating in a positive way for positive solutions was still unknown in Russia. Frankly I think even today it still is. Russia saw itself as retaining or gaining great power status through arms control agreements and through throwing its weight around in a negative way.

Q: Well, was the feeling that the Russian spy apparatus, which had been very effective and very huge, was still operating but had moved more to commercial fields, or was that an issue?

JONES: Not in terms of medical topics. That was still government controlled. Where it had moved into the commercial field was in sales of equipment and supplies to Iran for the nuclear program.

So the Russian government was very reluctant to try to control its indigenous commercial entities, although frankly they were pretty much under Russian government control in any case, in terms of sales to Iran. I must say a lot of us believed it was simply because the sales of equipment and material to Iran went into the pockets of people making the government decisions about whether or not to participate. It's that link between government and business that would have to be broken in order for Russia to be able to move on any of these areas, whether it's nuclear issues, whether it's energy, transportation.

Q: It's one of those basic corruption issues?

JONES: Absolutely. Corruption is endemic in Russia. I call the people around Putin and now Medvedev who are in the Russian White House in the Kremlin simply "Kremlin oligarchs." Every single board of an energy, minerals, any enterprise that has any kind lucrative income, you can find Kremlin and Russian White House people on every single board. So every government official of any note is receiving an income and a substantial income from Russian commercial concerns.

Q: Which, from our perspective, works to their detriment.

JONES: Absolutely. Well, it means a couple things. It means that any government decision about controlling a commercial entity, such as blocking sales to Iran, can't be made, number one.

Number two, it means that as much as there was a conversation from us and from the Europeans with the Russians about reinvesting in the gas infrastructure to make sure that they could keep producing the gas in the amount that the Europeans required, in terms of their own contracts, it didn't happen.

There was almost no investment in the gas infrastructure, still isn't. So Europeans are rightfully very worried that the gas contracts that they have— the German gas contracts, other European gas contracts—the Russians may not be able to honor them, because they will not, in the out years, be able to produce enough gas.

Again, it's because all of the income is going into the pockets of these guys. They don't care that twenty years from now there won't be enough gas. They'll be long gone. They'll be wealthy and gone.

Q: This is somewhat similar to what happened in Iraq, where Saddam Hussein did not invest in equipment. So while you have these reserves, they're not being exploited very prudently.

JONES: That's exactly right.

Q: When you're dealing with people that you know are lining their pockets, how do you deal with it?

JONES: We rarely were in conversation directly with the people who were doing the taking. We were much more likely to be involved with the foreign minister or with Putin directly. Now of course Putin was benefiting from this as well. But we would regularly have conversations about the failure to reinvest in the gas production and oil production. They would basically say, "Yes, we know" and shrug and wouldn't engage.

Q: Were there people, either in the government or outside the government, who were trying to do something about this?

JONES: Yes. In particular there were a tremendous number of Russian activists in HIV/AIDS, in some of these social issues, trying to upgrade education, working on the Chechnya issue, working on human rights issues, working on free media, all of those kinds of things. Whenever Secretary Powell would go to Russia, we tried it a few times with President Bush and it worked then, as well, we would have them do some kind of event that would bring greater attention to whatever the issue was.

So, for example, Secretary Powell opened an HIV/AIDS conference in Moscow, to the delight of the HIV/AIDS activists. We just told the Russian government that's what he was doing, in way to try to shame them into paying attention to this and getting them to understand it that it wasn't somehow a shameful thing for a government to say, "We've got a problem. We need to deal with it." The U.S. has a gigantic problem, so it's sort of an easy thing for us to talk about, in that respect. Or at one point, for example, we had Secretary Powell visit a conference on health pandemics. The conference was underway, he came in and gave a few remarks, shook hands with everybody.

Every time Secretary Powell went anywhere of course there was a gigantic media group accompanying him, especially in Moscow, but, really, anywhere. So we knew we could

get a tremendous amount of attention to whatever issue it was that he was prepared to address and he always was. We always had to do something outside of the official talks on his schedule.

Q: How would you describe Secretary Powell and Putin and the Russian situation?

JONES: Here's how things developed: we found that Putin, of course, was very articulate, he knew his issues backwards and forwards. There were certain issues that he would launch on in a conversation.

So if you raised Chechnya, for instance, he would launch into a highly emotional diatribe about the Chechens and how awful they were and all of the things that had gone wrong. President Bush and Secretary Powell learned very quickly that if you raised Chechnya at the beginning of a meeting, the meeting's over, that's the only subject that could be raised. So he basically trained the Europeans and the Americans and others not to raise certain issues. Chechnya elicited a very emotional response. Georgia elicited an emotional response. NATO, an emotional response. Things like that. So you had to be very careful about when and how you raised certain issues.

President Bush was unable to argue any of the points that were raised. We could get him briefed up to say something about any issue, but it was very, very difficult for us to get him to understand what I always called the second sentence.

Q: You mentioned this before, that he would raise it and Putin would make the normal response and he said, "Oh, yeah."

JONES: Powell, of course, could argue every single point that Putin made and did, particularly when we realized, as things were getting more and more difficult between the United States and Russia, how important it was for Powell to have those conversations. It was very, very important for him to be able to come back on Georgia, on the frozen conflicts, whether it was Moldova-Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, whatever those issues were and he did.

The interesting thing to me is that in those conversations it became clear how very badly briefed Putin actually was. So, for instance, in the last meeting I attended between Putin and Bush, it must have been in Bratislava, President Bush raised an energy matter, Khodorkovsky, the Yukos oil company president. He had been put in jail for corruption when he was clearly jailed because he challenged Putin politically. When this was raised with Putin by Bush, Putin said, "It's no different from the Enron case." Unfortunately Bush didn't have much response.

When he responded this way to Secretary Powell, Secretary Powell said, "I'm sorry, there's no connection, Mr. President. Even though all of the people involved in the Enron case were close friends of the president and the vice president, they are" as he put it

"doing the perp walk." I looked at the interpreter to make sure he could understand it what "perp walk" meant. He interpreted it beautifully.

But Putin completely misunderstood the Enron case. The same thing happened, later on, with media freedom. Putin came back in the press conference after the meeting and said, "I don't see what the difference is between media freedom in Russia and what the White House did to Dan Rather of CBS News for having misreported your National Guard duty. You had him fired. So what's the difference?" And of course there was no way. That was all done by CBS News, the White House had no role in that whatsoever.

But, to me it was a fascinating illustration of how badly Putin was briefed on what's going on and what the parallels are, lack thereof, really. He thinks they're parallels when they have no relationship whatsoever.

Q: People look at our society, but they look at it with their own eyes. They see what they want to see, whereas we see what we want to see and we try to relate. This is a common phenomenon.

JONES: Well, one of the things that we had to be very careful about in thinking and writing about Russia and what's going on there, especially on media freedom, is that there was no public opinion to speak of that cared about media freedom in Russia. So when we would press on media freedom, we had to do it knowing that Putin could easily point to all kinds of polls (and they were accurate polls) saying the Russian public didn't care. We knew that to be true.

Q: Let's talk about the Russian people. The Russians never really had had a real elected government. Responsibility had come from the top and from revolutionary sources. So when you have your polls and all, their main focus is putting bread on the table, "Do I have to worry about a midnight knock?"

JONES: The attitude I took to that, because there was often the argument that the Russians aren't used to democracy, so why are you pressing on democracy? It was usually from the Russian elites: "Our people aren't ready for democracy." To a degree, historically, you could say that that was accurate.

I preferred the argument that every person wants to be able to make choices about how best he or she should be governed, should be dealt with, should be supervised, should be treated. And that while yes, it is true that there was not a big democracy habit in Russia, I took the view that it was untrue that people liked to be dictated to. That as people became more prosperous, as they were able to get beyond putting food on the table, which certainly Russia was able to do as it became more and more wealthy, that it was equally important, as we talked about democracy to talk about responsibility, the citizen's responsibility. So that as much as we talked about the importance of choosing your leadership it was just as important to talk about paying taxes, obeying the law, police being responsive to the citizens.

There're two sides to the democracy issue. The U.S. has tended to talk not at all about the responsibility side of democracy, as though all you had to do was vote and that was sort of the beginning and the end of democratic life.

The Russians had found that voting was all well and good, but it produced a fairly chaotic result if you didn't also think in terms of combating corruption. The whole rule of law piece was missing in the democracy discussion. That's what we talked a lot about bringing back into the discussion. For that reason, whenever we talked about democracy we tended to talk more about rule of law, rather than just elections.

Q: We talk in the Middle East about the importance of democracy, but we know deep in our hearts that if Saudi Arabia had an election, probably the fundamentalists would win and we'd be in very deep trouble.

JONES: That's right, but the other thing is that Saudi Arabia has a very deep history of the *diwaniya*, where the whole family or the whole tribe sit around and discuss an issue and there's a consensus decision made. That's very democratic, actually.

Q: I've watched this in Dhahran. One of the king's cousins used to sit there and people would come up with petitions and we'd all sit around and watch it happen. Democracy might screw that system up.

JONES: That's part of what goes with the whole discussion about democracy. The term just means really "choice of the people" or "the people exercising a choice." I tend to use the term "political choice" rather than democracy, partly because the word democracy has gotten such a bad name through the Bush years.

With the Russians, we see anecdotal evidence of this, where communities have gotten together to decide that the hospital provided by the state is just no darned good. They have enough money, to build their own hospital, they hire their own doctors, doctors that are responsible to the community. The local authorities then closed these hospitals, because they hadn't gotten their cut of the revenues. There was enough of an uproar in the town that the authorities were forced to allow the hospital to reopen. They were held to account to a much greater degree than had been the case before. That, to me, that's a pretty good demonstration of democratic principles at work.

Q: Right now, Russia is doing all right economically, because essentially they're the equivalent of Saudi Arabia, they're getting their revenue from gas and all, but the West are making great strides for converting to reliance on various other types of nonpolluting energy sources and that would leave the Russians dangling, it's almost like Saudi Arabia or something.

JONES: Well, there're a couple of things I think are interesting in the Russian situation. You're absolutely right that its wealth is very lopsided and that's a very bad thing for any

country. The Russians have not done nearly enough in terms of investment in other industries. They've done some, but it's not nearly sufficient to generate the kinds of tax revenues, et cetera, that they have from gas and oil.

The interesting thing, now, with the financial crisis, two things are happening: the price of oil and gas are going down, so the income of the Russian state is not nearly what it was. The debt situation that Russia has found itself in, thanks to the financial crisis, is extremely serious.

Analysts apparently don't even know how serious it is, because so little of it is public record So many of the Kremlin oligarchs have loans from all over then place with very little equity to back them up. A lot of those loans are being called. The Kremlin is stepping in to pay the debts of a lot of these people. They are spending huge amounts of the revenues that have built up over the years thanks to the oil and gas exports.

They're still going to be okay for a while, but my guess is, I don't know the Saudi situation in as much detail, but my guess that there isn't a parallel after that, that the Saudis weren't nearly as profligate about racking up the debts as the Russian oligarchs were.

Q: Why was Putin not cooperating with us? Was this a Russian thing, or what was happening?

JONES: I think there were several reasons why things went off the track between the U.S. and Russia not too long, really, after 9/11.

9/11 was the point of time in which Putin talked his colleagues into cooperating with Bush in intelligence sharing and that kind of thing. In fact the intelligence sharing, law enforcement sharing, was a *pro forma* thing, mostly because the Russians just absolutely couldn't bring themselves to share real intelligence. It was just against their history, really.

But what I believe happened is Putin looked around and saw that the United States was going to go ahead with the invasion of Iraq, even though Blair, George Bush's "close friend" and several European leaders, also apparently close to the United States (whether or not they were close to Bush is a different question), no matter how many governments and how any public opposed the U.S. invading Iraq, George Bush was clearly going ahead anyway.

To a degree, I think Putin took a look at the fact that there was very little consequence, really, for the United States, in terms of its relationships in Europe. He thought to himself, "Gee, if George Bush can do something that everybody opposes and there really isn't much of a consequence, maybe I can do the same thing."

Whether he had an explicit thought process that went like that I don't know, but it was about that time, within six months after the invasion of Iraq, that so many of the antidemocratic moves were made by Putin: closing down the media, being very draconian in Chechnya, really pushing back on the OSCE and other international organizations in Chechnya and deciding the governors would be appointed by the Kremlin, not elected, all of that kind of thing. Because he could see, looking at Europe, that the United States and Europe, in spite of the fact that we completely disagreed about Iraq with many of them, were nevertheless going ahead full steam on the enlargement of NATO.

The conversations there were very cordial, perfectly in sync in terms of philosophy and policy. He could see that you could have a very big disagreement on one set of issues and still go full steam ahead on another set of issues.

The other thing that he really resented, this was shared by the *nomenklatura* around him, the political elite, was the United States having abrogated the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty right after 9/11.

In other words, just as Putin has made a fundamental decision to cooperate with the United States on something that's terribly important to the United States, the U.S. turns around and thanks him by walking out of a treaty that is very, very, very important to Putin. Why is it important? Because all these arms control treaties, I think, are the instrument that give the Russians a place at the table of the major powers.

So by walking out of the ABM Treaty in December of 2001, right after 9/11, Putin realized he couldn't do anything about it, he had to shrug and say, "Well, okay, if that's what you want to do." He pressed hard to get a Moscow Treaty, some replacement treaty, it was barely two pages long. The Cheney-Wolfowitz-Rumsfeld-Feith crowd were so opposed to having any kind of treaty that might limit U.S. action, so that was a lame replacement.

Q: Did you and Powell play any role in thinking on this ballistic missile treaty? Did we see what it was going to do?

JONES: Yes. If you looked at it on paper, there was no reason to retain the treaty. There was nothing in the treaty that was necessarily going to be particularly helpful and by walking out of the treaty we were saying, "We don't really need this anymore. We've pulled all the way back from these ballistic missiles. We don't have them pointed at each other the way we used to, so we don't really need this treaty."

So technically the treaty's opponents were correct. This is where Secretary Powell was. What was completely disregarded was the status issue that Putin was so concerned about. If you look at some of the statements made at the time and some of the writings of some of the neocons who came into government with President Bush, they came into the government precisely and sometimes only to get rid of the ABM Treaty.

They were so determined to get rid of it, in order to be able to test other anti-ballistic missiles. That was of course the whole issue. This was what Cheney was so interested in, was to be able to do this other testing that would no longer be restricted, there was no notification, or any other requirement.

Q: Why the hell did they care?

JONES: Why did the Russians care?

Q: No, the neocons. Was there a commercial commitment?

JONES: The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty would have restricted the testing of any other kind of ballistic missiles. The neocons saw this as a further restriction on the U.S. freedom of action, so they wanted to get rid of the ABM Treaty. Technically, all the requirements had been met. But Cheney had in his mind that there were all these other missiles that we wanted to be able to position, base and test.

Did Powell and the State Department get involved? We got involved in the following respect: we were responsible for negotiating basing of an ABM complex at Thule, Greenland. That was something that I ended up having to negotiate with the Danes and the Icelanders, which was a difficult negotiation. Of course, Secretary Powell was very involved in going to each of the signatories of the ABM Treaty in December of 2001 to say, "Okay, here's the deal: we want out, here's the date that we want out, the end of the year. Will you please cooperate?" He did this at the end of a trip that was already planned to go to the NATO ministerial and the OSCE ministerial in December. The tacked on stops were just to inform the other signatories, as is allowed under the treaty, that this was our formal notification of intention to get out of the treaty, without much discussion.

Q: The State Department's trying to develop good relations to work on other things and this is a kick in the teeth, not only to the Russians but to the Western Europeans, isn't it?

JONES: The talking points that the arms controllers had done up were accurate. They did catalogue why it was that we no longer needed this treaty. Don't forget that John Bolton was at the State Department honchoing the talking points for this kind of thing. The formal decision had been made by the White House, by the president. Powell was instructed to carry it out, by going to the each of the signatories, the UK, France, Berlin and Moscow to say, "We're done!"

Powell was the one who could see in the body language with Putin. The conversation with Putin in December, it was a one on one conversation. I didn't participate in that one. Putin basically just said, "Don't do this! Don't do this! Don't do this! If you do it, I can't stop you, but please replace it with something."

That's what Powell did. He really worked hard to negotiate something, against huge opposition from Cheney and Bolton and Wolfowitz and Feith. In the end that resulted in the Moscow Treaty. That's what Bush and Putin signed when Bush visited Russia the following May.

Q: It was not an easy time. You were fighting a war on two fronts.

JONES: It was very clear that the State Department was completely out of sync, if you will, with the rest of the administration on foreign policy issues. The NSC sometimes was with us. The Joint Staff was always with us. But the Pentagon and a lot of times the NSC….

Q: When you talk about the Pentagon, you're talking about?

JONES: The civilian side of the Pentagon.

In meetings, either deputies committee meetings where Rich Armitage would be the lead for State or Marc Grossman, principal's committee meeting, that would be Secretary Powell, or National Security Council meetings, which the president would attend, along with his senior team, including Secretary Powell -- we would trade positions with the Joint Staff, with the JCS, because they knew that they would not be permitted to speak at these meetings by the Pentagon civilians, Feith or Wolfowitz or Rumsfeld.

So we always knew what the Joint Staff wanted. We learned very quickly to prep Powell or Armitage or Marc, whoever was going to the meeting, with "This is our position. This is what we know the Joint Staff position to be."

Often we would agree with our level of the National Security Council staff, but Condi or Hadley would be unwilling to speak, principally because Rice as national security advisor saw herself as, she would say this in meetings, as the executive secretary of the group, not as the decision maker of the group. Whereas I saw her position as someone to say, "Thank you for your views. This is what we're going to do." What that meant is that decisions would be made in the deputies committee meeting or the principals committee meeting. We would come back and write the instruction cables up.

We'd be unable to get them cleared then by the Pentagon. The Joint Staff would clear them, the civilian side would not clear them. I don't know how many times I would call Secretary Powell or Mr. Armitage and say, "Remember the meeting where we were today? This was what was decided. The Pentagon still won't clear the cable. Would you please call Rumsfeld?" They never called Wolfowitz, because he would never decide something. He always punted decisions to Rumsfeld. Powell literally had to call Rumsfeld three or four times in one day, or one evening, in order to get a cable cleared.

Q: You're saying Wolfowitz was almost not a player?

JONES: He was a very big player in the government, but he was Cheney's man. He could not overcome Rumsfeld. Nobody would overcome Rumsfeld.

So when I talked to my counterpart, J.D. Crouch, if I couldn't get him to decide to clear a cable or to decide a particular issue, we knew it would go to Rumsfeld. He would not take it to Feith, or if he did it would get nowhere. He would not take it to Wolfowitz, again, it would get nowhere. He would take it straight to Rumsfeld. As soon as he would say that to me, I'd say, "Fine, I'm going to go talk to Secretary Powell. I'll call you back in 15 minutes."

That was my way of trumping him, because I knew I could get to Powell in 15 minutes, if he was at all available. He almost always was somehow, as soon as whatever meeting he was in was over, he would respond. He would call up Rumsfeld.

Q: Again, one gets the feeling that Rumsfeld was an extremely opinionated and self-confident person and was wrong most of the time.

JONES: Well, the interesting thing was that he was doing very badly in terms of Congress, public opinion, all that kind of thing, until 9/11.

There was a lot of talk before 9/11 that he wouldn't last another month or two, because the service chiefs were very upset with him for all the cuts he was proposing. Congress was extremely upset with him because he wouldn't appear, he wouldn't answer their letters, he wouldn't answer their phone calls. He just wouldn't communicate with the Congress at all.

But after 9/11 he became The Briefer and his oddball briefings became popular.

Q: Almost an amusement show or something, but popular.

JONES: But he was extremely adamant in his views. He would pepper people to death on any suggestion that they made, so his staff, throughout the Pentagon, were terrified of him, were really reluctant to take issues to him, unless it was researched to incredible detail.

One of my colleagues who went there as a deputy assistant secretary of defense in his first week made a decision, a perfectly legitimate decision, one that should have been made at his level, on a NATO matter. The cable went out, Rumsfeld threw a fit that he had made this decision. That DASD never made another decision for the next four years of his tenure there. The other thing about Rumsfeld were the "snowflakes" that have been written about in the papers. We saw them all the time.

He would write a memo, one to two paragraphs, one page, usually, on some issue, raising an objection, raising a question, raising an issue. Anything that had to do with foreign policy came to us as well as the NSC. The question always was do we answer this

nonsense or do we just let it disappear. Secretary Powell took the view that every single one needed to be answered and I respect that view. I could see his reason for wanting to do that, to have on the record that we objected to whatever it was he was proposing. Or we thought it was a lame idea or it had already been decided in a National Security Council meeting.

These would be on every possible issue. The biggest fight we had with Rumsfeld was on removing U.S. troops from the Balkans and in what way the turnover to the EU would transpire. For a long time the Pentagon, the civilian side, was adamant, for example, that if NATO left that per force meant that NATO had succeeded, so there was absolutely no reason for the EU to go in. Well, we argued that there was absolutely a reason for the EU to go in, that it wasn't stable yet, that there wasn't a contradiction between NATO leaving and the EU coming in.

But it was a fight that went on for months and months and months. We finally won, on the grounds that we couldn't tell the EU what to do or what not to do. We finally got it so that the NATO commander on the ground and the EU commander on the ground were the ones that worked out most of the issues that we couldn't get agreement on from the Pentagon.

Q: Well, the drain on our troops was quite minimal there.

JONES: It was not a big deal.

Q: I remember, I was an election observer, talking to a West Pointer who ran a reconnaissance squadron. He said, "Well, normally I'd be out at Fort Knox. It's a hell of a lot better exercise to run drills here in Bosnia than at Fort Knox. There's a certain element of doing something, as opposed to……"

JONES: It was very necessary.

The other big issue of Rumsfeld's was Iceland. I'm not sure we've talked about Iceland.

Q: We haven't. My next question was, could you talk about Iceland and Greenland?

JONES: Actually, the Greenland negotiation related to Denmark and that was a totally separate issue from Iceland.

That was an interesting negotiation with the Danes. It didn't involve NATO or the EU. It was a bilateral negotiation that involved the Greenlanders and the level of support that they wanted in exchange for authorizing continuation of the use of the Thule base for these missiles. I spent a lot of time negotiating with the Danes and with the Icelanders, as did J.D. Crouch, because there was a military side to the negotiation, as well. In the end, we finally got the agreement. I got Secretary Powell to go to Greenland to sign the agreement, which was a fabulous trip. It is one of my favorite trips.

Iceland was a completely different matter. Iceland, one of the original members of NATO, has no military force. So NATO was going to be protecting Iceland. The U.S. set up an air base, on a bilateral basis, to protect Iceland from potential Soviet attack.

Well, Rumsfeld decided at the very beginning of the administration that one of the cost savings that was absolutely essential was to close the base in Iceland. It was going to be a cost savings, there's no question about that. The Icelanders were absolutely dead opposed to closing the base. For them, this was their security, it was their ticket to a relationship with the United States. It was part of their NATO protection, as they saw it, even though it wasn't actually a NATO base. The State Department was able for a long time to persuade the president not to let Rumsfeld close the base.

Rumsfeld would do things like issue an order to close the base. We would find out about it because the embassy in Reykjavik would find out about it from the base commander. It was something that hadn't been authorized by the White House. It was that level of dirty tricks that Rumsfeld was playing. I was in touch all the time with the EUCOM commander, eventually General Jim Jones, who's now the national security advisor, to say, "Please talk to me about how much of a burden it is on EUCOM, on U.S. forces, for these four U.S. planes to be based in Iceland." These were planes from various Air National Guard units.

Q: They were being rotated.

JONES: That's right. Rumsfeld's argument was constantly, "Oh, we need them in Afghanistan. Oh, we need them in Iraq." Well, we knew perfectly well from our EUCOM colleagues that that's not at all how these planes would be used.

It did cost money to keep the base open, there's no question about that. But we were able to maintain the argument throughout that Iceland was such a good NATO ally, particularly since Iceland had been very supportive of the U.S. as we went into Iraq, as opposed to other NATO allies, that we shouldn't poke them in the eye right now about pulling out these four planes. At the same time we had a big negotiation underway on how to transfer some of the base capabilities and the base operations to Iceland's budget, because it shared part of the facility as a civilian airport.

Well, the Icelanders frankly didn't play it very well. They insisted that they didn't want to pay anything, that they shouldn't bear any kind of burden. In reality they were making money hand over fist at that point. They were a very, very wealthy country. Per capita income was way through the roof, for instance.

So they held fast to a negotiating position that really wasn't supportable. I went several times to Iceland, talked to the prime minister, talked to the foreign minister, talked to the defense minister, to say, "Guys, help us out on this negotiation! We're trying to help you keep the four planes, but you've got to be smarter about these negotiations. It's not

supportable for us to go to the U.S. taxpayer to say, 'Look how rich Iceland is, but they won't pay!'"

We frankly didn't succeed at all in that. Within a month, or two months, maybe, of Powell leaving office and my leaving office, Condi Rice caved and the president signed the order to remove the planes. The base was closed down.

But it was a very, very intense set of discussions, it went on for the entire four years that I was assistant secretary. We regularly called the bureau "the Bureau of Icelandic Affairs," because the fight with the Pentagon over the negotiating instructions, the fight with the Pentagon over the talking points for the next trip to talk to the Icelanders, the fight with the Pentagon over the talking points for Rumsfeld's phone call or the president's phone call, it just went on forever.

Q: Did you get any feel for Rumsfeld and Europe? It was basically NATO which was his responsibility, but Europe, he'd talk about Old Europe and New Europe and all that, did you get a feel, was he sort of anti-European or just very pro-do it yourself American, or what?

JONES: I would say it was both. He was, like all of the neocons, very pro the United States being able to do anything it pleased internationally without restrictions.

For example, when we first went into Afghanistan, Rumsfeld insisted "I don't want it to be a NATO operation." There was this sort of urban legend that all of NATO decided all the bombing targets in Serbia. This hadn't actually been true, but "We're not going to put ourselves into those kinds of restrictions. We want to operate independently."

Because Rumsfeld had been the ambassador to NATO, he knew quite well how NATO operated. Is it frustrating to try to come to consensus with that many members? Yes, of course it is. It's not easy at all.

But one of my colleagues, Ron Neumann who was then ambassador in Afghanistan, who would call me (somebody I'd known for years in the Middle East bureau) when we were first finally getting NATO into Afghanistan. He called me and said, "Oh, my God, how's this going to work?" So I explained the process and what it would take to coordinate. After NATO had been there for a couple months, he said, "This is very interesting. Yes, it took a long time for NATO to make the decisions that were necessary in order to operate here. But the consensus is such a strong unifying force within the NATO group that I don't see any difficulties now. Now that the decision is made, it goes very, very smoothly." So, for him, this outsider to NATO, this was a very, very big advantage.

That's what Rumsfeld and Cheney and all these guys couldn't see. Every time something came up in the NATO context, we had to get instructions to our ambassador there. The Pentagon was adamant that all kinds of things not be discussed in NATO, could not be taken to NATO for any kind of decision, whatever it was.

So, for instance, there we are in Europe with NATO. Somebody in the NATO group wants to have a discussion about what are we doing in Afghanistan. It was almost impossible to get the Pentagon to agree to allow a discussion to go forward. We never got agreement for discussion about Iraq, even though we ended up having a NATO agreement about supporting the Iraq operation.

Other, bigger issues, nonproliferation, whatever, the Pentagon adamantly opposed any kind of broad ranging discussion within NATO on any subject that might be of interest to European security, again, because "it's not their business and might result in some kind of a decision that will limit U.S. freedom of action." Rumsfeld was adamantly opposed to especially France being involved in anything. It was because of Chirac's opposition and very vocal opposition to the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

It manifested itself in prohibition after prohibition to the U.S. military being involved with France in any way. This applied even when it got down to celebrating D-Day anniversaries. American general officers would normally go over to Normandy. They would visit their various French counterparts. He, Rumsfeld, forced all the engagements to be cancelled. I was constantly getting phone calls from the U.S. ambassador to Paris saying, "What is going on here? We can't carry on a relationship if we have zero conversations with any of our French counterparts on all of these issues."

We eventually took it to a National Security Council meeting, a principals committee meeting. It was decided there that "We herewith end the prohibition on military-to-military contacts with France." Even with a formal decision by principals in the National Security Council, Rumsfeld still was forcing generals to not meet with their French counterparts. It took a fight every single time, every time I turned around it was something else with Rumsfeld and France.

Germany was a different matter. There the problem was with the president, it wasn't so much with the Pentagon, although it wasn't great with the Pentagon. That was specifically because Schröder, the Chancellor, in an early conversation with Bush after 9/11, this would have been the following summer, when Bush visited Berlin. I wasn't there, but the memcon (memo of conversation) says that Schröder said "I know you're going to have to do certain things. Do what you have to do, I won't object."

That was only a couple of months before an election campaign in which Schröder used his opposition to Bush and to all the talk in Washington about invading Iraq as a campaign platform and won the election, fairly narrowly, as a result of that. Bush was extremely angry with Schröder for this. He saw this as a foreign leader double-crossing him. He would often contrast that to Chirac's behavior.

He couldn't stand Chirac, but he always said, "Chirac at least never lied to me. Chirac always told me he was opposed to this and that I respect."

Q: You talk about the French connection, although France was not in the military part of NATO, the cooperation with the French military had always been, for years, very close.

JONES: Exactly, it had been very close and it had very valued, because the French were so good at all of these things.

The first we knew just how bad it was when the French Navy, I think it was, was disinvited from an exercise in Asia in which they participated for forty years. The excuse, when I called up J.D. Crouch about it, was, "Oh, France always participates. We want to invite some other countries that don't normally participate."

So they kept trying to pretend it wasn't really that they were just mad at France. But it was a very, very difficult relationship.

Q: When I was consul general in Naples, Admiral Crowe was the commander of NATO South. I asked him about the French Navy. He said, "They're our best asset in the Mediterranean." This is not a minor little thing. What you're documenting is really —

JONES: It was very idiosyncratic.

Q: But also, the guy was eccentric, or something.

JONES: He was very idiosyncratic and emotional, not very logical and thoughtful, about these decisions.

He was completely arrogant about decisions made as a consensus with other Cabinet level colleagues. He regularly would disregard decisions made by principals, or even the National Security Council, as did Cheney, by the way. There were plenty of times when I would call up my colleagues at the National Security Council and say, "Wait second, the U.S. government, the principals committee, decided X. You're now telling me the Pentagon wants to do Y. When is the President of the United States, who, by the way, chaired that meeting, going to insist that the Pentagon obey the instruction that was issued by him?

"Why do we have two governments in place here? There's the Bush government and then there's the Cheney-Rumsfeld government, which is separate." They were doing things off on their own.

Q: How about Cheney? Where was he coming into it?

JONES: I thought of Cheney as the evil genius, actually, behind Rumsfeld. He was much more, in terms of the government, insidious, in a negative way, than Rumsfeld was, actually. When Cheney felt very strongly about a particular issue, he would take government into his own hands.

The particular time that I saw this happen was when we were working hard to get the Turkish government to agree to allow U.S. troops, the 4th Infantry Division, to cross Turkey into Northern Iraq. Cheney became very impatient with the Turkish government, because it was going through elections and didn't have a government in place. At some point I got a call from Eric Edelman, who was his national security guy, dictating a cable to our ambassador in Turkey to say this and this and this to the Turkish government, even though there really wasn't one at the moment.

I said, "Well, where did this come from? Why is, all of a sudden, Cheney writing cables to instruct ambassadors on what to say to a foreign leader? Where's the principals committee?"

"Oh, we don't need a principals committee decision on this," we don't need this, we don't need that. That's the kind of thing that happened.

Q: Did Cheney's daughter, who was in the Near Eastern bureau, did she represent her father, pretty much? How was she viewed? Did she spill over into your field?

JONES: She rarely spilled over into my field. There were just a few times where we needed to have some assistance. She really worked on the assistance programs in the Middle East. I think I only met with her only once or twice.

But I used to hear a lot about it, because she was her father's representative there, she did control access to the White House, or tried to, for the assistant secretaries. She wasn't always successful, mind you, because Bill Burns was the assistant secretary. He was very good at this kind of thing. He gave her the lead when he thought he needed to, but otherwise kept control of it.

But it was impossible for the bureau at staff meetings to make comments about Cheney or the Bush White House. Our staff meetings were full of such comments. Poor NEA couldn't say anything about that because of Liz being there.

Berlusconi, the prime minister of Italy, was very close to Bush. He was very disliked around Europe, as kind of a joke. His friendship with Bush, his close association with Bush, didn't always translate into Italy supporting some of the military operations the way they needed to be supported.

There were several times when we were working on trying to get local permission, or cabinet or parliamentary permission for planes to take off from Aviano Air Base to do whatever they needed to do in Iraq. But he was a stalwart in terms of Bush support, as was Aznar, the prime minister of Spain. Spain was the first stop that Bush made on his first foreign trip. They became great friends. Aznar's Spain was a steadfast supporter of Bush's throughout the Iraq operation.

When Azar's party was voted out of office during this time, he was voted out of office just after the terrible terrorist bombings in the railroad stations in Spain. The Spanish government came to us to say, "We don't know who did it. If you do, or if you're able to find out, whatever you do, say that there's no link to al Qaida." They really tried to orchestrate what the U.S. was going to say about who it might have been and who it was or who it wasn't. They wanted to make sure that people thought it was the Basques and not an al Qaida connection. Not because Aznar was so closely associated with the U.S. Well, he was caught in a lie, basically, just before the election. I think he was voted out because of the lie, not because of his association with Bush.

Zapatero, who was the one who came in after him, had made all kinds of extremely negative comments about Bush during the election campaign. When he was elected we orchestrated a phone call from Bush to congratulate him, as one would, a NATO ally. The U.S. interpreter was on the phone waiting for Bush to come on, so she could begin interpreting the conversation. While she was on the phone she could hear Zapatero saying to his colleague, or his aides, "Oh my God, this is going to be a very embarrassing conversation. I said some pretty awful things about him. In wonder what he's going to say to me?" It was a perfectly civil conversation, obviously, but the Pentagon, the Office of the Vice President were extremely anti-Spain after that, you couldn't get anything organized with Spain, thanks to them.

Q: There really is a problem if you have a leadership on either side that keeps an enemies list. We all go through tough political times and politicians normally learn to accept that, shrug it off and move on. But I take it there were elements of personal animosity.

JONES: It was very personal. Secretary Powell took it upon himself and all of us internalized this, completely, that it was up to him and the rest of us to maintain relationships with each of these countries in a normal way, whether it was Spain, to leaven the Aznar friendship a bit and have good conversations, productive conversations, about what Spain could and couldn't do to support NATO. Same thing with Italy and Berlusconi; same thing with Germany.

Q: How much did you find, say with Schröder, where was he coming from? Were we dealing with Europeans who were looking at the American president as being sort of a halfwit, a problem, or what?

JONES: Let's take Germany: Schröder was a German politician who always had great respect for the United States. He grew up during the Cold War, was very appreciative of the role that the U.S. played to keep the Soviets at bay in Europe.

However, starting with when the U.S. walked out of the Kyoto Treaty, he had a huge domestic problem vis-à-vis the U.S., big anti-Americanism because of the Kyoto Treaty. He was in a very close election campaign then, by the summer of 2002. It became clear that the way to win the election was to be anti-U.S. also. So I saw Schröder as being very opportunistic in his anti-Americanism on one level. The other level with Schröder (and

this is not unlike other German politicians) is as Putin got more and more autocratic, he began to be more and more conciliatory to Putin, where others were pushing back.

The UK was pushing back a lot on Putin, the U.S. was, even France was, to a great degree. But Schröder was, among German politicians, not unusual in history, wanted to try to accommodate Putin. Frankly I used to talk in terms of Putin having recruited various world leaders, in the classic KGB sense. He recruited George Bush, he recruited Schröder, he recruited Chirac, to a degree. He couldn't recruit Blair; Blair was resistant to him. He totally recruited Berlusconi, Berlusconi's still recruited, to my mind. We see Schröder having joined the board of Gazprom after he left office, so he continues to be an apologist for some very bad, autocratic Russian international policies.

Q: Maybe Bush was accelerating the process, but did the next European generation no longer have sort of an appreciation for American leadership?

JONES: Yes, absolutely!

Q: And could we do anything about this?

JONES: Well, it's absolutely true that the generation that we're talking about has no personal memory of the Cold War and therefore no residual appreciation for the role that the U.S. played in that part of history.

But to my mind George Bush exacerbated that tremendously by walking away from a climate change agreement, walking away from a treaty against genocide and war crimes. Just on the face of it, to be so aggressively not supportive of those principles got a lot of people talking about a difference in values, that the U.S. and Europe no longer held the same values, that there had been a fundamental shift in the U.S.. The fact that the U.S. still had the death penalty just added fuel to the fire. People like Rumsfeld and Cheney seemed to revel in this. They would stoke the fire of anti-Americanism, it seemed to me, by the kinds of statements that they made.

At the same time, the interesting thing is as Western Europe, the traditional group of American allies, as their publics became more and more anti-American, the Eastern Europeans, their publics remained steadfastly pro-American. They either wanted the U.S. to be a very strong ally in NATO, if they were already in NATO. The three Eastern European countries that came, then there were ten other Eastern European countries that wanted to come into NATO, they were desperate to come into NATO.

They didn't want to hurt their chances by pissing off the U.S. in any way. They wanted that vote to come in. Of the ten, seven got in.

Q: Just recently, I feel much buoyed up about our future. Albania, it's now a member of NATO.

JONES: Well, I tell you what: Albania is probably one of the best NATO allies. The Albanians were the ones who stepped up right in the beginning in Iraq, never mind what you think about Iraq. They coordinated extremely well. They integrated extremely well. They are far better than the Czech military, far better than the Macedonian or the Croatian. So they might not be the best on standing up to the Russians, but Romania is much worse, for instance. So interestingly enough, the Albanians are very, very reliable allies in NATO.

Q: How about the Italians? You mentioned Berlusconi, but how stood Italy during this time?

JONES: Berlusconi was very pro-George Bush. The Italian population was very anti. There were big demonstrations all over the big cities. As I mentioned, even the parliament tried to refuse to allow U.S. planes from leaving the Aviano Air Base with weapons and munitions to go to Iraq. We finally got that vote turned around.

So it was a very, very military security situation with Italy. In addition, with Italy more than with other countries, but with several of the others as well, we had a very big issue in NATO over genetically modified seeds. That was another very big issue that we were constantly negotiating with the EU and with individual countries. So as we were trying to get planes allowed to leave the Aviano base, that would be one set of talking points that I would have. The next set would be on genetically modified seeds and allowing American companies in.

Q: I remember Henry Kissinger in his book talked about going to Rome to talk to the Italian government, he said it was almost a pro forma *gesture, because really very few decisions came out of the government and all. How did you find it at that time, with Berlusconi?*

JONES: Well, there were some very important decisions that had to be made, so certainly the government needed to make those decisions. But those decisions often had to be confirmed by the parliament or could be overturned by the parliament. It wasn't a foregone conclusion at all that Berlusconi controlled parliament enough, or even the cabinet, to make the decisions that were needed on this or that issue. So I must say I was constantly having conversations with my Italian counterparts on all kinds of issues, in order to make sure they felt briefed.

The Italians were not always in the in-group of European capitals that we talked to most often. They were always in on the Balkans issues. But what often happened with the Italians is that when they were particularly concerned about an issue, it was a personnel matter, it was a question of getting an Italian appointed to this or that position on which the U.S. had a vote, then they were vocal. So I probably spent as much time on personnel politics with the Italians as on policy issues.

But I was in Rome a lot. There were constant discussions with the Italians and the Vatican on a variety of issues.

Q: A point is always made about the Vatican being a great source of information, but I've heard others say not really. How did you find the Vatican?

JONES: I needed the Vatican conversations in order to understand what was going on with religious freedom in Russia, because Catholic priests were having a very hard time there, as the Russian Orthodox Church became more important.

So, yes, we would have that kind of conversation, often about China as well, concerning the church in China. The Vatican was also the place we tried to recruit as an ally on the genetically modified organisms, to see if we couldn't get their help in proselytizing them, that there wasn't a religious reason for opposing them. We had a very activist ambassador at the time who also spent a lot of time at his embassy on trafficking in persons. He did a very good job on that.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

JONES: His name was Jim Nicholson. He then became the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Q: This "frankenfood," was this something that just arose because of natural fear of the unknown], or was there the natural foods lobby working in Europe, because it became a real issue?

JONES: It became a very big issue. I don't know whether there was lobbying going on. It was certainly something that an awful lot of publics felt concerned about.

But the issue for us was not so much use of the seeds in Europe. What we were trying to get them to do is back off proselytizing in various parts of Africa not to use these seeds, where the issue was not which seed to use but starvation. So we became concerned about it in that respect. What do I know about the scientific issues? I don't know. There were an awful lot of scientific studies that demonstrated that there wasn't a difference in particular seeds, other than yield.

Probably twenty years from now we'll find out that there is. I don't know. But even so, I found it very hard to go along with European attitudes. Especially the European Commission would say, "We are going to campaign against the use of that kind of seed. We're not going to replace it with anything." You're campaigning for starvation and that seemed to me to be unconscionable.

Tony Blair, of course, became a very good friend of President Bush's right away. It was not expected that they would be that close, because he was a Labor politician. But it turned out that what they had in common was their religious faith. They got along very well partly as a result of that. Because they were so close and because it was so

important, because Blair was such an influence on Bush, he really listened to him, it became very important for Secretary Powell and Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, to have a very good relationship and to talk with each other in detail about how to manage the relationship.

Often the conversation was about how to get Blair to talk Bush into doing something that was more sensible, frankly. Those conversations were always private. Normally the secretary of state's conversations with a foreign counterpart are listened to, notes are taken. He had a private line to Straw, for that reason. The U.S. undertook things, for example, trying to get a second vote supporting the Iraq War through the Security Council, because Blair was adamant that he needed to have that second vote authorizing the invasion. In the end we couldn't get the vote, as hard as Secretary Powell tried. Blair was able to talk Parliament into allowing UK participation in the invasion even so.

The worst moment in all of that came just after the vote, when Rumsfeld said we really didn't need the Brits, that we could do it all on our own, anyway. Of course Blair threw a fit, all of the British military threw a fit, Jack Straw threw a fit: "Here we are, your best supporter. We're the ones bringing the rest of Europe along. You wouldn't have nearly any Europeans involved in this without us. How can Rumsfeld say that?"

Q: Besides, it wasn't symbolic. It was a significant effort.

JONES: It was significant. They were the ones going into Basra. The Poles were the ones who occupied the oilfields, they were fantastic in what they did. Various other European countries participated in all kinds of ways.

There's actually a controversy now in some of them about how they participated. Did they or didn't they get permission from their parliaments to participate. The policy we followed is that any kind of participation was counted as participation. So on a weekly basis we were racking up how many countries had agreed to participate. Participation could be as minor as allowing overflights by U.S. planes, all the way through to providing troops.

For example, Belgium, which was adamantly opposed to the invasion, nevertheless allowed trains to be loaded in the ports and transit Belgium with troops and materiel. That was counted as support. France and Germany allowed overflights and that was counted as support. There were very, very few countries, in fact, in Europe who didn't allow some kind of support. I think there were only two, as a matter of fact: Austria and Slovenia.

Q: Did Austria and Slovenia end up on our shitlist or something, or what?

JONES: Yeah, absolutely. Secretary Powell never visited Austria or Slovenia. Slovenia was less of an issue, because there wasn't all that much they could do. They should have provided overflight permission. The problem with Austria was train transit. What we wanted was train transit through Austria and they just wouldn't permit it.

Q: Was this Halder and all that?

JONES: Ferrero-Waldner was the foreign minister at the time but she wouldn't take it forward. She just wouldn't agree.

The other thing, we had a terrible problem with Austria over a child abduction case. The mother had taken the child away from the father in the U.S. There'd been a court order in the U.S. for shared custody. The mother refused to allow the father to visit the child in Austria. There were court decisions in Austria saying that the child should stay with the mother. It was a huge issue. I would have to talk to Ferrero-Waldner about it. She kept saying, "We can't be involved in it." I said, "Well, you're going to have to be. Your guys need to facilitate a conversation with the family that permits the father to see the daughter." It never happened.

Some of my colleagues now who are going into government are a little surprised that it's not sort of big policy all the time. It can be a child abduction case.

Q: I would think part of the Bush-Blair relationship would be that Bush really didn't have anybody else in Europe who he could talk to as a friend.

JONES: That's right.

Q: You have to have somebody to sit down and kick your shoes off with.

JONES: That certainly was Blair. It would have been Berlusconi and Aznar to a degree, except for the language barriers. That said, in all of the conversations that I saw them have, including casual conversations at dinners and lunches, they were all pretty good in terms of working through interpreters. It wasn't much of a barrier. Aznar gradually spoke better English, so they could have conversations. Bush had a certain amount of Spanish that helped him out in those kinds of conversations.

But the thing to keep in mind, though, is that Bush wasn't a guy to sit around and chat about world issues. It wasn't really very interesting to him. He didn't really want to spend very much time on these issues.

He wasn't curious about anything. This awful dinner with Chirac, one of the first meetings with Chirac, Chirac thought he would talk about something that was interesting. There was a lot going on in Lebanon. He talked about Lebanon. Bush didn't engage for one second. Chirac just talked the entire dinner. It was awful.

Q: If your principal doesn't engage, there you are.

JONES: Whenever Secretary Powell was there, he would try to engage, because he could see what was going on. He would try to help out in any way he could. The problem was

that if he did that kind of thing, Bush actually would become very huffy: "I'm the president, not you!" He said that to him one time. So he had to be quite careful about how he came across, either with the president in the room and when the president was going to be involved.

Q: Today is July 15, 2009 with Beth Jones.

JONES: Let's start with NATO enlargement and EUR enlargement. NATO enlargement was a very big issue when I first started in the Europe-Eurasia Bureau. It was something that Under Secretary Marc Grossman felt very strongly about, because he had led the bureau during the first NATO enlargement. He was very concerned that we organize ourselves properly for it and that it go well.

By "organize ourselves properly for it" he at first thought that we needed to have a separate person in the front office who would be in charge of NATO enlargement, because it was such a big effort the first time around.

I went back to my team and we talked about how best to organize ourselves for this, given that there would be quite a large enlargement, probably. There were ten countries that wanted to be part of NATO. We, after quite a good discussion, went back to Marc and said, "We would like to do this without adding another person. We have the capacity to do this, because of Bob Bradtke, Janet Bogue and Heather Conley, the relevant deputy assistant secretaries." We felt we had such a strong team that we could manage it on our own, including the part of persuading the Hill. It required the Senate to ratify a revision of the treaty to permit new countries to come into NATO.

Q: What was your overall feeling, at the time and maybe that of your team, about enlarging NATO?

JONES: We were all very enthusiastic about it. We wanted it to go well, though. We were very, very insistent, to the point of being draconian, that every country preparing to join NATO had to be genuinely capable, that there was no sort of political pass for any country. They didn't get a political pass on any of the capabilities or any of the values commitments. So, for example, we were very tough on the Baltic States on holocaust issues. We were very tough on some of the Central Europeans on corruption issues, the kinds of things that might not be exactly military capabilities, but things that all of NATO agreed that they were joining a group of like-minded nations. Even though they might be militarily capable, they had to also be socially and economically in the same league, shall we say, as the current NATO members.

Q: For the Baltic States, what were the holocaust issues?

JONES: There were a lot of Jewish properties that had been taken over by the Germans, so there were holocaust victim restitution issues that were very difficult for these

countries to undertake, both because of rule of law issues and because there was still a degree of anti-Semitism in the Baltic States.

There were anti-Semitism issues that we had to work through, in terms of seminars and training programs. How do you talk about Jewish issues without being anti-Semitic. We did a lot of collaborative work with the very small remaining Jewish communities in these countries, a lot of intercommunity, interfaith outreach kinds of things, a lot of encouragement for Jewish families to come back to these countries. That was part of it.

Another part of sort of the socialization, if you will, of the Baltic States for NATO was treatment of minorities. One of the largest minorities in each of these three countries of course were ethnic Russians, by language and by ethnicity. The Russians in Moscow were very nervous and upset about especially the Baltic States joining NATO, because it was just too close to home. Those three countries had been part of the Soviet Union, as opposed to just part of the Warsaw Pact like the others. The irony was that we were insisting that these countries treat their Russian minorities far better than they had planned to treat them, that there had to be a way that there would be a lead time for them to learn the local languages, that they couldn't do it in a draconian way, overnight, that there should be a way that they'd have Russian language newspapers, that Russian should continue to be allowed to be taught in the schools and that kind of thing.

So as I talked in Moscow with Russian officials about NATO enlargement, I made a big point of taking with me some of the textbooks that were being used to promote the teaching of Russians in schools, to demonstrate to the Russians that I knew a whole lot more about how their ethnic minorities were being treated in the Baltic States than they did. They could, thank you very much, just stop harassing me about how badly these places were treating their Russian minorities. The fact that they were joining NATO meant that they were being forced to treat the Russian minorities far better than they would have been treated had they not been joining NATO. So it was one of those great ironies of NATO enlargement.

But philosophically, also, at the beginning of the Bush Administration there was the question, okay, how many of these ten countries are we thinking about really pushing hard to join NATO? There was a lot of back and forth, because different European countries, other NATO members, had different ideas.

The British were tending toward a small enlargement, another small one, like the three that had gone in before. Others were much more in the category of the bigger enlargement. France was promoting the NATO membership of Romania and Bulgaria, who were not at the top of list, in terms of capabilities.

We in EUR were on the side of as many as could qualify should be allowed to come in. We developed a whole program for how to promote the kinds of reforms that were needed in each of these countries for a bigger enlargement. We got a decision, after a tremendous number of trips that these three—Bob Bradtke, Janet Bogue and Heather

Conley— made regularly with Defense Department colleagues to the ten countries They went to push them for reforms, to check on reforms, to see how they were doing, to the point that the other NATO countries basically just sat back and said, "Okay, you guys are doing all the work. We like what you're doing. We like the leadership. Thank you very much, we'll follow your lead."

So it was fairly early in the administration that the president, at our behest, made a decision in principle to err on the side of going larger, if the capabilities were there. The decisions, of course, weren't made until three years, or two and a half years later, in terms of which of the ten would qualify. The decision was made that seven would qualify, as far as the U.S. was concerned, for NATO membership.

There was still a very strong push from the Pentagon that Bulgaria should not be one of the seven, it should be six. That was principally because there was a lot of concern about the Bulgarian defense minister and his ties to a particular project that seemed to be too close to the Russians in some way. But it appeared to be, in the end, that there was a very negative campaign in Bulgaria against this particular guy and that the "intelligence" that was coming in, largely from Defense channels, was quite orchestrated. It turned out that this guy probably didn't have quite the contacts, it wasn't quite as bad. Plus we were able to get the government to establish some red lines, some fire walls, let's say, so that the kinds of sales that might have been going on could no longer go on. There was that whole controversy.

There was also a controversy about one of the Baltic States, about Lithuania, because of the president's close association with two men who were on her staff who were believed to have ongoing contacts with the Russian mafia, in terms of cigarette sales and other smuggling.

Q: Curious how our priorities move around. It's no longer KGB, it's the Russian mafia.

JONES: Russian mafia, but of course the KGB was very associated with the Russian mafia, so it's sort of the same thing. It was a very difficult thing for us to deal with, because we were getting information from the Agency. They were absolutely insistent that the president had to fire these two people, there was no way these guys could be in the government. To make a long story short, it turned out that there was a controversy within the embassy there as well as to whether or not these guys were actually as bad as they were thought to be. So we had quite a controversy within the U.S. government, within various parts of the intelligence community, as to were these guys so bad, what needed to be done?

It was exacerbated, because the President of Lithuania did not at all want these guys to be fired. She said they were her trusted aides and it was impossible that our information about them was correct. In the end we found a way to work around this, so Lithuania could join NATO.

Q: The same problem with Willy Brandt, his aide who turned out to be a spy. But this sort of thing can happen, where we find ourselves by circumstance having to get farther into a government than we'd like to. But now, Beth, while you were doing this, you were part of the Soviet mafia, going back. How about our Soviet specialists? There was an awful lot of unhappiness, I gather, from the people that dealt with Russia that NATO enlargement would unnecessarily provoke the Russians and all this. What were you getting from your people who'd been dealing with this? Was this an interbureau battle or not?

JONES: No. Basically it had been solved under Secretary Christopher, in terms of that fight. That was the fight I think I talked about. The lines were drawn between Lynn Davis, as Under Secretary for Political-Military Affairs and Strobe Talbot as Deputy Secretary, where Strobe was adamant that there should not be NATO enlargement (his recollections are different in his book than mine) and Lynn Davis was adamant that there should be NATO enlargement. In the end after quite a bit of discussion Lynn Davis's position won the day, that our relationship with Russia should not include putting a stop to the aspirations of the Central European governments and countries, many of whom were desperate to join NATO.

What Colin Powell used to say as secretary of state, when asked particularly by the Russians, he was often asked, "Why are you continuing NATO enlargement? The Warsaw Pact went away. NATO should go away at the same time." His line was "You don't close a club when you have a line going around the block of people who want to join it."

The question then was, "Okay, why do all these countries want to join NATO? What is NATO's role?" So as we were working on NATO enlargement we were also working very hard to redefine NATO: what is NATO's role? We were well past the out-of-area discussion, where it was very controversial for NATO even to operate in the Balkans. That was completely a given now. The question then became, after 9/11, what can NATO do in Afghanistan, what's the NATO role in Afghanistan? Then, further, is there a NATO role in Africa? Is there a NATO role in the Middle East? That was a big part of the Madrid NATO Ministerial, in May of 2004.

One of the reasons that Marc Grossman was concerned about NATO enlargement and were we organized well for it, was because of the Hill. Bob Bradtke and the NATO team briefed the staff on the Hill to within an inch of their lives on NATO enlargement. Every time they went out to Europe they briefed the staff. Every time they were going to go out they briefed the staff. So the senators who were most interested in NATO enlargement and their staffs knew everything that we were working on. They were brought in to a great degree, almost a complete degree, on what our thinking was on which countries, how were they doing and what were the criteria, et cetera.

By the time we made the decision and had the NATO summit and brought the seven in, the ratification of the NATO enlargement went like clockwork. There was no controversy whatsoever. We had organized a lot of outreach. I did a series of speeches in California

and Texas. Bob Bradtke did speeches all over the East Coast. Heather Conley was out. Janet Bogue was out. We were all over.

We found nobody was that interested any more. “Oh, yeah, NATO enlargement, fine, sure. Next!” So the vote, for example, on NATO enlargement, it was almost unanimous, only because one was missing, I think maybe Ted Kennedy was ill then,.

Q: I would also think that the only interest would be the equivalent to the Polish community in Chicago and, then, hell, yes, they want to get in. So the ethnic communities wanted it.

JONES: The ethnic communities wanted it. We met regularly with the Baltic-American groups. Part of the reason for doing that was, yes, they all want it, but we said, “Okay, help us advocate for this. Who are you talking to? We’re talking to a lot of people. You write letters to your senator or your congressman, talk to your community, so no issues arise about this.”

What about the three of ten who didn’t make it in? That was Croatia, Macedonia and Albania. One of the things that we felt strongly about is we need to tell them early that it wasn’t going to work, they just weren’t going to be able to become capable enough in time for the NATO Summit in Prague. That was my job, to go out and talk to the three of them and say, “Here’s the problem. Here’s where you’re falling short. You can still make it. The door remains open. But you’re not going to make it by Prague.”

Which they were very grateful for. We very quickly came up with the idea of the Adriatic Charter, which we had the three sign. Colin Powell went, he presided over the signature of the Adriatic Charter, as a way to demonstrate that we weren’t going to forget them, that somehow they hadn’t dropped off the edge of the Earth, with this Adriatic Charter.

Q; And what were the problems?

JONES: The problems were to some degree lack of military capability. That wasn’t the problem with Albania. Albania was pretty well up there.

Macedonia, they had very recently had the Ohrid Agreement, so there was still controversy over the unification of the country, could it really come together? It was coming together. It was doing well. But it hadn’t matured long enough for it to really solidify to the satisfaction of enough people. Therefore a lot of the social issues had not been addressed yet. What do you do about the Albanian minority? What do you do about the various religious groups? What do you do about the very aggressive militia kind of group? It’s been disbanded, but it was still a little bit too much in evidence. The language differences hadn’t been sorted out. With Macedonia, too. there was still the problem of the name, which hadn’t been sorted out with Greece. So that was the problem.

Q: I'm laughing, because I served five years in Belgrade and four years in Athens and most of my consular problems were down in Macedonia.

JONES: With Croatia, the problem was still with refugees, returned refugees from the Balkan Wars, treatment of refugees, displaced persons. Croatia would have been the first of the former Yugoslav republics to be brought into NATO. Macedonia would have, too, but Croatia was one of ones where the really severe ethnic conflicts had occurred. There just wasn't sufficient, they just weren't ready on social grounds. There was still outstanding war criminal charges against Croatians, everybody knows where they are but you haven't picked them up, yet. That disqualifies you for NATO membership, that kind of thing.

Q: For NATO, the situation was, by this date, if you're qualified you qualify and you're in. But if you don't qualify by this date, there will be another round?

JONES: That's right.

Q: So it wasn't a matter of people worrying about either or.

JONES: That's right, but it required constant reminder and constant reiteration of the NATO open door policy. It was something that every so often would come up in a NATO meeting, do we really want the open door policy? We always pushed hard for it. We see now the result of that, the open door policy means now we're talking about Ukraine and Georgia, who really aren't ready.

Part of the U.S. thinking was that NATO had such a strong role to play in terms of the stabilization and prosperity of the European continent that we didn't want to say that there was going to necessarily be a limit that we were going to determine right now.

Q: Was there something about, say, if the Baltic States reverted to anti-Semitism or what have you, in other words, started to renege, that they could be expelled?

JONES: There was a discussion about that, could a NATO member be expelled. We basically said no, that isn't the plan. In other words, the new members aren't coming in in a lower class of citizenship than the original members. Because there is no way to throw out a NATO member. We can't throw out Spain or Germany or whoever. To have said that we would throw out a new member, would give it second class citizenship. We said that we're not going to do that. If you're a NATO member, you're a NATO member, period, end of story.

Q: Austria was not a NATO member?

JONES: No and had no desire to be. Austria's a member of Partnership for Peace, which is in association with NATO. Finland, same thing. Ireland, same thing. Sweden, same thing.

Q: What about Russia? Were we even talking about, well, in time, maybe you might want to come in, or something?

JONES: Yes, we talked with the Russians all the time about this. I did it in Washington, I did it in Moscow, I did it every time I met with any of my Russian counterparts. We would meet in Brussels, we would meet in Spain, we would meet on the margins of every possible event and tell them where we were. I was a strong believer in transparency, where we were in terms of the thinking on who comes in and who doesn't.

I spent a lot of time talking about the criteria, how important it was for Russia to understand the criteria and how good it was for Russia to know that the criteria were being maintained well in these countries. This meant that Russia's neighbors, because if these countries were now Russia's neighbors, the new NATO members, would have capabilities and social principles and cultural principles that would protect Russia.

That was a lot of my advocacy. Those were the kinds of points that I would ask Marc to make, give to Mr. Armitage or Secretary Powell for any of their meetings. Our entire goal was to demonstrate to the Russians that NATO enlargement wasn't a problem.

Now the way the NATO-Russia Council works…. They were always complaining about it, because it was the NATO members plus Russia. So we said, "Let's think in terms of, there is a council in which Russia is a member, so that Russia sits next to Spain, seated in alphabetical order, rather than next to the United States at the end of the alliance and separate." This was to try to integrate Russia more into NATO, that was sort of the symbolic way we did it. To solidify that we had a special NATO meeting to bring Russia in, a new Russia-NATO Council. We did it in Italy in 2003, I think it was, pretty early, at a sea resort outside of Rome. It was a very, very big deal to have Russia be a partner in NATO.

The idea was to try to find all kinds of areas that we could cooperate on, whether it was exercises or nuclear issues, or whatever. That worked well enough for a while. But as the United States went into Iraq, as Putin began to see how much the United States was doing things that the Europeans hated (or some Europeans hated and the United States still was basically getting away with it, there was no real consequence for the United States) Putin began to be much more aggressive and much more prickly about NATO, about NATO enlargement and about other issues that Russia was unhappy about, particularly Ukraine, Georgia, as those issues came up.

Secretary Powell regularly went to Moscow. He was constantly talking with the Russian military leadership, many of whom he knew from having been a corps commander in Germany. Secretary Powell spent a lot of time with the defense minister as well, going through, okay, what does it mean for NATO enlargement, why is this better for Russia?

You could always get them to say that their relationship with Poland in fact had improved since Poland had become a member of NATO and a member of the EU. But even though we could always get them to say, in terms of facts, the situation was better and in terms of facts there wasn't anything that was really going to threaten Russia from NATO enlargement, emotionally they couldn't handle it. They hated it emotionally and culturally, really, politically. They absolutely hated it.

The clearest exposition of that came quite late in the first part of the Bush Administration, when Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov asked Secretary Powell to meet with the senior foreign policy leadership in Moscow on one of his trips. One after another they explained what it was that made them so upset about the United States and about NATO. The main argument they made was related not as much to NATO but the United States reneging on so many treaties, the other part of the Bush Administration policy: the START Treaty and NPT and all of the things that the United States had walked away from.

Every single one of them said, "You have to understand, we trust international agreements, we trust bilateral agreements. We want to have everything decided in a way that can be tested. We don't like the fact the United States says, 'We all agree that we're getting rid of nuclear weapons and we'll just agree on reducing nuclear weapons.' We want a detailed, negotiated agreement, so that we know what we're supposed to do and you know what you're supposed to do. We don't like this sort of gentleman's handshake kinds of agreements. Those don't work for us."

It was such a clear exposition. It was so contrary to everything that the Bush Administration stood for. They felt the treaties bound the United States too much. The Russians wanted the United States to be bound. They were prepared to bind themselves in order to make sure the United States was bound as well.

Q: What was Rumsfeld's role during this NATO business?

JONES: He didn't play a strong role. He agreed with the philosophy. There was no real issue. He, at the same time, expended his energy on making sure NATO didn't get involved in anything that got in his way. This meant that when discussion first began about what could NATO do in Afghanistan, his first reaction was, "Nothing. NATO should do nothing in Afghanistan."

The NATO allies, after 9/11, wanted very much to participate in some way. They could see that Afghanistan had been the source of the problem leading up to 9/11. Although it was completely appropriate that NATO redefine its role (it no longer even had a discussion about out of area, it was obvious it was going to be operating out of area) that NATO should have a role in Afghanistan in some way, which it eventually did. We finally got that agreed. It was only when so many more American troops were needed in Iraq that Rumsfeld and Cheney were prepared to discuss what NATO might do in Afghanistan to take up the slack from the U.S. in Afghanistan.

Before we go on to that, though, let me talk a minute about the Chocolate Summit, because that involves NATO. The Chocolate Summit was a mini-summit that was held in the chocolate capital of the world in Belgium and it involved the Belgians, the French and the Germans. It was a discussion about how a European military force might be used to greater effect in the world. It was dubbed the Chocolate Summit because of where it was held.

It was something that the U.S., the State Department, the Defense Department, we all agreed was a bad thing, that the Belgians and French were up to no good. The Germans were going along for reasons that were unclear and therefore upsetting. It was clearly, we felt, I felt, retaliation, in a way, for going into Iraq. It was a way for some of the NATO members to say, "We don't like what the U.S. is doing, we don't like the fact that the U.S. leads NATO. The Europeans need to have a stronger say in military operations." So they came up with a set of formulations to strengthen European military capabilities in a way that was very upsetting to the U.S.

In the end, we know now that the consequences weren't that bad, there were some consequences. It made it a little bit more difficult to negotiate the turnover from NATO to the EU in Bosnia, for instance, but not by much. The generals on the ground negotiated in a way that worked out fairly well, or quite well, I should say. But it is one of those little blips of history that demonstrated how the European countries, those three, in particular, could really, when they wanted to, throw a stick in the spokes of NATO.

It's something that the British were very helpful in talking to the Germans and the French and the Belgians about trying to ameliorate the language. I remember it in particular because I was on the phone with my British counterpart all the time, including on Thanksgiving Day when I was trying to take the turkey out of the oven, negotiating language on this crazy thing, to see if there was something that we could accept -- not agree to but at least remotely accept, to make it less bad. But it was just one of the elements of the difficulties that we were experiencing with Europe because of Iraq.

Q: The Chocolate Summit was designed essentially to weaken NATO, create a separate force, or what was it?

JONES: The main thrust of the idea was to create a headquarters for European forces that was separate from NATO headquarters. We were very worried about that, because it would draw away so much of the capability from NATO forces. There were already so few troops and so few headquarters staff that European countries were contributing to NATO that to have to have two we thought meant that the U.S. would be NATO and the Europeans would be the EU force. We thought that was not a good thing, that that was a very bad thing.

We tried very hard to get the officers that would be at the EU Force sort of dual-hatted and that kind of thing. To a degree that's what's happened, but there is a separate

headquarters now in Mons, even though they're right next to each other. I'm pretty sure that's how it's turned out.

Q: The Russians were having their problems in Chechnya and all that. Was that something we were watching or concerned about?

JONES: Yes, the whole Chechnya issue was something that was of great concern to us, to the Europeans. We talked with the Russians about it all the time, in terms of human rights issues and what was going on there. The Russian response basically was to say, "None of your business. This is our business. Get out!"

The OSCE, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, had observers in there, they had trainers, they had a whole mission there to work on a variety of issues, human rights issues, democracy issues, et cetera, in Chechnya. The Russians just threw them out. Then they said, "By the way, not only are we refusing to allow any OSCE people in, we don't want any Europeans going in there. Oh, by the way, we want to reduce our budgetary contribution to the OSCE because we don't like the way the OSCE is going. We don't like the emphasis on the democracy basket and human rights basket. We want their primary basket to be the security basket. We want the OSCE to take over as the premier European security agency."

We pushed back very hard on that. Basically it was a way to bring the OSCE up to at least equal NATO. That's the way I saw it, in terms of what the Russians were trying to do. It was difficult the entire four years I was assistant secretary. It continues to be, so far as I know, particularly in terms of the budget. That's where the Russians really have a stranglehold on us, on the budget.

Every December, when the OSCE ministerials took place, we had a huge budget controversy with the Russians, to the point that in the ministerial that was held in the Netherlands, probably in 2003, maybe 2004, Secretary Powell gave a really, really tough speech about Russian behavior, much tougher than had ever been done before. It was very much in accord with what Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, who was the Dutch foreign minister at the time and therefore chairman of the OSCE, very much wanted. He really wanted the Russians called out on their behavior in the OSCE, on the bullying tactics that they were using. I must say you could have heard a pin drop during Secretary Powell's speech at the OSCE, because finally something was going to be said about the Russians. I don't know what's happened. The budget issues are very arcane and difficult.

Q: Well, what were the Russians doing? Just cut the budget way down?

JONES: They were trying to reduce their share of the budget.

Q: Were they trying to emasculate the OSCE?

JONES: Both. They were trying to reduce their share of the budget in order to emasculate the OSCE. This was, of course, after it was clear that they weren't going to be able to make the OSCE into a counterpart to NATO.

One of the things that the Russians and some of the other Central Asian and Caucasus countries proposed was that there be an OSCE office in NATO and a NATO office in the OSCE. It was just a distraction. The members are almost all the same. That was just one of many things that were very difficult to deal with in those years.

Q: Still on the NATO thing, by the time you left, were there countries that were still candidates for membership?

JONES: Macedonia, Albania and Croatia were the ones in the Adriatic Charter. Serbia was not in anything yet. Serbia was still very controversial, although a prime minister was elected who was very much a reformer. He was then assassinated. That was one of the trips we had Secretary Powell make, right after the assassination, to pay condolences. It was hugely appreciated.

Q: Did you see Serbia as, okay, it maybe wasn't going to join right away, but was it was making some of the right moves?

JONES: It would have been under this reformist prime minister who was then assassinated. There were a couple of very difficult things with Serbia.

First, Milosevich in the beginning of my time as assistant secretary finally went to The Hague Tribunal to be tried for war crimes. So Milosevich finally was turned over and that was a big plus.

Then, however, there were still Mladic and Karadzic, two of these Serbian generals who had obviously participated in war crimes who were hiding in Serbia. The word was everybody knew where they were, the military knew where they were, the police knew where they were, but they couldn't be apprehended. So that was a very big problem between Serbia and the Europeans and the U.S., addressing war crimes. The other issues were, again, refugees, return of refugees, return of internally displaced persons and various economic and other reforms that would be necessary for Serbia to come back into the state of nations, to take its place as it wanted to.

In the meantime, there was still a tremendous number of U.S. sanctions on Serbia. One of the things that Janet Bogue as the DAS for the Balkans spent a tremendous amount of time on is which sanctions should be reduced or eliminated, had they complied with the requirements in order for us even to consider reducing sanctions. The other then was how to persuade Congress that this was appropriate, let alone the international community, as Congress was where the sanctions were the most stringent.

So the philosophy that we undertook with Serbia related to a degree to getting its military capabilities improved. We advocated for a return of military to military programs between the U.S. and Serbia, which Jim Jones, now national security advisor but then the EUCOM commander, was tasked with carrying that out. There were a few glitches back and forth about just how eager he was to do that. So that got underway.

But the primary element of U.S. policy toward Serbia was to push to increase its capabilities to become part of the EU. To give it a European perspective was actually more important than a NATO perspective. Prosperity and being part of Europe was a bigger attraction, a bigger driver of reform in Serbia than becoming a NATO member.

Now, the biggest problem that Serbia had was Kosovo, as far as the EU was concerned, as far as NATO was concerned. Serbia, even though it no longer controlled Kosovo, still was not prepared to agree to any kind of independence for Kosovo. There were still various ties to Kosovo, Serbia still directed, shall we shall, some of the incidents that took place in Kosovo. Throughout this whole time I was working in EUR there was a whole discussion of NATO and Kosovo, who would be the NATO lead and would the U.S. participate, how would the U.S. participate. Throughout the four years Rumsfeld was insisting that NATO no longer be anywhere in the Balkans.

When that controversy started right at the beginning of the administration Colin Powell was the one who said, "We went in together, we're going out together." In other words, the U.S. isn't pulling out before everybody else is in any of the Balkan states, including Kosovo. That was one of our more difficult issues.

Q: Talking about NATO, how was the EU-NATO relationship, from your perspective?

JONES: It was difficult on the military side, as we saw from the Chocolate Summit. There was this constant rub that the EU didn't want to associate itself with NATO, that it wanted to separate itself to a much greater degree.

At the same time, whenever I went to Brussels, they insisted that I participate in an EU-U.S. meeting. The same thing would happen when Colin Powell would go, that there should be a NATO-EU meeting of some kind. But we could never get agreement for the EU to invite NATO to participate, so it was always a one-way street. We just couldn't get much action on that.

The political philosophy that we developed and pushed hard from the State Department, from EUR, was that the United States supported without question EU enlargement. EU enlargement was very much in the U.S. interest. There was always skepticism in Europe. We were always getting questions whether the U.S. was opposed to EU enlargement. We would say, "Absolutely not. It is in our interest. We have had technical assistance programs in all of these prospective EU member countries. We've been very careful to coordinate all of that with the EU to make sure that the rule of law issues that we're

promoting, for instance, are in line with EU law and support the EU rules that these countries will have to abide by when they become EU members."

Q: Why was it put out that we were opposed?

JONES: The primary argument was that the EU was in competition with the U.S. in terms of trade and commerce. Therefore the U.S. didn't want the EU to become stronger. We said, it's true that we compete in terms of the goods we sell and so what? That has nothing to do with the tremendous European experiment. We were always praising it to the heavens, bringing so many countries together in a larger space of peace, security and prosperity. The bigger that space became in Europe, the better it was for the United States.

Q: Well, essentially the EU was our creation, when you go back

JONES: Back to the coal and steel agreement.

Q: The whole idea was to keep the Europeans from squabbling and fighting each other, so we can stay out of these wars. That was sort of behind it.

JONES: Absolutely, you're absolutely right.

Q: But was there ever the feeling NATO was ours, the EU was not quite ours?

JONES: The way it manifested itself was that the Europeans would say, "Don't forget the EU isn't yours! Stop telling us what to do!"

Most times that they said that was of course vis-à-vis Turkey and Turkish membership in the EU. We said, "We know, you're right. We are not members of the EU and we can't tell you who to include. But we can state our view that we think that your peace and security and prosperity will be enhanced if you include Turkey and if you include these other countries." So we were constantly saying it is in the interest of the United States for the EU to be enlarged, just as it's in the interest of the United States for NATO to be enlarged. I would also add, "I know how complicated it is for the consensus kind of discussions that go on in the EU. We have the same kind of thing at NATO. I know how controversial it is because of the money that has to be spent, depending on what kind of membership everybody has. I know that I don't have to deal with any of those kinds of issues. I grant you that. Nevertheless, we should have Turkey in the EU. Yes, it will be expensive, but your peace and prosperity are worth that expense." That was our mantra.

One of the things that we did is we would regularly turn to the EU, in the person of Solana, as the foreign minister of the EU to take the lead in solving various problems. So, for instance, Iran and the nuclear issue. When the UK, France and Germany said, "We think we'd like to negotiate with Iran," we said, "Go for it but can we talk about it with you, so that you have the information we have"

John Bolton had a heart attack. He hated it.

Q: John Bolton was?

JONES: At that point he was undersecretary of state for arms control and disarmament, so he was very much the person who would have been involved, if there had been U.S. participation on the nuclear issue with Iran.

But he was convinced that the EU was going to give away the store in any conversation with the Iranians. We said, "First of all, they're going to have the conversation, so you can't stop three sovereign nations and the EU having conversation with the Iranians if they want to. So let's make the best out of it. Let's say 'These are the kinds of things we're concerned about. This is what we know about what Iran is doing. These are all the bad things. Make sure you address these.'"

We would have the same kind of conversation with the Russians, because they were also sort of pooh-poohing that Iran was doing the kinds of things we knew it was doing, in terms of its nuclear program.

But the other thing that was very interesting about the EU are the kinds of things that the EU came to us about and said, "We can't solve it. Can you?" One of the ones that still sticks in my memory involves what was called Parsley Island in the Mediterranean. It was a rock, or three rocks, I think it is, tiny islands that belonged to Spain, right on the Moroccan coast. Parsley Island had been overrun by intending emigrants to Europe. These emigrants were actually on Spanish territory, because it owned these three little islands. Well, the Spanish, Solana, the EU and others basically came to Colin Powell and said, "Can you solve this?"

I remember talking to my EU colleagues and saying. "Where is the U.S. involved in an issue between Spain and Morocco? The EU should be dealing with this." Well, I'm being a little cynical here, but basically you couldn't find people. It was August. I think the Danes were in the presidency and they were on vacation. Solana said, "I'm Spanish. I can't really deal with it." So there's Colin Powell trying to deal with the Spanish foreign minister and the Moroccans. He's calling up King Hassan all the time. It's crazy, then calling me and being grumpy about why he has to solve the EU's problems.

Q: I've talked to so many of our people who've been ambassadors, problems will come up and all of a sudden everybody looks to the United States representative to solve the problem, even though it's a local one.

JONES: In a way, it's fair enough for a country to turn to the U.S. to solve a local problem. What bothered me is for the EU not to wish to take the lead to solve a problem of one of its members, when it was constantly explaining to us, in other fora, that it was the way Europe was going to decide everything.

Q: We went through this, too, not too long before, on Yugoslavia, when it started to split up. Essentially the Europeans said, "This is a European problem and we will solve it."

JONES: And then they didn't.

Q: Looking at it fundamentally, is there a major problem, almost insolvable problem, of the EU being able to take a firm line on anything?

JONES: I think it can. It has done. For instance, the EU really took the lead with Ukraine during the Orange Revolution. The EU backed itself into it a little bit with Kwasniewski, who was the president of Poland, Adamkus, the president of Lithuania and the Dutch, who were in the EU presidency. Kwasniewski was going to Ukraine anyway to try to negotiate between Kuchma, Yanukovych and Yushchenko. He was going anyway. Adamkus was going with him.

When we heard about that I was in touch with the Poles and the Lithuanians. I called up the Dutch and said, "Hey, how about if you guys join and make this an EU mediation effort?" Oh, yes, they thought that was a great idea and Solana went, too. The U.S. pushed very hard for this group to have the EU imprimatur. We were in touch with them literally on an hourly basis: the EU should issue this statement, Canada would issue that one, the U.S. would issue this one, each one ratcheting up the tone or the demand or whatever it is from the last. We worked to make sure we were in sync with what was going on in Ukraine without getting out ahead of each other. We wanted to be sure that the U.S. was not out ahead of the EU, with the EU always being a little step ahead, since Ukraine's in Europe. Why shouldn't the EU take the lead on that?

It worked extremely well. They did a great job. Again, we stayed in touch with them all the time. I was on the phone all the time with John Herbst, who was the ambassador there at the time and with my Dutch counterpart to say, "Okay, let's keep this going in all the right ways." That was an example of how well the EU did in the lead on something that was very, very, very important all over Europe. People all over Europe were wearing orange scarves, everywhere, in support of the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, very interesting.

We were constantly trying to get the Russians to understand that they really should be careful about who they were selling nuclear materials to, that we really did have intelligence that the Iranians were restarting their uranium enrichment program. Discussion never got very far.

In a way, the Iranian nuclear program was much more a controversy within the administration. But Colin Powell was very good about just saying to Rumsfeld, Bolton and those guys, "The EU is going to do this. We need to be giving the EU the information we have, not raising a stink about trying to get the Europeans to stop."

Q: You raise the intelligence about Iran. We'd been kicked out of Iran some time before. You had German and French investments in Iran and all that. I would have thought this also meant they had better intelligence about Iran. Were we still doing better than they were, or what?

JONES: I must say I thought at the time that we were doing better than they were, that we had better capabilities, still, that we had put more resources on the problem than they had. Yes, they had people on the ground, but I don't think they were focused on collecting intelligence on the nuclear issues. They were collecting intelligence on commercial issues.

Q: Because we saw Iran as an enemy. Particularly Germany, France and Russia saw it as an investment opportunity.

JONES: So they had information from their diplomatic sources. To a degree we did, too, because the Swiss were working on our behalf and would tell us what was going on. So we were pretty well in the same league as they were in that respect.

Q: You mentioned Switzerland. How did Switzerland fit into the European business, from your perspective?

JONES: We worked very hard with the Swiss after 9/11. We had a very good ambassador there who really took it upon himself to get moving with the Swiss on currency and financial matters after 9/11.

One or two of the 9/11 hijackers had been through Switzerland, had done some money laundering there, had been able to undertake some transactions there that we could show the Swiss had happened.

The ambassador there set up a working group with the Swiss government, with himself in the lead for the U.S. and a Swiss undersecretary in the lead for the Swiss. The working group included the U.S. Customs, U.S. Treasury, U.S. Secret Service, CIA, others, with Swiss counterparts. They went through all of the issues that we thought the Swiss needed to look at, in terms of really tightening up security on their financial systems and at least knowing who was coming into the country and who was leaving. The Swiss really took this to heart. They worked hard with us on a monthly basis in this working group. I went regularly to Bern to talk with the Swiss on a variety of issues, partly at the ambassador's behest, but also just because there were so many issues.

I consider it one of the more positive periods in the U.S.-Swiss relationship, because of the intensity of the effort that was undertaken. They accepted that they shouldn't be seen as a way station for other countries to be attacked.

The other set of conversations I had with the Swiss at the time had to do with the Middle East. There were constantly things that we needed to get the Swiss to help us with in the

Middle East. I was sort of pushing things. At one point I ended up in Jerusalem talking with the Swiss about a variety of the issues that were important to both of us.
It was a good relationship. It was interesting at the time.

Q: It's interesting, too, normally our political appointee ambassadors there are extremely forgettable. It's been a sort of social appointment and not much thought given to it, but apparently by happenstance he was in the right place at the right time.

JONES: The Ambassador was a financial bigwig for Bush. He had bundled a tremendous amount of money for the Bush election effort. He was also a very smart guy and he worked very hard. He left early from his post as ambassador to Switzerland in order to go back and help with the reelection campaign. A new ambassador was sent there, a woman from Texas, who also worked very hard. She was very good. She, unfortunately, was at the scene when Cheney accidentally shot a fellow hunter. She happened to be on that hunt in Texas. But she kept the effort going on getting at the financial issues. So that was a big positive.

I wanted to say a few things about Arafat. The Europeans were always making a beeline to Arafat in Ramallah to have a conversation with him. They thereby built him up as a big cheese when we really wanted Arafat to get down to business and continue or take up the negotiation that had ended at Camp David during the Clinton Administration.

Powell worked very hard at this. He went to see Arafat any number of times. The only reason I was involved at all, I never went with him to see Arafat, but he regularly would meet with the EU "troika." These were the EU member countries representing the EU presidency, the former presidency and future presidency, as well as the Commission. He talked with them about how to handle the Middle East, how to handle the Middle East situation. I would participate in those to some degree. When he went to see Boutros-Ghali at the UN to talk about Middle East issues, I would participate in that, again because there were so many Europeans involved.

He was stymied, though. At one point, after he'd really worked at getting to Arafat, who was surrounded by the Israelis. Arafat couldn't get out of Ramallah at one point, couldn't get out of his little enclave. Powell was stopped by Cheney and Wolfowitz. Basically, from then on the policy was that we weren't talking to Arafat anymore. I don't know what happened, exactly, but it was a very difficult thing for me on the European side, because there was so much still going on that the Europeans needed in terms of the Middle East.

I remember in particular the president, in a meeting in Northern Ireland with Tony Blair celebrating the Northern Ireland agreement and Bush saying, "I'm going to work as hard on the Middle East now as Tony worked on this agreement with the Irish." I thought, "That's a lot. If he's really going to work as hard as Tony Blair did on Northern Ireland, he's going to spend a lot of time in the Middle East," which of course he didn't do.

It was one of those big disconnects over the Middle East, where certain things were said about, "Oh, we're going to solve it." Then when the Secretary tried to solve it, he was basically pulled back from being able to by not being allowed to talk to Arafat.

Then when Arafat became ill and slipped into a coma, at the very end of Bush's first term and finally died, it looked like it was going to be a lot easier to get something done on the Middle East. I thought it was at that point that Secretary Powell would reconsider what he'd been saying, which was that he was going to leave the administration at the end of the first term. With Arafat no longer on the scene, Powell was going to be able to do more on the Middle East, which he really hadn't been able to get at in a satisfactory, sufficient way up until then.

Q: During the time you were with the Secretary, did you have the feeling that the attitude about the Middle East within senior circles in the Bush Administration had been that it hadn't been a winner for Clinton and let's just leave it alone?

JONES: That was the view that Cheney and Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld had, but mostly Cheney-Wolfowitz, that you couldn't deal with Arafat, so don't try. Powell didn't agree with that. He said, "Yeah, I know Arafat's difficult, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try," number one.

Number two, one of the reasons that he, Powell pushed to get out to the Middle East so much is that, especially after we went into Iraq, was that the president and the vice president said, "Oh, we'll go into Iraq, we'll solve Iraq and then the rest of the Middle East will fall like dominos, and everybody will become democratic."

Powell kept saying, "You may hold that belief, but until the Middle East peace process is solved, it doesn't matter what happens in Iraq, we have to solve the Middle East peace process if we want to have the Arab 'street,'" as it was known at the time, "on our side, on Iraq or on anything else."

So that was a big incentive for him, because of what was being said on Iraq, to say, "We've got to address the Middle East peace problem parallel with what we're doing in Iraq. We cannot let it go, because that's where the problem is, in terms of Arab attitudes about the United States" He was really held back from that in a way that I think is inexplicable, actually.

Let me talk about Article 98, the article in the Rome Treaty on war crimes and genocide that says that countries can agree to opt out of applying the Rome Treaty to countries that aren't members, something to that effect. So John Bolton, J.D. Crouch, Paul Wolfowitz and that group decided that we should sign Article 98 agreements with every country in the world, that not only should the U.S. not participate in the Rome Treaty, which we already knew we couldn't in the Clinton Administration, but we should force as many countries as possible to acknowledge that they would not bring any American citizen to

the court, to the international tribunal on war crimes or genocide. John Bolton set about a big campaign to do this.

I started with the Europeans, and we got the Romanians to agree to sign. The Romanians actually were the first country to sign an Article 98 agreement, or agree to sign, I can't remember which it was, if they ever actually signed it. That caused a gigantic uproar in the EU. They went back to the Romanians and said, "You do that kind of thing and you're not going to get into the EU." This scared the Romanians to death, and it scared all of the other prospective EU member states to death.

I argued and argued and argued with the EU and the Commission, saying "Please don't forbid any of these countries to sign. Let us negotiate this separately and have this be an individual national choice. Why does the EU have to get involved as an organization on this?" They basically wouldn't buy the argument at all. They said, "Not only do we not buy the argument, but we're passing a law that says it is illegal, basically, for any EU member or prospective EU member to sign an Article 98 agreement with the United States."

So as I would explain this to John Bolton, he decided that I was being recalcitrant and not even trying. I said, "I can't try with all these countries, because they're scared to death to sign an agreement. They don't even want to have a discussion with us. They don't even want the Article 98 team to go there and have a negotiation, because the EU will be so draconian to them if they do that."

The other part of the Article 98 problem that was very difficult for me was that there was a law that had been passed in the U.S. Congress and what that law included was that any country that was a member of the Rome Treaty and didn't sign an Article 98 agreement with the United States, I think I've got right, would no longer be allowed to receive U.S. assistance. But that rule was waived for anybody who was a member of NATO. Under the law, they had to sign an Article 98 agreement by a certain date. I said that was going to strip the ability of the United States to help the prospective NATO members become NATO members, because you're going to take away the assistance programs that we were using to bring them up to speed on corruption, on democracy and human rights issues, on nationality issues and on their military capabilities.

So I launched a big campaign to get the law changed, to say that any NATO member or prospective NATO member, any Partnership for Peace member, so that these countries wouldn't lose assistance. That was also seen as a highly anti-Bush Administration act by John Bolton and people like that. But we finally were able to get a provision that did not eliminate these guys from getting the assistance that they needed in order to be able to become NATO members and EU members. I was just reading the passage in John Bolton's book about all of this. He basically has it completely wrong on what the whole issue was. He does not bother to include the fact that all of these countries that we wanted to be in NATO we were going to be precluded from helping to get into NATO by this law.

The other argument that I made is that in negotiating with the EU that we should find a way to make some exceptions or change somehow the American Service Members Protection Act. It seemed to me that what we were saying was that U.S. law was so robust that we, the U.S., would prosecute even contractors or NGOs or journalists, whoever, who might be involved in war crimes, who might be involved in genocide, in the United States, that we didn't need to participate in the international war crimes and genocide treaty because we would abide by the substance of the treaty on a unilateral basis.

I argued to Bolton, to Marc Grossman and to the Secretary that I didn't believe that to be true. I basically got out-argued on legal terms. I'm not a lawyer, but of course what we in fact found is it's very difficult to prosecute the people who were involved in Abu Ghraib if they were contractors, or if they were involved in some awful incident in Iraq, that the contractors and other people aren't always prosecuted the way they should be.

The whole Article 98 issue was something that was very difficult for all of us. I at one point, because of that whole contractor controversy, got all of the regional assistant secretaries to sign a memo, all of us signed a memo to the Secretary saying, "Please, we need to reduce and change the way we're going about getting everybody to sign Article 98 agreements. We're arguing this under false pretenses. We're making arguments that I don't believe to be true, number one and number two they're hurting the U.S., in terms of reducing our ability to assist countries in their reforms." I didn't win the fight, but I think I won the war, actually.

Q: What has happened subsequently?

JONES: A lot of countries did sign Article 98 agreements. When John Bolton left the State Department nothing more happened with them. Nobody pays attention to them. It was just sort of a big show thing on John Bolton's part, frankly.

Q: Well, how did you feel about John Bolton? Was he just sort of a loose cannon, or what?

JONES: I wouldn't call him a loose cannon. He was highly ideological. He felt very strongly on particular issues. He was very difficult to argue with. I was one of the few who did argue with him on things that I felt strongly about, in terms of the relationships with countries I was responsible for and it was difficult. One of the reasons it was so difficult is not only was he a very good arguer and there's nothing wrong with that, but he was aggressive in a physical way, throwing things at me when he disagreed with me, inviting me out in the hall to have it out with me, arguing with me in front of the Secretary, things that were inappropriate.

But there were plenty of times that the Secretary or others would say, "I don't want John to know about this. Please find out the facts because he won't tell me the facts."

Q: Another person you've mentioned, over at the Defense Department, Paul Wolfowitz had quite a good record as ambassador to Indonesia, in Far Eastern affairs and all that and yet it is almost as though something happened, because we're talking about somebody who had a good diplomatic feel about what could be done or not and he got into this Iraq thing and it's as though he lost that.

JONES: I think he had been very good on all of those issues. Then he became an ideologue on Iraq and on treaties. I saw him as a clone of Cheney, I saw him as the handmaiden of Cheney. He did Cheney's bidding in the administration, in the Pentagon and elsewhere. He, for example, was completely not to be trusted on Turkey. He kept explaining to everybody that he knew Turkey better than everybody. Yet it was impossible to get him and Cheney to understand that you can't negotiate with a government that doesn't exist in Turkey, which they were insisting on.

There were several times when I needed to get very high-level clearances on instructions to NATO or whoever. I would get a Pentagon clearance from Wolfowitz and then I would get an Office of the Vice President clearance from Wolfowitz, with changes. So he would clear for both buildings. Or sometimes if Wolfowitz cleared for the Pentagon, it would be overturned by Rumsfeld, he couldn't clear for Rumsfeld. He could clear for Cheney. It was crazy. It was very strange, actually.

Q: It was remarkable that Colin Powell maintained his cool. Did he have somebody he could throw things at, a punching bag or something, or what?

JONES: My perspective on it was that he had had so many jobs in various administrations, he knew so much about how different parts of the organization worked, or should work, he knew all these people extremely well, so he had a very philosophical attitude about how to deal with issues and with people.

He picked his fights. He didn't fight everything. He knew that he had formidable opponents in Cheney and Wolfowitz and Rumsfeld, principally Cheney. He knew that he couldn't get help from Rice as national security advisor. He knew that if he could talk to the president he was likely to be able to get the president to see what was sensible. But the sense that we all had was that the last person who was in the Oval Office with the president, those were the views that were adopted by the president, that he really didn't have the capacity or the inclination to analyze and integrate views.

Secretary Powell worked extremely hard, I believe, to reduce the number of bad things that the U.S. did overseas as much as he possibly could. He couldn't prevent all of the bad things that the U.S. did, but he could prevent a lot of them. We all had the impression that he viewed the State Department, his State Department and all of us, as the ones who needed to work hard to maintain relationships with all of these countries, so that we could work with them on issues that we could work with them on, even though they disagreed with us strongly on Iraq or on whatever they might disagree with us strongly on.

It worked, in the end, it worked very well, because even as we had a huge controversy over Iraq and who should participate in Iraq, at the same time we enlarged NATO by seven countries. We reached agreement on that with all the same countries that we were having extremely difficult conversations with about Iraq or Iran. We nevertheless were able to have very good conversations about what to do about the Balkans, what to do about enlarging NATO and enlarging the EU and HIV/AIDS in Africa and an EU force in Africa.

Q: A very difficult time because of our Iraq involvement, but was it because of sort of the personality or the ability of Powell that kept NATO from turning really sour on us?

JONES: Yes, absolutely. He made it fundamental to his job to reach out all the time to his European counterparts. He was on the phone to them all the time. If I needed him to call somebody about something, he would do it instantly.

For instance, I think the perfect example is when the relationship with Germany, between the chancellor and the president, went very sour between Bush and Schröder. Powell stepped up his contacts with Foreign Minister Fischer, just to be sure that we could keep working with Germany on the dozens of other issues that were extremely important, including counterterrorism, which was of course extremely important at the time, when Schröder and Bush weren't speaking.

The same thing with the French, with Chirac. Even though we had Rumsfeld telling his generals that they couldn't have any contact with any French generals, Colin Powell was trying to undo that and trying to keep in touch with his French counterparts. It wasn't easy, because some of his French counterparts were pretty awful, as well.

You're absolutely right, it was a very difficult time. At the same time we had an extremely good collegial atmosphere within the State Department, thanks to the leadership of Colin Powell and Rich Armitage and Marc Grossman and Grant Green. I would put in that category, the top four at the State Department. We gathered in our bureau, for example, for vespers every night at 5:30, the DAS's and myself and the public affairs people and the assistance people, to go through what had happened that day, what did we need to do for the next day, what were the fights, what had we solved. It was always the feeling that we were safe inside the building, we were with likeminded people. We would figure out how to sally forth the next day and do battle all day long with the bureaucracy in Washington, the Pentagon in particular. Then we would come back to the safe castle of the State Department, protected by Powell and Armitage. Then we'd go forth the next day.

That's the feeling that we all had. I've worked in various times and various administrations, but there were very, very few fights within the building, bad fights. We had disagreements all the time. I was constantly going after Lorne Craner on a human rights issue or language on some report or another, but we got along extremely well. We would travel together on purpose to make the point that human rights are part of the

broader policy picture. The only person in the State Department who never could get along with anybody was John Bolton.

Q: This is October 23, 2009 with Beth Jones. I'm going to let you pick your start.

JONES: Afghanistan is the subject of the moment, October 2009. Afghanistan, for us in the Europe and Eurasia Bureau, really began with 9/11, when it became instantly obvious that the Central Asian countries for which our bureau was responsible were going to be very important as a transit route for men and matériel going into Afghanistan, not just for the United States but for NATO, for anybody coming from the West.

So the first thing that we did, since the Central Asian countries and the Caucasus and Russia were new to the European Bureau was we put out a list, to make sure that everybody, everybody in the bureau, knew the name of every country, the capital of every country, who the foreign minister was and who the head of government was. We said, "Okay, keep this cheat sheet with you, everybody. Central Asia is now *the* most important part of this bureau. All of you NATOniks are going to come running to all of those who know Central Asia well for help."

Q: I want to point out that later many of these countries, Central Asian countries, were split off into a different bureau.

JONES: That's right.

Q: But at that point you had how many countries that you were responsible for?

JONES: I had 54 embassies. That was 49 countries, because some of the embassies were missions to international or multilateral organizations.

The split off of the Central Asians didn't happen until after I left, when Rice came in as Secretary of State.

We immediately began discussions with Central Command, with CentCom in Tampa, as to which countries and which bases would be the most interesting for them use to use, potentially, to get whatever they needed into Afghanistan.

The one that became most quickly the interesting one was the one in Bishkek, Manas Airfield, which we've heard about a lot recently. There was also a tremendous interest at the beginning, however, in Dushanbe, in Tajikistan. Eventually, not too long after that, there was interest in something in Uzbekistan, some sort of a base in Uzbekistan. We ended up using Karshi Khanabad. But there was also an offer from the Kazakhstanis to use bases in Kazakhstan, particularly Shymkent, which is way in the south of Kazakhstan, not far from the Kyrgyz and the Uzbek borders.

After a bit of a survey from CentCom they decided that Shymkent was just too far away. It was close but it was far enough away that it wouldn't have been very useful. Then Centcom realized, too, that the airport in Dushanbe needed so much remedial work on the tarmac (they used it for a while), but they ended up leaving it mostly to the French to use. The French were the ones that used it the most.

What this meant was an immediate upset on the part of the Russians, with Putin basically saying, "We will not allow Americans to use bases in Central Asia." The various Central Asian leaders were saying, they didn't even respond to Putin. They just said to us, "Come ahead! We're happy to negotiate these memoranda of understanding with you." Our embassies did conclude these MOU's. They did it very, very quickly, with some guidance from the Pentagon and from others who knew about how to write military-related memoranda of understanding. But they were done extremely quickly and were ratified very quickly by the various parliaments in these countries.

Q: You had this big bear sitting there in your bailiwick, Russia and Putin. Why was he saying this and why do you say you won't tolerate something when you don't have any control? This is bad politics.

JONES: Bad politics. The interesting thing to us was that one of first things we did after 9/11 was Deputy Secretary Armitage took a delegation, quite a senior delegation, to Moscow.

9/11 happened on a Tuesday. We were in Moscow by Saturday. It happened that quickly. In that series of conversations we basically made a representation to the Russians to join us, saying, "This was dangerous to us. It will be dangerous to you; it has been dangerous to you. These kinds of groups are after all of our governments and all of our societies, not just the United States."

We made a very detailed presentation to the Russians about the assets that we had. This was done by the head of counterterrorism at the CIA, Cofer Black, at the time, a very detailed presentation on exactly which assets we had in Afghanistan, including which Afghans were with us, what we were doing in terms of resupplying them already, through Tajikistan. We said we probably would need some help with some of these governments, if the Russians would care to support our requests for access so that we could transit. This was for transit of men and materiel. We also said we really would like to get involved in intelligence exchange with them, because it was clear to us from the 9/11 experience that we had neglected intelligence exchange with Russia, with all of our European friends and allies. There was a tremendous amount going on that none of us knew about and that we needed to get on top of.

The Russian response was dead silence. It was stunning in the room, because we, of course, we had a delegation of 11 or 12. I was there with Armitage for State, Cofer Black from the CIA, we had somebody very senior from the Defense Intelligence Agency, in uniform and a variety of other people from various parts of the U.S. government to make

very detailed presentations of very highly classified material. I hadn't heard some of it before. The Russians responded with dead silence, because they just weren't used to hearing this kind of thing, unless they'd stolen it.

Trubnikov, who was Armitage's counterpart on the Russian side, closed the meeting as soon as our presentations were finished, when he could see that there was not going to be a response from any of the Russian generals sitting on the other side of the table. He took Armitage and me to lunch with the ambassador, Sandy Vershbow and said, "You have to understand. No one's ever told us this kind of thing in a meeting before. None of us can respond. None of us has any instruction to respond. I'm going to have to talk to President Putin about this and maybe we'll have a response, maybe we won't."

In the meantime the foreign minister, Igor Ivanov, was just arriving in Washington for a meeting in the Oval Office. The timing allowed us to have our meeting and then report back in as to what the president should say to Igor Ivanov the same morning. Of course we had nothing to report, which was something that we really pushed hard with Trubnikov as well, "Do you really want your foreign minister to appear in the Oval Office five days after 9/11 and have nothing to say?"

We learned later there was a very big senior level conversation with Putin in which there was a big push to say "No" to us, that they weren't going to cooperate. There was a big push on the other side, from Trubnikov and some of the others in the foreign ministry, to cooperate. Putin came down on the side of, "Yes, we're going to cooperate."

We were very clear about, "This is what we're doing through Tajikistan, this what we'd like to through Manas in Kyrgyzstan. We're looking at some of the bases for transit possibilities in Uzbekistan, we think we won't use Kazakhstan." We were completely, totally transparent.

Putin, a week later, said, "We're not going to allow this."

Q: How did he say this?

JONES: It was a public statement that appeared in the press. We saw it in the press, that's how we first saw it. Actually, I'm not sure it was Putin who actually said this. I think it was Rushailo, his national security chief, said, "Russia will not permit the Americans to use these bases."

Q: Takes it down one

JONES: Takes it down one notch. My memory's sort of faulty on that, as to who it was. Basically the governments who were already heavily involved with us in negotiating MOUs on how would we use the bases, were all completely forward leaning on collaboration, cooperation, because of what had happened on 9/11.

Q: First place, on this meeting that you had in Moscow, had our embassy or you sort of warned our delegation that we were really breaking ground?

JONES: Yes. We had warned them ahead of time.

Q: And they're going to have to take some time to mull this over and figure out what to do?

JONES: We had sent a message through our ambassador that we intended to be extremely forthcoming, that we were going to be very detailed in our presentation about what we are actually doing in any of these places. He presented that. But one thing that I learned through that experience and through a few others is that just because we tell this set of Russian officials something, it doesn't mean that they've passed it on. There's still an element of fear of presenting something that they can't explain or they think the senior people won't like to hear.

So a few times we said, "We briefed you on this. Why are you reacting this way?" The response we got, at least one occasion, if not more, is "But what you told us was secret, so we didn't pass it on."

We said, "It was secret between us. It wasn't secret from you and your boss."

So we learned that we needed to brief a lot more people and take the initiative to get in touch with a lot more of the senior Russians each time we wanted to do something, because they weren't talking to each other.

Q: I suppose there are people who have the same reaction about talking to Washington and saying, "These people really aren't on the same side" or something. Every government is different.

JONES: That is something that's more peculiar about the U.S., is that there's so many centers of power. We tend to know what each other's doing, even though we're very turf conscious in Washington about various things.

But, anyway, to continue on Afghanistan. One of the things that happened very quickly when on October 7th we started the campaign in Afghanistan, the NATO allies had been clamoring from the beginning to participate, participate, participate. The Pentagon was dead set against any participation of any ally, because they had this myth in their heads that if NATO is involved at all that all NATO nations must approve the bombing target list. That, of course, was a wrong interpretation of what had actually happened in the Balkans, but this was the Pentagon prejudice, led by Vice President Cheney.

We nevertheless were able to get agreement in NATO. We sort of bludgeoned the Pentagon aside on this one for NATO members to participate in various ways: troops,

medical, transportation, intelligence, whatever it was. We helped write the MOUs for each of the other NATO countries going through Central Asia to Afghanistan.

Q: MOU is memorandum of understanding.

JONES: So it was our embassies who ended up drafting most of them for most of the other countries.

Q: I would imagine, for most embassies and all, that you'd not only tell them where capitals were but telling them, Afghanistan, the government there, the situation there, it must have been a big learning experience and for all of the other countries that were gathered together in NATO.

JONES: That's right, it was big. The biggest asset I had, being assistant secretary for Europe and Eurasia at the time, is that I'd served in Afghanistan, and I'd served in Iraq, so I knew the terrain, I knew the territory really well and I knew the players. It was one of those fortuitous things. It never would have occurred to me that that previous service would have helped in the Europe/Eurasia bureau, but it turned out to be golden, for a terrible reason. It turned out to be really helpful. We did have a few people, we had quite a few people working on Central Asia in the State Department, in the Europe and Eurasia bureau, who had been posted with me in Pakistan or others in Afghanistan. So we had plenty who knew the broader region as well as I did, if not better. It was just the traditional part, the ones who had focused mostly on NATO, NATO countries, the EU, who needed the remedial education. They got with the program immediately, I must say, there was no hesitation.

Everybody rolled up their sleeves and got into it extremely quickly and very professionally. It was great.

Q: Did you find that there was good information that we could pass on, so people could quickly come up to speed and knowledge about what was happening in Afghanistan, because the Taliban was sort of a bogeyman name and most people had no real idea what this whole thing was about.

JONES: That's right, but we did a couple of things: as we got an ambassador named, that was Jim Dobbins, who took over almost immediately as the Afghanistan envoy, we did regular briefings of any ambassador in the Europe/Eurasia bureau on what was going on with Afghanistan, our negotiations with the Central Asians and Pakistan. We offered the same kinds of briefings at NATO as well, NATO and the EU.

We also were very clear that we knew that there were plenty of other embassies that might have very good information about what was going on. We asked them to participate and contribute whenever we held one of these briefings. So it wasn't just us talking, it was, "Please come to the briefing and please bring whatever you're getting

from your embassies and your counterparts in Afghanistan and Pakistan." Pakistan was a very big part of the whole Afghanistan effort, as you'll remember.

I think that's probably the most that I can say about Afghanistan, those beginning stages, with one other thing: almost immediately after we started on October 7th, we were capturing people. We had prisoners of war. It was after that that the whole controversy began, the fight began, over were these captured people prisoners of war going to be treated as such under the Geneva Conventions, or, as Cheney and company wanted to do, to treat them as enemy combatants and not treat them under the Geneva Conventions. That was a major, major fight between Powell and Cheney and Rumsfeld.

We know now the kinds of memos that Powell was writing. He had Will Taft, who was our Legal Advisor, whom he'd worked with in the Pentagon, write about why it was so important to treat these people under the Geneva Conventions as prisoners of war, that it was completely unacceptable to put them in a separate category. It was even more unacceptable for the United States to turn its back on the Geneva Conventions. We know he lost the fight. All the memos that Will Taft wrote at the time have now been released on the web, so one can see the arguments that Powell made.

Q: Basically, what was the State Department position? Really, why did they want to call them enemy combatants? What was the rationale?

JONES: Because they wanted to undertake interrogations, as we now know, in ways that are not permitted under the Geneva Conventions. They wanted to incarcerate them wherever they wanted to and that became an issue. They wanted nobody, this is the classic Cheney-Rumsfeld-Bush philosophy, nobody should tell us what to do, no international law, no international tribunal, no NATO, no UN, no nobody, can tell the U.S. what to do.

In addition to that, at the same time, as these people were being rounded up, there was a call from the military saying, "We can't keep all these guys here." Obviously, that's about the time they opened Abu Ghraib prison. But they wanted to transfer them out to someplace else. So the request came to the State Department in the following terms: Find a country where human rights rules aren't respected.

Q: Oh, my God!

JONES: Yeah. It was that literal. That came to us in the bureau, and we basically just laughed and said, "That's nuts! It's completely crazy! We can give you a list of countries where human rights are not respected, absolutely. But should we go to Uzbekistan and ask them to take these guys? No." We basically said to our bosses, "It's un-American!" That's how they ended up in Cuba.

Q: Well, was the CIA on board with you on this attitude, or were they?

JONES: I can't say. I don't know. I wasn't in any of the interagency meetings at which the enemy combatant status versus the Geneva Conventions was discussed. That would have been handled by Will Taft, as the department's legal advisor. So I don't know where the CIA came down on that.

I knew, to some degree, not a lot, some of the renditions that the CIA had done, after they did them, when it became public and they got in trouble and had to talk to me about, "Okay, what do we say to various European countries about what we've done?"

Q: You might explain what a rendition is.

JONES: A rendition is when there is a person of interest, let's call it that, in a country, not the United States, that the United States would like to take out of the country in which he had been apprehended to interrogate or imprison, in the United States, or maybe even in a third country. It is done clandestinely, sometimes with the collaboration and cooperation of the host government, sometimes not. It can be done either way. So there were a variety of renditions that took place, some from the Balkans of Islamic radicals.

Q: During the Balkans Wars, so-called mujahideen *had been established there, particularly in Bosnia and Macedonia.*

JONES: That's right. Some of those were taken and I think sent to Guantanamo, as I remember.

Q: Well now, still on Afghanistan, were there any European countries, let's take Russia out of the equation, that were reluctant to get involved?

JONES: At the beginning, you'll remember that right after 9/11 all of NATO was very, very supportive of the United States and authorized NATO AWACS to fly over the U.S. as extra protection from another 9/11-type attack.

That was done immediately. It was done the next morning, it was on the 12th, authorized by Secretary Powell. Several of us were asked to come to his office at about 5:30 in the morning to discuss it, because it needed to be done at NATO by noon Brussels time when George Robertson, the NATO Secretary General, wanted to have it voted.

We all talked about it, talked about the fact that the Pentagon and Vice President Cheney would hate this, but Powell said, "I'm authorizing it. Go ahead, vote it" As I recall, then he told the national security advisor, who told the others that we had done this. So it was done before anybody could complain about NATO being involved. Immediately, even more members of NATO, virtually every member of NATO, had said, "Let us help. Just like we did in the Balkans, we will help, we will participate. Where do we sign up for the coalition?"

Immediately, I got from my counterpart at the Pentagon, J.D. Crouch, "There will be no coalition, we can't even use the word coalition, never capitalize the word coalition." It was crazy.

Nevertheless at the State Department, with our colleagues in Political-Military Affairs, which was run by Linc Bloomfield, we basically took in all of the offers. We made a list of them, a matrix: who has offered, what have they offered, what is the time frame, does anybody need parliamentary approval domestically to participate, does anybody need a UN resolution to participate? So, we developed this big matrix of what had been offered and what was required in order for the offer to be accepted, so that we could go into Afghanistan with a whole coalition.

As you know, at the beginning we went in alone. We didn't tell anybody when we were going, except the moment that we went in. This was, I believe, the beginning of the downturn in U.S.-Europeans relations, when without any discussion, really, the offer of support and offer of participation by our NATO allies was turned down without even an acknowledgement.

Q: Were you saying, "Hey, wait, you have?

JONES: We were campaigning, campaigning, campaigning the whole time and getting all this blowback from the Pentagon. I was working with the NSC, with Dan Fried, to have them say, "We can't say no to these offers."

Remember, we'd already had this big blowback to our negative response to all the offers of help for New York from humanitarian organizations from across the world who wanted to send in dog teams and rescue teams and everything else. FEMA, New York, everybody else, said, "No, no, it's too complicated to coordinate all of that."

So already our allies had a bad taste in their mouth about how we were reacting to their offers of help. Then we went into Afghanistan on October 7th, practically without warning. I kept asking, asking, asking, "When are we going in?" because I planned to go up to Princeton, my daughter's birthday is on October 7th, that's why I remember the date so well. They kept saying, "No, no, go ahead, no problem, no problem."

As we were driving up, they called and said, "Okay, we're going in today." I had to get on the phone, then, the whole time I was trying to celebrate my daughter's birthday, notifying all of our embassies, this was a Sunday, that this was happening right now, could they please go in. Of course, by then it's late Sunday afternoon and evening in all of the places that I'm responsible for, so it didn't go over very well.

Q: Was the secrecy basically designed, is this part of you might say the Cheney-Rumsfeld way of doing things, the idea of we're going to do it alone and so we don't want to tell people, because even if the enemy forces were not that sophisticated, it was going to upset a surprise, one way or another?

JONES: I can't honestly say what the rationale was for the secrecy. It probably was operational to a degree, but I think a lot of it was, "We don't want to talk to anybody about it. We don't want to deal with other people. We just want to decide what we want to decide and we're going to do it."

The other thing to remember is that at the time there was a lot of positive reinforcement coming from NATO allies commending the U.S. for being calm and deliberate about the response, in other words, that we didn't react instantly with a disjointed set of attacks in Afghanistan. It was considered a good thing. But at the same time, they were coming to us, saying, "What's the plan? We want to participate. What's the plan? We want to participate."

Q: Well, were you getting any feedback that "Al Qaida is not the Taliban. The Taliban did not bomb the World Trade Center."

JONES: Right, but the Taliban had given them refuge. That's why all the statements that came out about that time from the United States said, "If you are a terrorist organization or if you harbor a terrorist organization you are in the same category."

That's one of the issues that made our meetings in Moscow so important, because part of it was to make this representation to the Russians: "We know that the Georgians are allowing, because they don't have the military means to prevent it, they are allowing Chechen fighters into the Pankisi Gorge in Georgia from Chechnya, but we don't consider that 'harboring terrorists,' the way the U.S. has defined it. The problem with Georgia is that it cannot control its border. So we, the United States, are now going to help Georgia beef up its military to control its border, so that these Chechen militias are no longer able to move into the Pankisi Gorge and rest there all winter long for the fighting season in Chechnya." So we were very careful to define this 'harboring of terrorists.'

But for the U.S., the Taliban were as bad as al Qaida, in our view, at the beginning. And it's just now that we're beginning to see maybe we should differentiate, just now.

Q: We didn't even have representation in Afghanistan at the time, but many of the European countries did.

JONES: Some did. We tended to work through the Indians a bit in Afghanistan. I can't remember who else had embassies there. There weren't many, though, because it was so dangerous for Westerners to be there.

But one thing that I recall from the time is we had maintained our embassy there. We'd kept on and paid some locally engaged staff to try to maintain it and protect it and keep track of the cars and the property and all that kind of thing. We had regularly found ways to pay them so that they could survive through all this period. Well, almost immediately

after we went in on October 7th, within a week, two weeks, or so, we were down in Kabul and found these guys, and began reopening the embassy.

These guys had done a fabulous job of maintaining the embassy in some fashion. So they were highly decorated and paid and got special awards and for the work that they did.

Q: The saddest stories I've heard about the whole war in Afghanistan was that apparently the gardeners there had maintained rose bushes and really done a remarkable job under very difficult circumstances.

JONES: They maintained the motor pool, everything.

Q: And when we came in, we eventually started working on the grounds and there went the roses!

JONES: They probably moved them somewhere, is my guess.

Q: I hope.

Let's come to the other side of this equation, Iraq, the reaction to our shift to Iraq. Afghanistan really became secondary. For the Bush apparatus, Rumsfeld and Cheney and all, Iraq was the thing. How were you seeing that, from your perspective?

JONES: That is completely true. We knew pretty early that the focus of the Bush White House was on Iraq, not on Afghanistan.

We now know from reports in the press and maybe even a couple of books that when the national security team met at Camp David on that Saturday after 9/11, when Deputy Secretary Armitage was on his way to Moscow, that Cheney and Wolfowitz, to a degree Rumsfeld, but mostly Cheney and Wolfowitz, argued repeatedly with Cofer Black, the director of the CIA's Counterterrorism Center who was doing the briefing on what the situation in Afghanistan was. They argued repeatedly that Afghanistan wasn't the problem, it was Iraq and that we should forget Afghanistan, this was all about Iraq.

Cofer pushed back extremely hard, both in the briefing and then later at lunch one-on-one with Wolfowitz, to say there was no evidence of it, there is no connection between al Qaida and Iraq, there are radical Palestinian groups who are based in Iraq, but they're inactive at the moment. The head of one of them was dying of cancer and he completely rejected this theory. But that was the beginning of the big push to say Iraq is really the problem. Frankly all of us thought that it would be easy to push back on it, because there was just no evidence of it, there was no intelligence to support it.

As we now know, the Cheney-Wolfowitz crowd found these various "sources," these false sources, claiming that this and that happened in Iraq and this and that was from

whatever his name was, Cannonball, I can't remember the code name for the guy in Germany

Q: Curveball.

JONES: Right. Whose intelligence was completely false. He'd made the whole thing up, but he made it up in order to substantiate the position that the Bush White House had.

We were concentrating on Afghanistan. A lot the focus was on the *loya jirga* meeting that took place outside Bonn that brought Karzai to the presidency. That was really led and negotiated with Dobbins and the Germans, as well as a tremendous number of NATO countries. There was a tremendous focus on governance, on how do we get Afghanistan back on its feet, what are the kinds of issues that need to be determined. Certain issues were divided up, so the Germans were in charge of the police, the Italians were in charge of some aspect of law enforcement, I can't remember exactly, maybe the judiciary, the French were in charge of something else. The major NATO allies each had a category of issues that they needed to be in charge of. The British were in charge of narcotics, the drug issue.

So that was the entire focus: what do we do about Afghanistan, how do we build on some of the assistance work that had been done before that had gone away during the Soviet invasion and *mujahideen* period to make it not a breeding ground or a safe haven for al Qaida. A lot of the focus of the U.S., not so much the Europeans, was on Pakistan, because of the Pakistani support, through the intelligence services, for some of the *mujahideen* who were supporting the Taliban and al Qaida, Hekmatyar being the main person doing that.

Q: Was there any effort to say, although this wasn't in your bailiwick, you'd been there, that Pakistan was part of the problem?

JONES: Yeah, Pakistan was part of the problem, in the sense that there were elements in Pakistan that were giving relief and assistance to al Qaida and/or the Taliban, particularly along the Pak/Afghan border. There was, to a degree, state support for this, through ISI, the interservice intelligence service. So that's why the conversation between Deputy Secretary Armitage and the Pakistani president, Musharraf, was so important, right at the beginning, "Are you with us or are you not with us?" Musharraf said, "Yes, I'm with you," which meant that he had to force a change in the relationship between ISI and the mujahideen.

Q: ISI is?

JONES: The intelligence services in Pakistan. We needed a change in their relationship with the various *mujahideen*, their Afghan protégés, I guess I should say, from the time of the Soviet invasion.

As a result of that, Pakistan got a tremendous amount of budget support, which played into all of our work with the Central Asians in an interesting way. The Uzbeks started hearing how much we were giving Pakistan. They said, "If you want to use Karshi Khanabad, that's how much we want, too." So in the end, just to go back to the Central Asia part of this, in the end we ended up negotiating a very big memorandum of understanding with the Uzbeks that involved how much assistance we would provide them in exchange for use of Karshi Khanabad air base.

The tricky bit of that was to make sure that the assistance went to technical assistance people, not as budget support to the government, because we wanted to make sure that every bit that we did supported our basic policies, either in democracy building, rule of law, particularly ending torture in predetention centers and in jails, in some of the military-to-military work that we'd been doing on POWs and all that kind of thing. That was a bit ironic at the time, because we ourselves were going in the wrong direction on POWs and what you can do in a predetention center.

We didn't really know it at the time. We could still, as Americans, hold our heads up and say, "Okay, these are the kinds of things that we want in the MOU."

It worked extremely well. I specifically went to Tashkent with the assistant secretary for human rights, Lorne Craner. We talked to the minister of interior, talked to the minister of defense, talked to some of the justices, et cetera, about "Okay, these are the kinds of programs we're talking about. We need the UN rapporteur on torture to come in here, do a report, do an investigation, et cetera." They actually all agreed and all of those things happened.

The problem was, in the end, Congress got hold of the MOU and said, "This is really great. We're going to make it mandatory that there be progress on every single one of these four categories every year." By year four, ironically, we could say there has been progress on human rights, there has been progress on democracy, there has been progress on military-to-military cooperation. But there hasn't been progress on economic reform. We were forced by our legislation to end the assistance program. We had to end the assistance and at that point U.S. access to Karshi Khanabad was cut off by the Uzbeks.

Here we were, actually getting improvements and ending torture in Uzbekistan and we had to stop the program because they weren't doing enough on economic reform.

Q: The shift towards Iraq: what were you getting as rationale to pass on to all our European embassies on something that you really didn't believe in, from the Secretary of State on down?

JONES: Here's the philosophy that we undertook: at first, for the first six months or so after 9/11, we basically didn't believe that this focus on Iraq would get any traction, this idea of going into Iraq. We just thought it is nuts, there's nothing to support it, how can this be? It was at that point that the Pentagon started bringing in these "other sources."

We were telling all the Europeans, “Don’t worry about it. It’s not going to happen,” even though Cheney was making all these speeches. We knew that Powell was fighting back, fighting back, fighting back on all this, that it made no sense.

So by the summer of 2002 at various meetings that I had with NATO members, in the troika with the French, British and Germans and a big seminar outside of Berlin one time, I basically kept maintaining, “Look, I think we’re going to be able to stave this off. None of us thinks it makes any sense. But, if worse comes to worst and we get rolled by the president on going into Iraq, at least we have the Future of Iraq project.” This was something that we had started two or three years before, where we had identified, some self-identified, Iraqi-Americans, Iraqis that lived in France and all over Europe who were experts in the constitution, in irrigation, in education, in every possible area that might be needed in order to govern Iraq if Saddam Hussein went away, if he was hit by a truck tomorrow or if the U.S. invaded, either way. These different committees were meeting regularly. They were putting out papers. They were studying, big debates about the constitution, et cetera. So, a lot of us thought, “Okay, if these idiots prevail, at least we’ll have something that we can go in with immediately, that makes sense.”

The other thing that happened, this was in July when I had that conversation, then Cheney made a speech in early August saying, “We’re going to attack Iraq.”

Powell thought that he had agreement to go to the UN first about any kind of attack on Iraq. So at this point, Powell went and got the president’s agreement to go to the UN and say we wanted UN agreement for whatever it is that we do in Iraq. Which is what Bush said when he got to the UN in September. Powell was then authorized to negotiate the UN Security Council resolution, which he finally negotiated by early November.

That resolution was read by us as saying, “We can go in if we all agree.” Others, including the British, said it required a second UN Security Council resolution to authorize any military action in Iraq. We at State thought that was the case as well, but the Pentagon and Cheney were arguing the contrary. Nevertheless, Powell was able to persuade the President and others that he absolutely, for the sake of the British, for the sake of Blair, had to negotiate a second resolution, because Blair’s political support depended on it.

We know the result. He tried and tried and tried and failed. We could not get the votes for a second resolution, not least because of French opposition. But the Germans were also on the Security Council and were absolutely opposed to it. They were really rallying support behind the scenes in New York against it. So that was how it happened.

The argument that we were making, the political argument we were making to our counterparts was, “Look, the more ferocious we look, the more threatening we look to Iraq, the more chance that Saddam will surrender before we have to attack. So let us look more ferocious. Stick with us on this, so that we don’t have to attack. Help us out that way.” The French basically wouldn’t do it and went the other way.

Now, would it have worked? I don't know. But that was the political philosophy that we all came up with as a way to deal with this problem, while Powell behind the scenes was saying, "Don't do it, don't do it, don't do it!"

Q: What were you getting back from our embassies in Europe?

JONES: We were getting back reports of unadulterated opposition to this, with a few exceptions. The exceptions were of course the governments of Spain, Italy, the UK, who said, "We're with you." Their people were not in favor and many in their governments were not. But, even so, interestingly enough, every government, when we went to them to say, "We need transit rights across your territory for troops and matériel," every one of them granted it but two. The two were Austria and Slovenia.

Even Ireland was adamantly opposed to entering the war. I went to the Irish foreign minister when he was visiting and I said, "I know you hate this, but think about it this way, think of all those American kids on those planes. They would really like to have one stop in Shannon and have a Guinness before they go to Afghanistan or Iraq. Can you please let them land?" They finally did, even though I had a lot of my colleagues say, "It's not going to happen, it's not going to happen, the Irish will never agree." I said, "Let me try!"

It was at that point I went home, and I said to my husband, "I just succeeded in something I don't believe in." He was the one who said and that helped me a lot, "Think of yourself as a defense attorney. You don't have to care whether your client is guilty or not, you've got to defend them to the best of your ability."

The other country, that I thought was interesting that they agreed, was Belgium. They were adamantly opposed to what we were doing and yet they were completely collegial, I guess is the best way to put it, about using ports and using trains to get the troops and the matériel and all of that. They agreed on the basis that "We can't make it hard for the poor guys who are the ones that are being ordered to do this."

We had the other setback in Turkey, I think I've talked about this, about the huge disconnects there.

Q: You have. There was no government to deal with.

JONES: Cheney and Wolfowitz kept insisting that we issue ultimatums to the government of Turkey. I kept saying, "To whom? There's nobody who can made a decision." Gül was the prime minister. The real prime minister was Erdogan, who couldn't be prime minister because there was a court case pending against him that still hadn't been resolved. It was crazy.

Q: What was happening before we actually went in? Was there almost a social gap between the State Department and Pentagon, or were there subsets within the Pentagon and the State Department and the NSC?

JONES: Here's how it worked: the staff of the Joint Chiefs (JCS) were completely with us, they thought it was nuts, but they were under strict orders, they were completely intimidated by Rumsfeld's Pentagon. So what they would do, whenever we had an interagency meeting, they knew they couldn't speak up at the meeting, but they gave us all their talking points. We couldn't say, "JCS tells us," but we said, "We know that the military side of this" whatever it is. That was that.

The other one was General Tommy Franks, who was the commander at Central Command in Tampa, whom I had known through the years, would call up every so often and say, "Beth, can you invite me up for a briefing? I need to talk to you about what's going on in Afghanistan." So I would invite him up and he would explain to me, this happened two or maybe three times, that this was the only way he could get to see Powell and Armitage to explain to them his misgivings about what was going on. He came to ask for their help in the interagency meetings to present some of his points of view. His book doesn't show any of that; his book shows him basically a collaborator from the very beginning. But it was interesting to me that he felt so nervous and concerned about the lack of support for the troops that Rumsfeld was forcing on him by going into Iraq that he tried to get - and did get - help from Powell and Armitage, as much as they could.

Now Secretary Powell at the time felt, and I know this only second hand not directly from him, very concerned about overplaying his hand. He was very conscious of the fact that he was the secretary of state and not the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, although he had been, not the national security advisor, although he had been, not the special advisor to the secretary of defense, although he had been. He had all of this incredible experience, but he was very diffident about using it in his State Department role, although he tried to inject some of this into the conversations in ways that he thought would not be too aggressive.

He would say at times, "There's just so many times that I, as Secretary of State can go toe to toe with the vice president." It's very, very tough, because it was him against all of them.

Q: We've talked about this from time to time, but what was the hand of Condoleezza Rice, she was national security advisor, as this debate about going into Iraq was coming up. Were you able to talk to her, were other people talking to her, was she getting the misgivings?

JONES: I believe she was. I don't know that for sure because of course I wasn't there. But certainly, the sense that all of us had at the time was that Powell and Armitage were talking to her a lot, as well as to Hadley, her deputy national security advisor. But all of

us had the sense at the time that she was not a player, in a big sense. She was a message conveyor, maybe.

So, for instance, when Powell decided that he really needed to talk to the president around the time of Cheney's speech saying, "We're going to go into Iraq," he called Condi and asked her for help in getting a meeting with the president and she did that. But none of us ever had the sense that she ever carried any water at all substantively for State. In fact, from my perspective every time that we got into a big fight with the Pentagon, which for me was every day, every single solitary day, seven days a week, my NSC counterpart, Dan Fried, specifically told me, "My job is to stay out of the fight that you're having with the Pentagon."

I said, "No, your job is to adjudicate the fight with the Pentagon."

"Oh, no, that's not the way Condi sees it."

So we were left to scrap with the Pentagon in every possible way we knew, without any help from the National Security Council. A couple of times Steve Hadley himself called me to say, "I can't get clearance from the Pentagon on this instruction," it was usually to our mission to NATO. And I'd say, "But, Steve, that's the instruction you agreed on in the deputies committee meeting on this issue."

"Oh, yes, but the Pentagon has now changed its mind."

"But you are in charge! You work for the president! It was the president's group that decided it should be done this way."

"Oh, no, Beth, you don't understand. We have to change it." It was ridiculous.

Q: As assistant secretary for European affairs, where did the NATO command and our ambassadors at NATO fit? Was that strictly a Pol-Mil channel?

JONES: No, no. Nick Burns was the NATO ambassador at the time, and he reported to me exclusively, really. Now, Nick was extremely good, however, at talking to Rumsfeld. So we would often be in a situation where we had a very hard time getting approval from the Pentagon for this or that decision at a NATO ministerial, especially the defense ministerials. It got so we would get as much as we could into the instructions by beating up on our colleagues in the Pentagon and then at the end, on several occasions, Nick was able to talk Rumsfeld into the better position, the one we wanted, in the car from the airport on the way to the NATO meeting.

It was there that he could overcome the objections of J.D. Crouch or Ian Brzezinski or whoever it was who was making the argument. That was a huge asset. So we had that great asset.

But all the instructions that we sent—it was mostly those instructions that I had to fight over every single day with J.D. Crouch. The interesting thing that I discovered pretty quickly is that J.D. had no authority to approve any number of things that should have been done not even at our level but at the deputy assistant secretary level. Every single thing Nick said or did had to be approved under instruction. It's one of those few U.S. missions that works only under instruction. So every time anything happened, we had to come up with this big paper of instructions for our mission.

But J.D. couldn't approve very much at all, if he thought there might be the tiniest bit of controversy from Rumsfeld. I quickly learned that his boss, Doug Feith, couldn't approve it, his boss, Wolfowitz, couldn't approve it.

So everything that needed to go to NATO had to go from J.D. Crouch to Rumsfeld. Whenever he told me that that was the case I'd say, "Okay, I'll talk to Secretary Powell. I'll call you back in ten minutes," which I did on purpose, I was basically harassing him, because I knew I could get to Powell unless he was in Timbuktu, in ten minutes by email. He was very email friendly and just say, "Okay, this is the issue that we're having with Rumsfeld, it's ridiculous it's coming to you, I'm so sorry, Mr. Secretary, but could you please call him and tell him to get on board?"

He would always say, "This is perfectly ridiculous, Beth. Yes, I'll do it."

There were any number of occasions in which he'd call me back and say, "Okay, Rumsfeld says yes" and I still couldn't get DOD to sign off on the cable. I'd call Rumsfeld back and say, "Could you call him again? The word isn't getting down to his guys."

At one point he called him three times and he still wouldn't do it. He said, "Send the God damned cable out! I'll take the heat from the NSC." I just did it. I took it back from the NSC. I said, "You guys don't have charge of this anymore. I do. It's going! It's going under instruction. It's going with the Secretary of State's name on it. Sorry!"
That was the kind of thing that happened where, in my book, the NSC should have been fighting that fight, but they wouldn't.

Q: Well, let's talk a little bit about some of the countries that were involved in the Iraq war preliminary discussions. Where was Tony Blair coming from? His country really wasn't behind him, or was it at the beginning and it got disillusioned, or what?

JONES: As I remember the UK was behind Tony Blair, who was behind Bush, for Afghanistan. There was no issue there. They were not happy at the lack of participation, because that clearly meant that we didn't think too much of their military prowess.

After Blair met with Bush, pretty early after 9/11, when they went up to Camp David, Blair was completely on board with Bush. They had a religious connection. They hit it off in a way that was pretty interesting.

In the meantime, Jack Straw, the foreign secretary, and Secretary Powell were hitting it off extremely well, to the point that as it got into the summer of 2002 Powell and Straw had their own phone line. Ordinarily a secretary of state's phone conversations with his foreign counterparts are routed through the Operations Center and someone would stay on the line and take notes. They decided they didn't want to do that, because clearly what they were doing is talking about how to manage their bosses, because their bosses were coming to decisions that neither one of them liked. So it may be overstating it here a little bit, but I'm pretty sure that's what was going on.
Powell could say to Straw: "I really need you to get Blair to pass this message to the president."

So the UK wanted very much to be seen as a powerful equal partner to the U.S. under Blair. You may remember that one of the early things that Rumsfeld said which was devastating to Blair, after the various allies joined us going into Iraq, quite a few did, the Brits did, the Poles did, others did, Rumsfeld said it didn't really matter whether or not we had the Brits with us, he said that in a public statement.

Well the reaction came within seconds, I promise you, from my British colleagues. Jack Straw was on the phone to Powell and my colleagues were on the phone to me, saying, "Oh my God, this is devastating. How can you say this?" Well, we got Rumsfeld to retract it, but the damage was done.

Q: Was it a feeling that Rumsfeld not only had fixed ideas, but also if it sounded good in the press, he's inclined to run his mouth off, too?

JONES: You'll remember, he was giving daily press briefings, if not more, and he was very popular.

Q: Very popular. I remember watching. You'd sort of see granddad.

JONES: It was very popular. He would get carried away with himself, I think, and God forbid that we might suggest something that he could say that would be helpful.

Q: Okay, let's talk about Germany. We all remember when Joschka Fischer said, "I don't believe you" to Colin Powell when he was presenting something about Iraq, at least I remember this.

JONES: I don't remember that specifically.

Q: But, anyway, I remember it, but there was this, basically, did we see Fischer as a separate element to the German government, or was he a good reflection of the German government?

JONES: I think maybe both, actually, in the following respect: the interesting thing about Joschka Fischer was that he and Secretary Powell had an extremely good personal relationship, because when they both got into politics and Joschka Fischer became the foreign minister, every time they met, they would sort of reminisce about earlier times, number one.

Second, Fischer had a very good way of being very clear about what the issues were as far as the Germans were concerned. He didn't sugarcoat anything and of course Powell doesn't, either.

So they both got into the mode of being sure we each understood what the problem was on each side, but also seeing if there was a different way to bridge it, rather than what was going on between Schröder and Bush, which was throwing verbal grenades at each other.

There were reasons that antipathy between Bush and Schröder was so great, a couple of things. One of the first times they met was in Genoa at the G-8 meeting in June 2001, I guess it was, and the United States had already pulled out of Kyoto; climate change was a big issue and there were a variety of other issues.

I was in the meeting. The interesting thing to me was even though the issues were top of the list for the Germans of why they were upset with the U.S., Schröder didn't mention them. He didn't bring up the problem with Kyoto or climate change. I thought: What a chicken! Why aren't you having this discussion?

So that was an interesting insight, that he had been complaining in public, to the media, about Bush, but face to face he didn't have the guts to say anything to him that was the least bit controversial or difficult or anything.

So that was very interesting, number one. Number two, the president then visited him in Berlin. Bush arrived sort of eight, nine, ten o'clock at night and they went to a coffee bar that evening and had a private tête-à-tête. The report that I got from the tête-à-tête was Schröder saying to Bush, "I know that you're interested in going into Iraq. I think it doesn't make any sense, but I know you're going to do what you have to do and I'm not going to get in your way," something to that effect. That was in May or June.

By August, when Schröder was heavily into his campaign for reelection, he basically won on the basis of complaining bitterly in public, in his campaign speeches, about Bush and about going into Iraq. So Bush immediately took a great dislike to Schröder for basically having lied to him about what policy he would follow.

One theme that was pretty constant with President Bush was "I know Chirac hates what I'm doing, but at least he never lied to me about his position. Schröder lied to me about his position." I don't think they ever had much of a civil word after that.

Through all of that, Joschka Fischer and Powell were saying to each other, "We're the only ones talking to each other between the U.S. and Germany. We've got to keep this going, this is terribly important, Germany's on the Security Council, after all. There are things that we need to get done here."

Now, one of the things of course that is very interesting is that throughout this entire period the other discussion was on enlarging NATO. We were talking in great detail with all of the allies about, okay, which countries had met the criteria and how are we going to do it and what's the timing, et cetera. So all the time we were having this terrible discussion on Iraq we were having extremely good discussions about enlarging NATO and about addressing HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Q: You're still assistant secretary for European affairs and Germany obviously looms large in your task chart and things are going bad with Schröder and Bush. Do you do anything with our embassy in Berlin to say, "What can you do about this or how do we mend things?" Obviously, Powell and Fischer are working this. What about the embassy?

JONES: The embassy was very active. We pushed all of the embassies very hard to do as much as possible publicly, with universities, in speeches, on television, everything.

The problem, of course, was and this was obvious is that you can't do very much with bad policy. You can't do good public diplomacy if you've been dealt a bad hand on what it is you are promoting. It went from bad to worse, since we had Iraq and then we had Abu Ghraib and then we had Guantanamo, et cetera.

So it was very, very tough for all of these embassies to get very much done. The interesting thing to me was that most of the big embassies in countries that were so critical to us as part of NATO were all headed by political appointees. Every one of them came to me to say, "This isn't going well, Beth. This is bad, what's going on out there. Everybody hates us. Can't you talk to Karl Rove and get some of this stuff changed?"

I just said, "You're the one with the money. You're the one that got this guy elected. You talk to Karl Rove! You have more access to him than I do."

"Oh, well, we couldn't do that."

Karl Rove was the political director, really, for the White House who was the genius under Bush who figured out how to get him elected and who was the political brain behind how Bush presented himself domestically, more than internationally.

Q: Did you ever have a chance to talk to Rove?

JONES: Never. I would see him on the trips to Europe.

Q: How about Powell?

JONES: I don't know. He would have known him, but he wouldn't have had a conversation with him about that because it was Condi Rice who was responsible for that kind of stuff. And that's what would have happened, frankly, if any of our ambassadors had called Karl Rove, Karl Rove would have shrugged and said, "Talk to Condi."

Q: Well, what about Chirac and France, during this lead up to the Iraq War and all?

JONES: We saw France as the biggest problem. The French were leading the fight against getting the second Security Council resolution. We, myself, Powell, others, would push the French over and over and over again to please understand the philosophy of "Make us look united and ferocious, so that Saddam waves the white flag, and we don't have to go in" and the French just couldn't do it.

The first we knew just how bad it was going to be was in January, I think it was Martin Luther King Day. The French were in the chair of the U.N. Security Council and said they wanted to have a meeting on the Security Council on that day on counterterrorism. Powell saw it as a trap, objected, said he couldn't be there, it was Martin Luther King Day, he had lots of prior engagements, which of course he would on Martin Luther King Day. But nevertheless the French foreign minister persuaded him that it was very important that he come, very important that they have this meeting, it was just going to be about counterterrorism, how could the U.S. object to a counterterrorism meeting?

So Powell went, they had the meeting, it was all about counterterrorism, made various agreements. Powell went out to give a talk in front of the media, as he always did and went upstairs to lunch with the Secretary General, which was on the schedule. He didn't realize that the French foreign minister stayed behind to do another press statement, in which he basically said, "We're all gathered here and let me tell you right now that France will never support a second Security Council resolution." So he sandbagged Powell completely, without saying anything to him directly.

From then on, it was daggers drawn with the French over all of this. In the end as you know Powell didn't get the second Security Council resolution, because of the French campaigning with the Africans who were on the Security Council to vote against.

Q: Was there a certain point where we wrote the Germans and the French off?

JONES: No, we couldn't write them off, because they were on the Security Council. We couldn't. And we needed them for transit and all that kind of thing, number two, and number three, we were doing all this other stuff in terms of enlarging NATO and supporting the enlargement of the EU, and there was a big Cyprus negotiation. We had this huge list of other issues on which we were actually working very well with the French and the Germans and others. So even though, further with the French, even

though President Bush would say, “At least Chirac never lied to me,” he nevertheless couldn’t stand him. He thought that Chirac was condescending.

Q: Our ambassador to Norway was pretty gung-ho on pushing things. Could you talk about that and also the control of some of our ambassadors?

JONES: Yes, this is John Ong, who was the ambassador, one of the political appointees and he, from my perspective, overused the talking points. So the only issue that he ever talked about, that ever came to my attention, in Norway was the Iraq War and that it was imperative that Norway participate.

At the time we had lots of other issues going with Norway, not least of which was of course NATO enlargement. The Norwegian defense minister was very easy to talk to. She was a good colleague in a lot of respects, somebody that we trusted, even Rumsfeld. So we constantly had quite good discussions from Washington with our Norwegian counterparts. But the ambassador kept getting in the way by being so aggressive, “You’re with us or you’re against us.”

You couldn’t really have a conversation in which he wasn’t just pontificating about what Norway should do or shouldn’t do.

One of the big issues that we had at the time was a man named Mullah Krekar, who was an Iraqi Kurd, as I remember. He had gone to Norway from northern Iraq. There was a question about whether he maintained ties to terrorist organizations, what was he really doing, should he be tried, should he be sent somewhere else, et cetera.

So, we always had big conversations, mostly in law enforcement and intelligence channels, about Mullah Krekar. But there was a big policy aspect of it that I was constantly involved in. We basically had to keep the ambassador out of it, because he couldn’t hold a two-way conversation, it was always one way.

Q: Which brings up the question of political appointee ambassadors and career ambassadors. Career ambassadors, like the military, are trained to salute and do their job, but political appointees sometimes have their own agenda. They’ve contributed money, usually, to the party in power, particularly those appointed to embassies in Europe and so they feel sort of entitled in their postings or something. Did you find discipline on some things, was this a problem?

JONES: It was at first, but a couple things worked to mitigate the problem, as it turned out. I traveled as much as I could. I wanted to be sure to get to every single embassy and meet with every ambassador on their home turf, in their embassies, as soon as I possibly could, and I did succeed in doing that.

I especially focused on the ones where we had problems with ambassadors. They turned out mostly to be the political appointees, partly because they honestly didn’t understand

their jobs and didn't understand how important it was that they cooperate with what the policies were.

The argument that worked with them I discovered pretty quickly was, "The things that you're hearing from me about what you need to be saying here, I'm not making this up, I'm not coming in in the morning after a bad dream and telling you what to say. This is something that's been decided by a whole group of people, and it's been blessed by the president of the United States, maybe not personally, every time, but certainly by people that he's designated to bless these things.

"So every time you get off the reservation, the president's going to hear about it, one way or the other. Or if you're not at your post, what am I supposed to say when Condi Rice calls Colin Powell who calls me and says, 'Where's so and so from Bratislava?' and I have to say, 'Oh, well, they're at home in the U.S. for three weeks.'"

So it was that way that I was able to inject some discipline into the system. Now many of them got it perfectly well and knew that they had to ask for permission when they left pos. If we sent in an instruction that said, "Ambassador must do this," it really should be the ambassador, unless they could tell me a reason why not. If the instruction said, "Ambassador or other senior official," then the ambassador didn't have to do it.

But I said, "You really need to internalize the fact that this is a very important job as far as the president, your friend, is concerned. It's not just me, the career person, making this up." A lot of them understood that. There were some who treated their postings as a grand European vacation. I really had a hard time getting them to stay at their posts. Some were kind of useless and so I didn't really mind if they were away from their posts, because then there would be less damage done to the relationship.

But there were a few times when they would ask to be away for this period or that period and I would say, "Actually, you can't be away then, because this is what's going on in your country. I really need you to be there to talk to so and so or stand outside the committee room." Whenever I did that, they said okay. I didn't get blowback.

But it meant intense involvement with all of them. Now, I didn't do that on my own. We had good conversations with our desks and they with their country directors and their deputy assistant secretaries up the line. So as anybody was getting off the reservation, I would know about it pretty quickly. They would know that I would call them and say, "Hey, what's going on out there?"

So we only had one instance when an ambassador issued a press release that said something was going to happen with the White House that hadn't been cleared by the White House. The White House of course raised holy hell, which was absolutely appropriate. I was able to go back and say, "Okay, no more press releases that mention the White House without checking with me." That was another example.

We had a couple of instances in which, speaking of lack of discipline, Secretary Rumsfeld tried to send letters to his defense minister counterparts that weren't approved by the interagency (all the stakeholder departments), and without informing us at State. Luckily, we had the embassies trained up enough, so they would be alerted by their defense attachés, who would go to them when a fax came in from Rumsfeld without checking with us.

The most notorious one was the one that he sent around to his French, German, Belgian counterparts that basically said, "I hate what you're doing and I'm going to kick you out of NATO." It was ridiculous, it was just emotional froth that luckily the defense attachés read and said, "Oh, my God! This isn't really something I want to deliver." They went to the deputy chiefs of mission, who in each case called me and said, "Should we deliver this?" and I said, "Deliver what?" and then we got it pulled back.

So it was very intense. It meant that all of the deputy assistant secretaries, each one either traveled out or were on the phone with these political appointee ambassadors all the time. Every time anything out of the ordinary happened, I would be informed and would make sure to get it back in its box.

The other thing I did is I regularly briefed Armitage, the Deputy Secretary and the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Marc Grossman and the Under Secretary for Management, Grant Green, on anything that came up with one of the ambassadors. I knew that if the ambassador didn't like my disciplining them, that they were going to complain to the White House and then Grant Green or Marc would hear about it immediately.

So I would say, "Okay, here's what just happened, here's what the issue was, here's what we've done about it, so if the White House calls you to complain, here's why I did it" and that worked fine. They were happy to be briefed, rarely did the White House call. These guys didn't really call the White House very often. But the philosophy of "You don't want me to tell President Bush that you're not at your post during an important meeting" really worked.

The other thing that we did when it became clear that we were going to go into Iraq at some point in the spring, we put a ban on all travel by the ambassadors. I said, "I don't know when this is going to happen," this was about six weeks in advance, as it turned out, ""but you need to be at your post when it does. Since I don't know when it's going to happen, you can't leave your posts, period, end of story, from now until whenever it happens." They were all good about that.

Q: We should move to developments in Iraq. When we went in, how was this playing in your bailiwick?

JONES: We had of course been intensely engaged, in the weeks before we went in, in all of the transportation issues, in the transit issues. So on one level we had a very workmanlike relationship with all of our counterparts in Europe, even though on a

political level they hated it. So when we went in and we said, “Shock and awe has happened,” the posture that those of us on the policy side in Washington took is to do constant briefings of “the friends.”

Now before we went in, the Pentagon came around to the idea that it would be better if it looked like we weren’t going in alone, it would be better if other countries participated with us. So there was a big push, all of a sudden, to have more countries on the list as participating. That’s when Poland came in and a bunch of others, in various ways.

Again, we came up with a matrix of the level of support they offered. We counted transit as support, or landing rights, and we had determined what constituted sufficient support to count them as in the group. Some countries didn’t want to be named. They didn’t want anybody to know that they were supporting. We said, “Okay, fine, that’s between you and your parliaments. We aren’t going to rat you out in public.”

But there was a big push after we went in, also, to constantly get more support, either political support (that counted also), or physical support of some kind. As we got further into Iraq, as time went on and Jerry Bremer got there and started saying, “Okay, we need more help” in this area and that area, we then went back to several of the European governments in NATO to say, “We think there’s a role for NATO now in Iraq.” Of course we’d already done the NATO thing in Afghanistan, “We would like NATO participation to train police, to do civil society stuff,” all the things, frankly, that were supposed to have been done by the Future of Iraq group that Rumsfeld and Cheney wouldn’t permit.

So even when we were having awful demonstrations in the streets all over Europe, and other indications of massive opposition, we still were able to have civil conversations with people all over Europe about “Okay, what do we do about this, what do we do about that.” This was not least because all of our NATO allies understood that, okay, the U.S. has gone in, that’s a bad thing, but it’ll be worse if Iraq goes bad in the way Afghanistan was going bad.

We still had the ability to talk with our allies about how they might participate. Now, we started this conversation pretty early. We went in in March and by April we suggested to the Secretary that he make a trip to Europe to talk to NATO and the EU. We had him start in Turkey and stop in Belgrade, where the prime minister had just been assassinated, to pay condolences. He was quite a reformer. Then we went up to Brussels, still very cognizant of the fact that there were huge demonstrations all over the place.

We had Powell stay out by the airport (NATO is right by the airport) so we had the meetings out there to make sure that we didn’t stop all traffic for two days in Brussels just because he was visiting. But he basically talked, in the NATO context and in the EU context, about, “Okay, this is what we’re trying to do, this is what we’re trying to get done, here’s where NATO can help, here’s where individual European countries can help. Talk to me.”

Q: There was a lot of opposition in Europe, demonstrations and all. At a certain point, did this make any difference? Were we able to boost our public relations efforts or anything, or was there much we could do at this point?

JONES: There really wasn't very much we could do, from my perspective, because it went from bad to worse. We had the Iraq invasion and then we had Abu Ghraib, we had Guantanamo, the Geneva Conventions. We were not doing Kyoto and then we unsigned the Rome Treaty. We pulled out of the Antiballistic Missile Treaty. Everything the U.S. had done, to the European public, was negative, was terrible. It used to be that all we got complaints about was the death penalty in the United States and now we had this huge other long list of all these awful things the U.S. was doing.

Q: Did you have the feeling that you're up against a malevolent force or something that was trying to screw things up and you trying to have good relations with Europe?

JONES: We basically finally had to accept that we couldn't overcome the Bush-Cheney-Wolfowitz-Rumsfeld crowd, but that we could do our best to maintain some sort of relationship with the rest of the world. It wasn't just Europe; it was all over. Under Powell and Armitage, that's what we did. There were plenty of other issues that needed attention and got attention, despite all of this uproar. Now the media was totally focused, of course, on Iraq, so it was very hard to get any attention in the media about any of these issues, which I can't really complain about.

I saw the way the Bush White House behaved as un-American. I thought they did not represent genuine American values. I used to talk that way with my counterparts: "These guys are going to go one day." That they got reelected was of course stunning to the Europeans.

Q: For example, let's take Abu Ghraib, because you mentioned this, showing that basically a bunch of low-level enlisted personnel were maltreating prisoners.

JONES: And taking photographs of it.

Q: It was awful in a humiliating way.

JONES: It was humiliating and ugly.

Q: It wasn't as though we were cutting off ears or something, but still.

JONES: Terrorizing them with dogs was pretty bad. That was bad.

Q: Had you known about any of this?

JONES: No. When those photographs came out, it was a complete shock to everybody, anybody that I knew, as well as to Secretary Powell. I'm pretty sure he issued a statement

right away about how sickened he was that his army would permit this kind of thing to happen. He was quite adamant among us that senior heads needed to roll over this, this was completely unacceptable.

The fact that the most senior person who was then fired was a reservist woman colonel was ridiculous. From my perspective, Rumsfeld handled it extremely badly. He kept saying, "I haven't seen the pictures yet," when asked for a comment. It made things worse, of course, for everybody in Europe, anybody in any country that I was responsible for. I'm sure it was the same worldwide.

But it was sickening. It was completely sickening.

Q: Were your European counterparts, particularly, saying, "Beth, what the hell's happening in your country?" and how would you respond to this?

JONES: Honestly, I would say, "Beats me. I don't know how this guy got reelected, either" because we had plenty of time to have a ton of conversations on the margins of all of these other meetings. Frankly I would talk with them about, okay, this is what we are trying to do in order to overcome this new, ridiculous policy.

Now one of the things that was going on throughout this period was the Rumsfeld crowd trying to force us out of the Balkans militarily and Powell was the one who right from the beginning said, "We went in together, we're going out together. We're not going to allow Rumsfeld to pull us out of this." So that was another part of the whole conversation that we were having with our European colleagues, "Help us make the argument to Rumsfeld, Cheney and company that the U.S. needs to stay. Help us with this." And that actually did work quite well.

When it was then decided that we would pull out of Bosnia and the European force would take over, there was a huge uproar from the Pentagon, because they wanted to say, since NATO was leaving and the EU was coming in, that the task was over and there was no need for an EU force there. They were so adamantly opposed to an EU force philosophically, seeing NATO as the only military force that was permitted in Europe.

That was one of the few things we did win on. We said, "Look, it's not over. You want the U.S. out. That means NATO's out. The EU force is perfectly capable of doing this."

Most of the negotiations were with the Pentagon about how to do the memorandum of understanding between NATO and the EU for the turnover. It helped that the new EU commander was British, so the conversations on the ground were easier. We finally were able to persuade the Pentagon that we couldn't decide everything in a formal memorandum of understanding, that some of this had to be done on the ground between the two commanding generals there over how best to collaborate, coordinate, do the turnover. It finally worked well in the end, but it was a gigantic battle.

Q: Well, what happened, in, say, Bosnia? American troops are all out?

JONES: Yes, they're all out.

Q: In Macedonia?

JONES: Macedonia, I haven't kept up with it. At the time, there were plenty of American troops there. We stayed in, in Macedonia, as part of the NATO force. Macedonia, Kosovo, that whole area.

Q: I meant Kosovo. Would you say NATO was badly weakened by this whole Iraqi business or not?

JONES: There was a lot of talk about that, particularly after 9/11, what's the role for NATO. That's one of the reasons that the Secretary General, George Robertson, was so intent on pushing for use of Article V. I argued that the horizon of NATO expanded considerably as a result of all of this. It was unthinkable even for NATO to participate in the Balkans earlier. Yet when we went to NATO and said, "How about NATO participation in Afghanistan?" everybody said, "Sure," basically.

There was still a discussion in terms of who was going to be in charge. Was NATO going to be in charge or was the U.S. commander going to be in charge? Then, again, when we said, "How about NATO in Iraq?" there was more discussion. But, still, by then, we had a ministerial in Madrid in which foreign minister after foreign minister, this was before we went to them on Iraq, said, "We need to consider, first of all, number one, the discussion of out of area and NATO is over. There's no question about it. NATO does operate out of area and out of insular Europe. "And, furthermore, NATO has a role to play because of the respect with which it is held, wherever it might be needed.

"So, should NATO be used in Pakistan after the earthquake? Yes. Should it be used in Afghanistan? Yes, it's being used in Afghanistan. Should it be used to solve the Middle East peace process? Should it be called upon as part of a solution? Yes, once there's an agreement, NATO forces should participate." So, for me, NATO became much more relevant as a result of all of this.

Now, one of the difficulties is what's called the national caveats. NATO of course works on consensus, which means that everybody has to vote yes on whatever decision it is. That means it is hard to get a decision, but also means once there is a decision, everybody is in, except for national caveats. Those began to be accepted, where Germany would say, "Yes, we vote for NATO troops to go to Afghanistan, but German troops will never be in a combat situation. They will go, but not in a combat situation. They'll be in a peacekeeping situation."

That began to be fairly standard, which is too bad. For example when there was a big conflict in Kosovo, all of a sudden there was a big internal battle between the Serbs and

Kosovars. NATO was there, but because of the caveats, they couldn't act very quickly, they had to go back to their capitals and ask, "Can we participate in this? Can we participate in that?" That meant that the rioters got ahead of them and burned a bunch of churches and mosques, which was really too bad.

So that's one of the big issues now in NATO: how to reduce the number of national caveats, so that when there is a NATO operation the commander can say, "Okay, we're going to do this" and that the approvals are already in place.

Q: Today is December 9, 2009.

How much were events driven by the media? One has the feeling that everybody in Washington turns to the New York Times and to the Washington Post and whatever happens to be the editorial choice in these papers, on the front page, that almost sets your agenda.

JONES: I would say that that was true during other administrations. I found it less true during the 2001-2005 period, in the following respect: I was surprised that the media didn't ask more questions about the Bush policies. I felt that the media reported on 9/11, post-9/11 and polices related to 9/11, especially Iraq and Afghanistan, in a very neutral way, without asking the tough questions. Frankly, without asking the tough questions that the State Department was asking the administration about some of these issues.

So the failure to involve allies in Afghanistan, the failure to do much about involving allies in a real way in Iraq. We finally were able to persuade the Pentagon for others to be involved in Afghanistan, but it was so difficult to find a good way for allies to be in Afghanistan without the U.S. also being in charge of all of it.

It was all reported in a very flat way, without editorial comment, without questions, without really appreciating the sharp departures in U.S. behavior in the media. I thought the Bush Administration got a really big pass from the media.

Q: Many describe the media as having a liberal bias, i.e.*, they would be skeptical of the Bush Administration. But, particularly in foreign policy, why weren't they engaging?*

JONES: I don't know the reason. My explanation for it was diffidence about seeming to question being tough on terrorism. There was no stomach for questioning decisions about how to deal with the world in the post-9/11 era.

That said, it was hard for me to understand why the supposedly liberal media didn't ask some very tough questions about treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo. They would report on tough European questions about treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo, but I didn't feel that there was a strong U.S. media set of questions about why are we abandoning the Geneva Conventions, why is this right for the U.S. to do?

Q: It does, in a way, represent a certain throwback to something that I recall: the McCarthy period, where you had to establish your credentials as anti-communist and particularly the media. And so the media was always a bit shy about questioning the tactics of McCarthy and others, which were highly dubious.

JONES: It was different in the sense that the media wasn't attacking anybody, they weren't making anybody into a bad guy, but they also weren't asking even the same questions that members of the administration were asking each other and the White House.

For instance, let's just take the Geneva Conventions and treatment of the Guantanamo prisoners. There were very tough questions raised by Will Taft, the State Department legal advisor, on behalf of Secretary Powell. They were asking very tough questions and arguing that we should not abandon the Geneva Conventions the way we had and that we should not treat the Guantanamo prisoners as enemy combatants. That had implications for the way American soldiers would be treated sometime in the future. Those were private documents until a lot of them were put on a website several years later, but there was no appreciable media discussion along the lines of the arguments that the State Department was making at the time, for instance.

Q: Your particular bailiwick, Europe, how did you find the media, its interest in what you were up to

JONES: European media?

Q: Yeah.

JONES: Oh, my goodness, they were very, very aggressive. They were the ones posing a lot of the questions. But those questions tended to be broader: How can the U.S. invade Iraq? Rather than going into greater detail on the values question of how can the U.S. justify abandoning the Geneva Convention?

Some did ask that, mind you, some did, but it tended to be a more emotional set of questions, rather than what I would consider factual: "How is it that the U.S. can justify its new posture on the Geneva Conventions, how is it that the U.S. can justify abandoning this treaty or that treaty, how is it that the country that passed so much legislation, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, can abandon the principles of the Kyoto Treaty, is it true that the U.S. is so anti-environment?

Of course it wasn't true that the U.S. is anti-environment. It was true that the White House was anti-environment.

Q: Here you have the European media asking you questions about things you might say were outside of your bailiwick. Were you having to deal with questions on Iraq, Iran, Guantanamo?

JONES: Yes, oh yes, absolutely. It is true that Guantanamo itself and the treatment of the prisoners was outside of my bailiwick. But I worked very closely with Pierre Prosper, who was the Ambassador-at-large for War Crimes Issues at the State Department who was charged by Secretary Powell to work directly with the Pentagon on figuring out how to get European governments access to prisoners of their nationalities at Guantanamo. We worked very closely with him on that. We were eventually working with him on negotiating conditions under which certain prisoners would be released to governments in Europe. We were able to negotiate several of those eventually, through the course of the four years.

So I didn't have direct responsibility for it, but because they involved countries for which I did have responsibility, we were very heavily involved in it. Often, the original request from a government for access to Guantanamo prison or to initiate discussions on getting a prisoner released would come to me first. Then I or one of my deputy assistant secretaries (DASs) would sit down with Pierre Prosper and say, "Okay, here's the parameter of what we need to get done. Can you negotiate this with the Pentagon?"

Q: But did you get involved in dealing with the Pentagon, particularly Rumsfeld and company?

JONES: Absolutely. Oh, my goodness, I had daily, many times a day, dealings with J.D. Crouch, my direct counterpart. I never dealt directly with Rumsfeld, other than in meetings in the Situation Room in the White House, when I would be the backup to Secretary Powell or Deputy Secretary Armitage at a meeting and Rumsfeld would be there.

Q: Can you characterize any in the European press that were particularly difficult for you to deal with, or asked the really penetrating questions, or not?

JONES: I'm not sure I can differentiate, because I went to every European capital many times. Every time I went, I sat down with the media for a round table discussion.

The countries in Central Europe who were NATO-aspirant countries or EU-aspirant countries before we actually enlarged NATO and the EU enlarged, those journalists tended to be much more focused on the issues of their particular country with the U.S.

Whereas countries already in NATO or already in the EU tended to focus on the bigger questions of Iraq, Afghanistan, Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, Article 98, the war crimes exception that we kept trying to get for the Rome Treaty, they would be the broader, generic questions. Whereas if I went to Slovenia those journalists were focused entirely on a particularly Slovenia issue.

Q: The British press, again, you think of the British having this great intellectual tradition, yet the British press that one gets wind of has these scandalous headlines and all this. Did you find, were there two British presses?

JONES: Oh, yes. There were always the serious journalists, who were actually very interesting to talk to. They were very insightful and asked insightful questions. I would single out the British press as being interesting and fun for me to talk to, because it was an intellectual challenge.

The Dutch press, the Danish press, the French press, those were the ones that were probably the most insightful and most interesting. The German press, to a degree, the German press could be a bit emotional on some of these issues, not least because for part of the most difficult period, there was an election campaign underway in Germany, so that made it more difficult.

Q: Did the German election campaign? This was when Chancellor Schröder was taking a sort of anti-American stance

JONES: Not anti-American. Anti-Bush, very specific.

Q: Did that cause problems?

JONES: Absolutely, it caused very serious problems with the White House, no question about it. The genesis of it was President Bush's understanding from a brief meeting when he first arrived in Berlin in—I think it was May of 2002, I wasn't there—when Schröder apparently said, "You're going to do what you have to do, and I'll support you in that. I won't argue with you about it."

That was in May, I believe. By August, he was really hot and heavy into his election campaign and was having a very hard time, he was not winning. He started complaining about Bush specifically and his Iraq policy. That's when Schröder really began to win. The NSC was constantly calling me saying, "Make him stop, make him stop!" I'd call up my German counterpart and say, "It's one thing to complain about a country's policies, but the *ad hominem* attack on the President of the United States for election campaign purposes is a little unseemly, don't you think?"

That wasn't the extent of the problem. You may remember the justice minister made a comparison in a speech about that same time between Hitler and Bush. We really raised a stink about that. She was removed from her post, but not until after the election. As I remember, there was some delay, there was something not good about what happened. They did the right thing, but made it more difficult than they should have, or could have, let's put it that way.

The interesting thing for us is that at the same time that Schröder was being so difficult about Bush, we were meeting separately with Angela Merkel, who was the

up-and-coming politician of the opposition party, who was very pro-American, not necessarily pro-Bush. She thought that it was appropriate for German troops to participate with NATO in Afghanistan, that if the U.S. as a NATO ally wanted Germany's help in Iraq that that should happen. Those were really interesting meetings for me to participate in.

Q: What was your take on her at the time? Here she was, an East German.

JONES: Yes. She was very articulate, very well briefed, said her piece very clearly. She argued her position well. I would see her with Secretary Powell; I think I once saw her with the president. So she was the darling of the administration, but at the same time, frankly, from the State Department perspective we were a bit careful about embracing her too much, because we knew that would only hurt her.

But at the same time that all of this was happening between Bush and Schröder, Secretary Powell and Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer were being extremely careful to try to retain as much of the relationship as possible. Secretary Powell on numerous occasions would explain at White House meetings that the greatest Atlanticist in Europe was Joschka Fischer, that he absolutely wanted to retain the relationship with the United States, recalling how much the U.S. had helped Germany in the postwar years as Germany was divided. It was interesting to hear now General Powell repeat that at his recent portrait unveiling at the State Department. Joschka Fischer was there and he repeated that view in his speech.

Q: In the States, did you feel that the New York Times and Washington Post were driving forces on policy matters?

JONES: No, I didn't feel they were driving forces. They were kind of behind. They were reporting what was going on without being as sharp as they could have been. Members of the administration always looked at the New York Times and the Washington Post first thing. The White House always fussed about what Maureen Dowd had said. She was the one who was the toughest, always, on the Bush Administration.

Q: She was a columnist who belittled Bush.

JONES: Right, she was sort of the bad girl in the media. But this was also the period when Judith Miller of the New York Times was in jail for refusing to reveal her sources for information that she had published in the New York Times about evidence that we had on the nuclear and chem/bioweapons in Iraq. It eventually came out that she had been passed bad information by sources that were bad sources, that hadn't been vetted properly by the CIA and by others.

Q: What about CNN? In times of great crisis, people turn to CNN, but when one looks at CNN in the normal course of events the news is pretty damned superficial.

JONES: Yeah, it was superficial usually, it was.

Q: If things were happening, like when the Gulf War turned hot—

JONES: Everybody turned to CNN, because CNN had all the pictures of all the cruise missiles flying around Baghdad. For quick news if something had just happened people would turn to CNN. But this was also the beginning, from my perspective, anyway, the beginning of the era of a lot of online news sources.

Secretary Powell was a master at looking online for his news, first thing in the morning, by five in the morning he was on his computer. He had certain sites that he went to. I've forgotten the site that he went to, but we figured out which one it was, because whatever was on that news source--.

Q: This is internet news.

JONES: That's right, internet news, online news. There was a particular site that he went to, and we could be sure that we would be asked questions in the 8:30 staff meeting, by Secretary Powell based on what he'd seen in those news stories.

Q: So obviously you or somebody--

JONES: Absolutely, I met at 8:10 every morning with my DASs and my public affairs person to say, "Okay, what's happened overnight?" They helped me to get ahead of it, to have already called various of their embassies, wherever the news was generated in our bureau. That allowed me to be able to say in the meeting either, "We're on it, the embassy is looking into this, the embassy has called the foreign ministry about this," called the interior ministry, whatever it is. Or "The embassy checked it and it is bogus, there's nothing to this." Because that was often the case.

We all felt we had to be able to speak up even before Secretary Powell asked the questions, to say, "There's a news report about X in Georgia," "There's a news report about something or other in Switzerland," "There's a news report about this and this is what the facts are, as we know them so far from our embassy."

Q: You were on the right side of the 24-hour clock in Europe.

JONES: Thank goodness, yes, it was perfect.

Q: Because if something happened in Japan, you'd get a sleepy voice at the other end.

JONES: That's right and all of our embassies knew that they would get calls from the DAS or from the desks first thing in the morning about all of this. They were very good about saying, "There is a news report about X and Y, here's what we know about it,

here's what's wrong about it, here's what's right about it, just so you guys have it first thing in the morning. Because they knew how important it was to Secretary Powell.

The other thing that we did to get ahead of the news is that we knew that, I don't think it was every day, I'm thinking it was Monday, Wednesday and Friday, but I could be wrong about that, now, Secretary Powell had a phone call with the national security advisor, with Rice and with Rumsfeld at 7:15. As much as I could, I would get information to him by email before his 7:15 phone call.

So if it was something that I really, really wanted him to know about, so he either wouldn't be blindsided by one of the others asking about it, or so that he could be ahead of the curve with the others on whatever it was, I would get it to him by 7:15.

Q: Looking at the 24-hour day, did you have any personal time at all?

JONES: Yes. Here's how it worked: Secretary Powell and Deputy Secretary Armitage never came into the office on the weekends. They worked from home all the time. It was easy to get them by email or by phone, Armitage more by phone than by email. So we knew we could reach them and they could reach us. So, for instance, that's one of the reasons, when finally we got Blackberries, partway through these four years….

Q: A Blackberry being a form of?

JONES: A handheld personal communications device. I think the last year I was an assistant secretary we had those, but before that I would literally run upstairs to the computer in the house if I was out gardening at least every hour, if not more frequently, to be sure I hadn't been asked to do something by Secretary Powell. I walked around the house with a phone attached to my belt and a headphone. I was often on the phone so much my ear would hurt from being on the phone, so I wore a headphone in the end, so it wouldn't hurt quite so much.

Although this sounds a bit relaxed and casual, it was not. I wanted to be as responsive as I possibly could be to Secretary Powell and Mr. Armitage. Whenever the Secretary called (always through Ops), I always stood up at home; I needed to do that out of respect. My husband would laugh and tell me, "You know that he can't see you. You don't really have to stand up every time he calls you!"

So we were able quite easily to get home before it was very late in the evening and then work from home on the weekends, which is a lot nicer than sitting in an office waiting for something to happen. Of course right after 9/11, we were in all the time, but eventually Saturday and Sunday we might be on the phone all day and all weekend, but at least we were at home. Frankly while I was on the phone I got a lot of dusting done, that kind of thing, walking around with my little headphone. But Secretary Powell especially was very mindful of the need for family time and even though he really appreciated a fast response, he understood that we were often doing this from home. The tough part was,

when something needed to be written that was classified, we couldn't do that at home. We had to do that in the Department.

Q: What about one on one talks with correspondents? Was this a way of picking an outlet who you think could maybe not be overly friendly, it's not that, but get it right, because so often you talk to somebody and they get it wrong?

JONES: I'm not sure that I know too much about how that worked. Richard Boucher was the spokesman of the Department and assistant secretary for public affairs. He was the one who managed that aspect of the Department's business with the media.

That said, as soon as Powell and Armitage started at State, we were all told, "Talk to the media. Make sure Richard knows about it. Don't hold back." which was a vast difference from the way Secretary Albright had done it. We were all forbidden, absolutely forbidden, from talking to the media when she was Secretary and we were also forbidden from talking to Congress. Not only did that change, but we were told we must talk to Congress especially, that was our instruction, particularly from Mr. Armitage.

Q: What was the difference? What was your analysis of that?

JONES: Trust. Secretary Powell trusted us not to be stupid in what we said to the media or to Congress. There just was not trust by Secretary Albright for the professionals in the Foreign Service that we would get it right. I don't know why, but that was certainly how we took it.

Q: Well she did bring a team with her which was essentially outside of the Foreign Service.

JONES: They were. That's not unusual, though. Most Secretaries did that. Some would come in who were from outside the Foreign Service, but the Secretary Albright group was a very close-knit group. They had worked together for years and years.

There were plenty of us who were allowed to brief her and brief them and all that kind of thing, but they were the ones who set the tone of: "You can't talk to the media. None of you is smart enough to know how to do it right."

Now, at the same time, under Powell, we individually would set the rules for our own bureaus, in terms of who should be talking to the media in the bureau. and I said, "I'm not going to restrict anybody from doing it, but I want it clearly coordinated through our public affairs person, so that we know what the questions are that are being asked by the media and that we have smart answers." That was number one.

Number two, when I talked to the media or when anybody from the bureau talked to the media, we insisted on talking on background. I felt very strongly that there's only one spokesman for the State Department and that was Richard Boucher. I believed that it was

not appropriate for my name to be in articles about this or that. I would say this to journalists: "I'll talk to you on background. If you want something on the record, you need to talk to Richard, but I will not talk on the record." I kept it that way, except for when I was traveling and I was specifically speaking to the local media, where the ground rules were on the record, generally.

In the bureau, I wanted to be sure I knew what the media questions were and that people who were comfortable speaking to the media, in other words people who had some experience, *i.e.*, the more senior people, were the ones actually doing the talking.

That said, there were, for example, in the Cyprus negotiations, several of the Cyprus desk officers were brilliant on the details, when it got really down to details. The same thing with the Balkans issues, there were some so detailed it really took an expert to be able to walk somebody through what does this really mean.

The sanctions legislation on the Balkans was terribly complicated legally, in terms of what was required, what reporting was required, what could the Bosnians or the Serbs do or not do, what could be imported, what could be exported, et cetera. We'd have whoever was the expert on that actually talk to the media when that was necessary. It wasn't necessary that often, frankly.

Q: What was going on with Cyprus?

JONES: Cyprus really had heated up quite a bit. There were several things going on with Cyprus. The first was the UN, Kofi Annan, had put forward a plan, the Annan Plan, that tried to parse the issues between Greek and Turkish Cyprus. The two sides were asked to negotiate with the UN representative to make an agreement based on the Annan Plan.

We had a U.S. negotiator, Tom Weston, who assisted that process, by providing good offices to the two sides and by providing ideas for how they might bridge some of the gaps. The Turkish Cypriots basically found a way to agree to most of what the Annan Plan had. The Greek Cypriots came to an agreement as well. So, there was an agreement over the Annan Plan, but it had to go to a referendum on both sides of the island.

In the meantime, in order for the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots to agree to the Annan Plan, we had to get the Greeks and the Turks to allow their respective communities on the island to agree to this. So we had a big discussion with the Turks and the Greeks about supporting the Annan Plan, about supporting the negotiation, about allowing their compatriots to agree to what was necessary.

This was extremely difficult for Turkey, because the Turkish military had been so opposed to any sort of agreement along these lines. We were able to get the Turkish military to stand down from its opposition to this. There was a new Turkish government in place that we persuaded to support the Turkish Cypriots in this. This was Erdogan

when he came in and his team. The Turks did a complete turnaround, really. So that was very important.

The Greek government was a little bit more tepid about its support, didn't push the Greek Cypriots as hard, but nevertheless they did come to agreement, so the referendum was in the offing. At the same time as all of this is happening and we were getting Turkey and Greece to agree to support the Annan plan, the EU was trying to begin a negotiation with Turkey to join the EU. So that was out there, as a separate strand, that all relates to a degree to what was going on in Cyprus.

At the same time the EU is trying to decide how to let a divided Cyprus into the EU, which it is really on a fast track to do. We the U.S. are very involved with the EU to say, "How can you do this? How can you let these guys in before an agreement, because you're basically giving the Greek Cypriots a green light to object to the Annan Plan." Even though the Commission said, "Yes, yes, we know, we've kind of made a mess of this, but it's on a track that we can't stop." So that was another whole strand number three of this whole business.

At the same time we were negotiating with Turkey and Greece on energy pipelines, allowing gas to go from Turkey to Greece, which was turning the direction of a pipeline flow around, which they agreed to do.

So in other words, we're getting some good traction between Greece and Turkey on some of these things. We're getting some traction with the two sides of Cyprus, but we're still having trouble with the EU in terms of should Cyprus enter and should Turkey be allowed to begin negotiations to join the EU.

In the end, in the referendum the Turkish Cypriots agreed to the Annan Plan and the Greek Cypriots turned it down, so the agreement never happened. But at the same time the U.S. said, "Okay, we need to reward the Turkish Cypriots for taking a big risk, one that they'd never taken before, to see if there aren't ways that we can ameliorate their situation as Cyprus joins the EU, so that agricultural goods from the Turkish side of the island can be exported, so that ports can open, so that transportation routes can be opened to the international community." That discussion is still underway, so far as I know. It is still difficult.

Q: Why was the EU taking this sort of pro-Greek Cypriot stance?

JONES: They didn't mean to, I think. The decision to begin negotiations for Cypriot accession started a very long time ago. They thought that the split of the island would be solved by the time accession happened. They didn't condition it on an agreement. It was a very bad mistake.

Q: When one looks at it, here they say, "You've got to settle all your boundary disputes before you can join us" and then sort of the preeminent boundary dispute, they allow it.

JONES: It is still very debilitating in the EU and in Turkey, because it stops the EU in its tracks on negotiating all kinds of things. So, for example, when NATO and the EU need to discuss something on the military track, Turkey can say, "No, you're not going to do it, so long as Cyprus is involved."

Q: The major European powers, obviously they were aware of this. Were we constantly saying, "What are you trying to do?"

JONES: We were constantly in conversation with the EU, with the British, with whoever was in the EU presidency, to say, "Please, isn't there some way we can sort this out to make it not so easy, for example, before the referendum, for the Greek Cypriots to just vote this down and get in anyway?" In other words, it didn't matter what they did on the referendum, they were still going to get into the EU. We really pushed the EU hard on making very strong representations to the Greek Cypriots on this. They did, but it didn't do any good.

We also really pushed the EU hard on creating cut-outs, if you will, that would allow the Turkish Cypriots various agreements in the EU that would permit their goods to leave from Turkish ports, that this would be agreed by the Commission. In substance, in principle, they really totally agreed with us, that the Turkish Cypriots needed some sort of a reward, or a series of rewards, for having behaved extremely well, doing all the things that the international community wanted it to do in the negotiations. But the EU was never able to solve various requirements of the Commission - this rule and that rule - that would have permitted that sort of a cut-out to take place.

We pushed very hard for some assistance to Turkish Cyprus, that was pretty straightforward. We were able to do all kinds of things that worked very nicely. Our embassy in Nicosia was very good at coming up with very good ideas for things that we could do across the lines or with both communities, on either side of the line.
But in terms of some of the aviation agreement type of things, or use of the ports, that we tried to do, we ran up against the Greek lobby in Congress.

Q: I was going to say, I had my four year in Athens. The Greek lobby is next to the Israeli lobby

JONES: Formidable. We worked them very hard, we talked to them throughout on what it was we were trying to get done and why this was so important to Cyprus and to Greek Cyprus and Greece. We explained to them that Greece was just as interested in getting to an agreement. Greece wasn't so interested in the cut-outs that we were talking about later on.

So we briefed and briefed and briefed and tried to get as much support as we could, particularly from Senator Sarbanes of Maryland. That was a very important one. They

understood it in substance, but it was very hard for them to be as supportive as we wanted them to be, to permit some of these things to take place.

I haven't kept up, so I don't know if it ever happened. I don't think it did.

Q: When you get with the Greeks and the Turks, particularly the Greeks, you're dealing with myths. Moldova had this peculiar Transnistrian situation.

JONES: It was a big issue for us. I spent a tremendous amount of time on it. The shorthand for situations like this was "frozen conflicts." When we referred to frozen conflicts, it was the Moldova-Transnistria issue, and then the Nagorno Karabakh issue and then the breakaway republics in Georgia. Those three sets of issues were what we referred to as frozen conflicts.

On Moldova, there were a couple of things going on. First, in Istanbul in 1999 there'd been an agreement signed by Yeltsin in which he agreed that Russia would withdraw its matériel and its troops from Transnistria and from Georgia. We called those the "Istanbul commitments." It was done at the OSCE summit meeting in Istanbul in November 1999. The Istanbul Commitments were constantly on the agenda between the U.S. and Russia. Every single conversation that any of us had with the Russians always included something about these frozen conflicts and the Istanbul Commitments, because they were related to the CFE Agreement, the Conventional Forces in Europe Agreement, in terms of how much matériel and how many troops the Russians could have on the line between the former Warsaw Pact and NATO.

But there were a couple of things about Moldova that were particularly interesting during the four years I was assistant secretary. One was that, at first, the Russians agreed to remove their small arms ammunition from large warehouses in Transnistria and they began removing it. The OSCE, I believe, had provided some sort of financial support, or maybe the U.S. had, I can't remember the details now, to help do that and the Russians began removing it. This had to do with trains. Then after Putin had been in office for about a year, the trains stopped and the withdrawal of the ammunition didn't continue, and the removal of the troops didn't continue. The Russians got very sticky about closing the bases in Georgia that they needed to close. So, it got to be a much more important agenda item between the U.S. and Russia.

In the meantime, the OSCE had this negotiator trying to negotiate something between Moldova and the Transnistrian government to resolve the breakaway republic of Transnistria issues. That was complicated. Every time I went to Moldova, I got involved in discussing it with everybody. I wasn't really a negotiator, but I certainly stayed involved in what was going on with all this.

We also tried to get Ukraine, particularly after the Orange Revolution, to help us out by being more observant, shall we say, at their customs posts between Ukraine and Moldova, on the Transnistria side, to prevent so much smuggling. That was one of the big issues,

the smuggling of weapons, of narcotics, of trafficked persons, all kinds of things were being smuggled into Transnistria through Ukraine and then into Moldova and back and forth. We didn't do too well in that, but that was another big effort, to get Ukraine involved.

The bottom line was Moldova was a very, very big issue for us. It was a big issue for the Russians. At one point, the Russians negotiated some sort of a semi-agreement with Voronin, the president of Moldova, which we got wind of just before Voronin signed it, we the U.S. and the EU. Both the U.S. and the EU went to Voronin and said, "Are you sure you want to sign this? This is not in your interests." He called off the signing ceremony as Putin was landing in Moldova, so that didn't go over very well, at all. Putin was extremely upset with us and with the EU for having called this off.

But we said to Voronin, "You can sign anything you like, but can we point out to you what this means for you and what this means for your ideas about getting closer to the EU and joining Europe and all that kind of thing." But the interesting thing is there's a new government now in Moldova, very reformist government, lots of very good things going on there. It is quite amazing. But I don't think the ammunition has been removed, yet, from Transnistria.

Q: Also, too, I understand that it's been a good source of finance, too. A certain amount of that ammunition has gone to Iran and other places.

JONES: From the Russian side, you mean?

Q: Yeah.

JONES: I don't know that the Russians have really supplied ammunition to Iran. The issue is supplying nuclear materials, because that is such a lucrative thing to do. But I'm not so sure about just plain old ammunition. We actually went to the Russians to say, "One of the things that is needed as we are doing all this training of the new Iraqi Army and the new Afghan Army, is weapons and ammunition." We went to the Ukrainians, we went to the Russians and we went to others to say, "Can't you give them this stuff?"

Q: Let's talk about U.S. embassies. I would think you could almost divide them off into sort of the traditional London and Paris and Berlin and all, where they usually would have a political ambassador, which may be very good or very bad, but it was for the most an unknown quantity, because these people were coming out of the political or the business world. That group, first.

JONES: It's true. Of the 54 embassies that were under my purview in EUR, I had 28 political appointees, so I had quite a number. They were largely very professional. I found them very easy to work with, with a couple of exceptions. They were very intensely involved in promoting U.S. policies after 9/11. They really understood their roles. But

they also were the ones to be hit first by all the intensely negative reaction to Bush policies and to President Bush himself.

Many of these people were friends of Bush, of course, personal friends of his and were very unhappy about the position they found themselves in. What was interesting to me is without exception they were very worried about how the White House looked to their European interlocutors. They believed that the White House was actually doing quite a bad job of representing the United States and representing U.S. policies and U.S. values and U.S. interests.

They, the ambassadors, out there on the front line were having a really difficult time explaining why it was okay for the United States to give up on the Geneva Conventions, or why it was okay for the U.S. to not do very much work in Afghanistan but rather move to Iraq when there was no evidence that 9/11 was sourced to Iraq, et cetera. They would come to me, individually or in small groups, to say, "We're being trashed. The White House needs to do a better job of the way it talks about these things. Whenever Vice President Cheney, in particular, opens his mouth, we get bombarded. Beth." they would say. "Do something!"

I would say, "Actually, I agree with you. All of us at the State Department agree with you, basically."

They would say, "Call up Karl Rove and tell him to stop!" I'd say, "You know Karl Rove, I don't. I can call the NSC, but I'm really not going to get a call through to Karl Rove, but you can." "Oh, no, no, we couldn't do that," they said. They weren't prepared, in other words, to explain to their friends at the White House just how difficult it was for them to represent the United States with the way the White House, particularly Bush and Cheney, but particularly Cheney, spoke and acted.

Q: This shows a real breakdown in the process, because one of the major arguments, probably the major argument, for having political appointees in some of these major embassies is that these are people who are connected not only to the party but to the president and can have their own lines of communication open. And yet, here, at a time when it was really important to let him know, they didn't.

JONES: Right, they weren't prepared to have that kind of a conversation with either the president or with Cheney.

Another kind of small instance, every January, early in January, I had an EUR chiefs of mission meeting in Washington and had them come back to meet with us. I did it then because I figured a lot of them would be back for Christmas anyway and they could stop in Washington for two days, three days, on the way back to their posts. To kick it off I always had a reception at my house, which I of course paid for personally, because you can't get any representational funds for that kind of thing. It was a great way to see everybody, it was a great way to bring everybody together and generate the idea that

we're all a family, we are all in this together, these are our colleagues, your colleagues, et cetera.

The second year I did that and they had all accepted. But, then I had a call from two or three of them, deep apologies, because they had been invited to a dinner by Cheney the same night. They had been told originally that the dinner would start at seven, so they would come to my reception for a while. Secretary Powell always came to my reception, too, so it was a good thing for them to be able to talk to Secretary Powell. Of course Cheney's office knew all of this, not least because one of the ambassadors stayed at the White House, because he was a cousin of the president. So everybody knew at the White House all about this whole thing. A couple of them called, very apologetic, to say that Cheney had just moved the dinner from seven o'clock to six o'clock. Even they believed that he'd done it in order to prevent them from seeing Powell at my house. That's how petty the fights got in Washington. Now, whether that's true, I have no idea. The reason they were of course invited by Cheney is they were the big money, the big funders of the Republican Party.

So we had these political appointees who were at the front line and felt very strongly that they had an extremely difficult brief to pursue. All of them tried, with a couple of exceptions. As I mentioned, we had a couple who were either shy or felt like they couldn't do it. But I also made certain that they had extremely strong DCMs, in every single case, so that the DCMs could carry the water any time it was necessary, either in terms of representation of the U.S. or argumentation, advocacy in NGOs, think tanks, media, ministries, whatever it took to represent the United States as effectively as they possibly could.

The interesting thing is that we had several political appointees in Eastern European capitals, which I thought was a bad mistake, because even though several of these countries had already joined NATO and the EU, there was still extremely serious political issues in the countries. For example, there were extremely serious Holocaust issues. Holocaust issues had not been solved as far as the U.S. and the Jewish community had been concerned. There were extremely serious corruption issues. There were extremely serious issues involving Russian Mafia and Russian Mafia infiltration of some of these governments. Some of the political appointees just could not handle this kind of very, very difficult political atmosphere in these countries. I thought that was a mistake to put them there. That was where we really lost ground and didn't need to.

Q: Were these people from Eastern European backgrounds who wanted to go back to their families' countries?

JONES: We only had one like that. That wasn't done so much. We didn't have Italian-Americans going to Italy or anything like that. That didn't happen. We didn't have Slovene-Americans going to Slovenia or anything like that. We had one Polish-American go to one of the Baltic States, but that was as close as we got to any kind of ethnicity issue.

Q: So that wasn't….

JONES: That was not an issue. It was lack of experience, it was lack of guts, really. Not all of them were as gutsy. It took a lot of guts to go in to a government and say, "You really have to think about corruption if you expect to get into NATO, or if you expect to get into the EU. Corruption is very big issue for examination." Or, if it was a government that was already in the EU and already in NATO, to go in and have that kind of conversation is also difficult.

Q: Was there any time of coordination in these countries that had the corruption problem, going to the Germans and to the French and the Brits, to make sure we're all hitting them all together?

JONES: Absolutely. One of the devices that we had in the countries that were still EU-aspirant countries is we had parallel assistance programs. Anything that the U.S. did in terms of assistance in these countries, we were extremely careful to coordinate with the European Commission. Of course the Commission had working groups in there all the time, in every ministry. Different countries in the EU were responsible for corruption or various justice issues or environmental issues, to close the various chapters that they needed to close for their EU accession.

So we were very careful as we were doing, say, judicial ethics training, to make sure we were training to the judicial ethics that were the EU standard, not the U.S. standard, in each of these. So we were very, very positive-aggressive about that kind of thing. In the countries where we no longer had an assistance program, which would have been the ones that already joined NATO or already joined the EU, we were very active in Brussels and with EU counterparts in capitals to coordinate on talking points, coordinate on advocacy, number one.

Number two, we were also very active in the OECD in Paris on corruption initiatives. Or we worked with Transparency International a lot and all that kind of thing. It was a tremendous amount of that kind of collaboration, coordination with the Europeans, which is something that I often talk about. Because, as we were collaborating so closely with our various European counterparts on the NATO aspirants or the EU aspirants or on some of the civil society issues, we were having tremendous collaboration at the same time we were battling each other over the Iraq issue.

There were huge demonstrations in the streets, but we were still having a very good conversation about what to do about the Balkans, or what to do about the NATO aspirants, or whatever.

Q: You mentioned one thing which is so vital, but often kind of overlooked for these countries and that is the legal system. Today, from what I gather, I'm not expert on this, but the Russian legal system is dismal, still, and when the Soviet system was in control

throughout these places, they really hadn't put much effort into the legal system. In other words, the rule of law did not particularly pertain. And then in the EU, where the rule of law is number one, how did that work during your time?

JONES: The anomaly, of course, is that in all of the countries that joined the EU and the RU-aspirant countries there was a big legislative review underway, a lot of legislation was revised to accord with EU law. That wasn't a problem. The same thing happened in Russia, a lot of legislation was changed to comply with WTO requirements or just to modernize it.

It's the implementation where they got crosswise, where, yes, there would be a wonderful anticorruption law on the books, but it was never implemented. Or, it would be applied to low level people when that wasn't really where the corruption was that anybody was talking about. It was at the very high level, where nobody was indicted or brought to trial on charges. That's always what's always necessary, in Russia and everywhere.

Q: Do you feel that the EU was bringing these countries up to snuff, as far as the real, true adherence to a legal process?

JONES: I thought so. That said, I'm always on the side of "get the structures in place, get the legislation in place, do the training on implementation, make sure people understand what conflict of interest and all of this kind of thing." I always believed that in the end it is easier to advocate and to force change or create change if a country or an organization is on the inside of the deal.

If you leave a country out or disappoint a country -- that provides them with a negative incentive to make the kinds of changes that are necessary. Now, that said, let's take NATO enlargement: there were ten aspirant countries, only seven of which made it, so there were three that didn't make it. Those were the countries that I spent a lot of time in myself, to talk about not what is the problem, so much, but what do you still need to do? How the U.S. is going to continue to be close to you guys and maintain support and work through assistance programs? The EU would do the same.

But at the same time the European Commission has mechanisms whereby if countries don't comply or backslide on some of the commitments that they made in the EU, they have ways to deal with that, as well. So, for instance, Bulgaria is in some sort of a hiatus situation with Brussels for failure to implement some of the anticorruption legislation; maybe they have overcome it by now. Romania was in bad trouble with the EU as well, for the same kinds of reasons.

But I argue that the more these countries are in the EU and see what it means to comply with the rule of law or to really honor the rule of law, the more they see that they can be prosperous by obeying the law. Maybe not as prosperous as if they were taking all the money that they would if they were corrupt, but in the end it is better for everybody not to be corrupt. It is a hard argument to make when people are making so much money, but

the negative part of the argument is, someday you're going to be caught, you are going to be sitting in jail, you'll be very unhappy with yourself, so why not knock this off, do it right, you're a very wealthy person, you can live on this salary or this income.

Q: We're talking about the very top.

JONES: That's where the corruption happens.

Q: What about this, as an attitude? You have the EU having its own vetting process and bringing countries in. Once they're brought in, do you sort of check that off and say, okay, we don't have to worry about preaching to this or that country?

JONES: Oh, no, no, we keep all that going, for a couple of reasons: one is because we really do push the whole concept of the rule of law in principle, but, second, we have so many American companies, American NGOs, American media, American religious organizations that are trying to operate in these societies and get crosswise legally or get caught in some corrupt deal. Let's say, an American company that is bidding on a big project doesn't get the deal because it didn't pay money under the table. That's bad for that American company, which right there is the platform that the U.S. has to say, "We care about the rule of law here. This is a problem."

Q: Did you find, by the time you were doing this, that the whole idea of an anticorruption for corporations, not paying bribes, at one point the American corporations, that law was considered naive as hell, of course everybody does this, but then, as with so many other things, had this become pretty well accepted?

JONES: The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act was the legislation we're talking about. There was no question that every American company I ever worked with took this very seriously. They didn't like it; they still don't like it. They still think that it disadvantages them, compared with companies from other countries. But they know quite well that they must comply, because the Department of Justice and the Securities Exchange Commission in the States has charged so many companies with disobeying the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and they've paid millions of dollars in fines. Their company's name has been dragged through the mud, because all of this is made public. So, they comply, as far as I know.

The argument that we always made to them and I still make to them in my current business is, "This is good for you, because it makes you squeaky clean. It makes for an argument to all of these countries that must comply with anticorruption rules as far as the EC is concerned. Your argument to them is if you hire us you can be assured that there isn't going to be any corruption here. It might not be good for this official or that official, but it's good for your reputation with Brussels, with the population, with the media, because there isn't going to be anything corrupt about this contract."

Some companies are reluctant to use that argument. But I firmly believe that actually does work, because there are so many governments who say, "We're fighting corruption," even though they really are not. But if they can showcase the hiring by an American company, to say, "We're fighting corruption and here's an American company that may not be corrupt because of the FCPA, so this is evidence that we really are fighting corruption, there can't be any corruption in this deal."

Q: How did you find the EU attitude in this?

JONES: Well, see, of course, I was dealing with European Commission officials and with government officials and they were all as appalled by corruption as anybody was.

There was one instance we really had to fight hard on this issue, when we were promoting the sale of an American fighter plane to one of the new NATO countries. They were up against a European consortium which had promoted themselves by saying that they would do so much extra in terms of building roads, building schools. But it was this whole extra social infrastructure investment that they were going to be doing.

We did a lot of research on the last time this consortium, or one part of this consortium, had gotten a contract somewhere in Africa. We discovered that they had made all these promises and then hadn't done anything, they hadn't fulfilled any of them, or hardly any of them. We went back to the government concerned and said, "Watch out, watch out. Our information is that they are not telling you the truth, that, yes, it sounds nice, but you really should look at the evidence, their track record on actually completing these things that they say they're doing."

I went to the two governments in the consortium and said, "You should know that this is what we found out about what this company didn't do." They were very unhappy with me, extremely unhappy with me. I said, "Prove me wrong."

It wasn't really corruption, but it was a bad deal. But we played hard and these were close allies. We just said, "Business is business, but we believe your companies are misrepresenting, we believe, what it is that they're going to do."

Q: Do you know what happened on that?

JONES: Yes, the U.S. company won.

Q: To play it straight, you're playing from a strong hand. It might not always work, but did you have a feeling the times were changing, regarding that sort of thing?

JONES: At the same time, of course, we had the Enron disaster and the Tyco disaster. As I started as assistant secretary Enron was a very big, powerful American company, Tyco was all over Europe, the Tyco CEO was actually seeing one of my ambassadors. Then all of a sudden all of these guys are going to jail and I thought, "Oh, my God, how are we

going to represent this to all these places, companies, around the world. “All American companies are above reproach,” was basically one of the talking points I used to use.

We just said, “Look, I always believed American companies are above reproach, but when they are not, they go to jail. That’s how good our system is. So, you can be sure that if you hire an American company and there is something wrong, that it will be found out and” they will be penalized appropriately. But that was a little tough for us, in terms of advocacy for American business.

Q: You were doing this at a very difficult time, because one of our strong points always is if we’re not holier than thou, we are pretty damned holy and we were proving ourselves not to be on a certain number of fronts.

JONES: Even on Abu Ghraib, which was extremely difficult, the best I could do was to say, “It came out. There will be consequences.” Now, frankly, I didn’t think the consequences were good ones.

Q: Abu Ghraib was the mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners by American soldiers in a prison and when you get right down to it, it was done by low ranking troops. As a matter of fact, looking at it, compared to other things that have since come to light, it was almost childish, compared to what our president and vice president and all were promoting for interrogation techniques, which is real torture.

JONES: It was serious humiliation and inappropriate behavior.

Q: But it can be explained by lax discipline, as opposed to policy.

JONES: Exactly, absolutely.

Q: How did you find the foreign embassies operated?

JONES: Foreign embassies in Washington?

Q: Right.

JONES: We stayed in very close touch with all of them, that was one of the things that I charged the desks and the country directors with doing, my deputies to some degree. There were so many issues and such detail that we were working on with all of these governments. We wanted to be sure that we in Washington were as positive-aggressive as we could be with the foreign embassies in Washington as we were asking our embassies overseas to be.

So, for instance, every time there was something new that we had instructed our embassies to brief governments on, we would do a briefing in Washington of embassies. I would invite them in and I would do the briefing or my deputies would do the briefing,

depending on the subject. We didn't have all 54 in at the same time. Sometimes it would be NATO only, sometimes it would be NATO plus aspirants, sometimes it would be all the Central Asians, sometimes we just divided in half so there wouldn't be so many people in the room.

But whenever there was something that we wanted to explain, or a policy initiative that we wanted to undertake, or for example, if I had just come back from a trip with Secretary Powell or President Bush to Russia, I would brief NATO allies on that. We would invite them to come; our goal was transparency, as much as we possibly could. We also, as we got into asking for troops, asking for assistance in Iraq and Afghanistan, either NATO-related or just bilaterally, we had a pol-mil negotiator in my bureau who was charged with direct contact with embassies, to talk with military attachés, pol-mil officers, ambassadors, whoever it was she needed to talk to in order to negotiate whatever it was that was needed.

So sometimes she would call in several and say, "We need troops that are good at chem-bio remediation," or, "We need units that are good at de-mining," or whatever it was. She would always brief me on who she was calling in, how things were going. She was always in very close touch with the Political Military Affairs Bureau, run by Linc Bloomfield. There was very, very close collaboration, but we had the lead on actually doing this kind of work directly with the embassies.

We also, as we built up the coalition of the willing in Iraq, so many of the countries that sent troops to Iraq started being represented at the Department of Defense's offices in Tampa. They were invited to go down to Tampa to participate with Central Command (CentCom), to be right there as war plans were made and targets selected. We were very involved in facilitating that, as well. We would talk to the embassies about who might go, what the rules were, and all that kind of thing.

The reverse of that was also, true. CentCom came back to us and said, "Some of the representatives are behaving inappropriately down here," such as the Russian. I did representations to the Russian Embassy here in Washington to say, "Your guy is behaving in a way that is inappropriate. He's not down there to spy. Everything that you need to know is going to be briefed to him, but he cannot be found one more time in a place that he is not allowed to be. Can you please get that back to Moscow, that this is on the not-allowed list?" I made sure that Secretary Powell knew about it, before he got a call from Igor Ivanov, the foreign minister. So, there was that.

Then whenever an ambassador wanted to come in to see me, I always vetted it with my deputies, to make sure that there wasn't something that they could handle just as easily. Often it took a long time to get an appointment with me, because I was incredibly overbooked. But I tried to do it as much as possible. I always said if there was anybody coming from overseas, if they had a deputy foreign minister or a defense minister or somebody that wanted to come talk, absolutely.

Sometimes ambassadors wanted to see the Secretary or Deputy Secretary Armitage. I always vetted those very carefully, because I didn't want them to think that they should only ever see the Seventh Floor, rather than me.

I did my very best to be the end of the line for most of them, but occasionally if I thought that we really needed to get a point across in an incredibly strong way, then I would ask Marc Grossman, who was the Under Secretary for Political Affairs, or Deputy Secretary Armitage, or even Secretary Powell, to see an ambassador.

There were a couple of ambassadors who had regular access to the Seventh Floor with my full blessing and agreement. One was the British Ambassador. Sometimes the Russian ambassador, although I actually had a congenial relationship with the Russian ambassador at the time. We regularly went to lunch and had very good conversations about how do we get our two governments to stop fighting with each other. The same with the German ambassador, who was great to work with.

Q: Did you find with the German ambassador that you were saying, "We've got this Bush-Schröder non-relationship and how do we get around this?"

JONES: Right. I would talk to him about it, but I also talked to the political director at the Foreign Office in Berlin about it, just as Secretary Powell was talking with Foreign Minister Fischer about it. So we made it our business to keep the relationship as repaired as it possibly could be, because we had so much other business to do.

I was always on the phone with the French ambassador and the Belgian ambassador. The Belgian ambassador, particularly, was terribly concerned about the terrible relationship that the U.S. had with Belgium. Belgium sided so much with the French and the Germans over many EU-NATO military issues.

Q: Were the Belgians taking a contrary position?

JONES: Very and the Belgian defense minister was very outspoken, in a very negative way, about Bush and Cheney and Rumsfeld. Even I, who didn't like the policy, thought he was way out of line. I was constantly calling the Belgian ambassador to say, "Can you please get him to shut up?" He would laugh and he would say, "Oh, my God, I have no hair left over this, my hair I have is white. I'm trying my best." It got to the point that he and I would sit down and say, "Okay, let's talk about what are the issues that aren't so emotional and negative that we can find for Belgium and the United States to cooperate on" I went to Brussels a couple times on a bilateral basis just to say, "Okay, let's talk about ways we can work with Belgium on these things."

For example, even when the Belgians were horrible in public on Bush and Cheney and Iraq policy, they still, because of all the work we did at our level, allowed the trains to run from the port of Antwerp, where military matériel would be offloaded, troops would be offloaded, all the trains were allowed to flow through Belgium and across Germany down

to the ports to get to Iraq. It was really tough going a lot of times but we had some successes.

Q: For someone looking at these discussions, just pointing out that this often is the role, what diplomats do: their principals are at each other's throats, they really disagree, but there's so much more business that it behooves everyone to say, "We've got to keep the trains running.

JONES: The French ambassador, he worked so hard and very successfully to find ways to make France not be seen as such a bad boy in all of this. This is the period of time in which Congress refused to use the term "French fries" on their cafeteria] menu. It was "freedom fries" instead. The poor French ambassador called me and said, "Oh, my God, this is terrible. Do something!"

I said, "I'm trying, but I can't do anything about your image in the United States. I can work on the U.S. image in France, that is my job. But the French image in the U.S., I can't do anything."

Q: Well, it gets childish.

JONES: It was childish, on all sides, really nasty.

Q: This is where sometimes the adults farther down the line have to take over.

JONES: There were times during that period when I would say to Secretary Powell or Deputy Secretary Armitage or Marc Grossman, "Could you please call Ambassador so and so. They're really up against it, they really need to be able to say that you care so much about that issue that you called him or her, and that will help tremendously in their capital, too." They always would, they were wonderful. I did it rarely, very, very rarely, but I would do that.

One of the things, going back to U.S. embassies overseas, that was an issue that was kind of interesting. Condi Rice, the national security advisor, of course had her few counterpart national security advisors in various European governments whom she would talk to fairly regularly: France, sometimes Germany, certainly the UK, sometimes Russia, I think that was pretty much it. They would have quite long conversations about various things, which I had to work really hard to find out about and to get the substance on. Our ambassadors in those embassies were extremely unhappy about this, not about it happening, they completely accepted that Condi Rice should be talking to her counterparts. But, the fact that she steadfastly refused to brief them on the conversations really, really made them unhappy and I didn't blame them. I thought they were exactly right to be unhappy.

I did my level best to get out of my NSC counterpart, Dan Fried, what had gone on in the conversation, what had been discussed. Of course the national security advisor in the

foreign capital assumed that the ambassador knew all about the conversation and would make reference to things that Condi had said to him. The ambassador didn't know anything. The attitude I got back from the NSC is, "Yes, I'll try to find out, but it's none of his God damned business. Tell him to keep his shirt on. We don't have to brief him if we don't want to."

I would explain that these are not only friends of the president who are complaining, these are the big funders of the Republican Party who are complaining, can't you just think about that part of it as a reason to brief? Never mind that it is absolutely necessary in diplomatic dealings that all people on the team know what the other members of the team are doing.

Q: Well, we ran across that before under Henry Kissinger, too. I don't know what there is about it, power is keeping knowledge to yourself, or something like that. Or also maybe you're afraid to expose what you said.

JONES: There's some of that. From what I knew of the conversations there was nothing particularly overly sensitive, it was just sort of the same kind of thing.

I didn't think that Dr. Rice was trying to hoard information. It is just that she couldn't be bothered. She thought these ambassadors were a waste of time, not appreciating at all how much pressure they were under in terms of their interactions with their host country counterparts, colleagues, media, NGOs, and civil society and not appreciating how hard working they were and how important it was for their credibility to know what it was that she had said. Anyway, it was just an interesting sidelight, talking about the way our embassies overseas function.

Q: Every country has a system and when you find that parts of it break down you have to bypass it and things can get out of whack sometimes.

JONES: It was also a really serious problem with our embassy in Moscow, because Secretary Rumsfeld would go to Moscow every so often for conversations, rarely, but every so often. Steve Hadley, the deputy national security advisor, would go fairly regularly because he was charged with a particular national security conversation with his Russian counterpart. They would regularly refuse to allow the ambassador, Sandy Vershbow, attend the meetings.

Sandy very rightly was extremely unhappy about this. I would do my very best to try to persuade the NSC or the Pentagon to get him in, using the arguments you want the ambassador in there, because there is going to be follow-up. You don't want him to look stupid. Whatever it is that Rumsfeld or Cheney is doing, you want the ambassador to be able to follow up on it. I don't think I ever won.

Q: Did you have any dealing with Turkmenistan?

JONES: Yes, I had a lot of dealing with Turkmenistan. It's one of the countries in our bailiwick. I went several times to meet with Niyazov, the "Türkmenbasy," as he was known.

There were two reasons that I worked so hard with them. One is we actually persuaded them to establish and let us use what we called the "gas and go" operation in Turkmenistan for our planes going into Afghanistan to refuel as sort of a way station on the long route in, which was very necessary. This was highly unusual, because Niyazov had established Turkmenistan as "the Switzerland of Central Asia," not taking sides. That we were able to negotiate that was a very big deal, number one.

We also got him to agree that because Turkmenistan is on the border of Afghanistan that there should be humanitarian assistance routes from Turkmenistan into Afghanistan that we could use and that the Europeans could use and others could use and that was agreed, which was also highly unusual, but a very good thing.

But part two was that even though Niyazov was a dictator, we nevertheless believed, I believed, very strongly that we needed to maintain a relationship with civil society in Turkmenistan. Some day Niyazov was going to be gone, just like all of them will be gone and that we needed to have a set of relationships we could pick up from day one of a new administration and be able to advocate our positions, engage in policies, engage in programs, et cetera.

It was in Turkmenistan, in one of my meetings there with returned Turkmen exchange students, exchange students who had done exchanges in high schools in the United States and a few teachers who'd been on teacher exchanges that the head of the group said to me, "I know there's a lot of feeling in the U.S. Congress that Turkmenistan should be sanctioned because the president has such questionable behavior. I think the best sanction for him by the U.S. is to triple the exchange program."

I thought that that was such a smart point. It is one that I used with Congress for the rest of the time I was in office and still do,. The exchange programs and the other programs that we use to engage with civil society are what is in the end going to allow change in the direction that's in the U.S. interest in a country like Turkmenistan. As long as these kids are prepared to take the grief and go through the difficult process that it took to get permission for exchanges or to set up the NGOs that they set up when they came back or set up the other kinds of programs, that it was incumbent upon the U.S. to continue to support these programs.

Q: You've mentioned again and again in these conversations, the exchange program is probably the biggest arrow in our diplomatic quiver.

JONES: Yes. We also continued to have conversations with the energy minister. There were still American companies interested in energy matters in Turkmenistan. We still had

issues of the use of the Caspian seabed, use of the Caspian waters, transit across the Caspian for non-proliferation, for ending smuggling, all that kind of thing.

So we constantly tried to draw the Turkmen into these kinds of conversation. The foreign minister, he would always come to New York during the UN General Assembly period, I always had a very long meeting with him. I took a lot of time to maintain a relationship with the Turkmen, as much as I could.

Q: Could you have real conversations? Were these people looking over their shoulder?

JONES: Of course they were looking over their shoulder. They always had a minder there. The Turkmen always had a minder, the Uzbeks always had a minder. But I felt that everything I was suggesting to them I was able to couch in a way that was in Turkmenistan's interest to not isolate itself, these were all things that Turkmenistan, using its rubric, its various philosophies, we'd pick out words and phrases that they themselves would use to advance whatever it was that we were promoting. I was very conscious of not trying to get them into trouble by suggesting something that would be completely unacceptable.

Q: Of course you'd had the "stan" experience, in a different country, but at the same time you understood the dynamic.

JONES: One thing I felt very strongly about is not to allow any group of countries to feel that they didn't have the right kind of attention from Washington. Particularly since Central Asia and the Caucasus were so far away, I myself went twice a year to each of the countries, all eight of them, to every single one of them. My deputy for the region went a couple times a year also.

So, they got a tremendous amount of attention from Washington in a way that I thought worked very well. I was able to take Mr. Armitage once or twice to various of these countries. I took Secretary Powell once to quite a few of these countries. So they got high level attention and constant attention, from my perspective, for policies. Of course these were all countries who were very supportive of what we were doing in Iraq and Afghanistan, because they were right there.

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Q: Today is February 25, 2010. This is the continuation of an interview with Beth Jones.

JONES: The leadership of the Pentagon, Secretary Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz, were very particular about their role in policy. They did not believe that State had the lead on policy development. They resisted the instruction that State be the only agency through which instructions to embassies would go.

They also did not see the NSC as having any kind of leadership in the foreign policy establishment in Washington. So, the difficulty that we always had from State was twofold: on the one hand, to get the NSC to play the leadership role of adjudicating among the agencies whenever there was a disagreement about an issue, number one.

Number two, to get the Pentagon to cooperate with us on any issue at all. This manifested itself in a number of areas. The first issue in which it manifested itself was with the Balkans, when Rumsfeld decided that he wanted to pull all American troops out of the Balkans, really without reference to any kind of discussion. Secretary Powell stepped in very, very quickly. That was one of the first confrontations that they had and he basically decreed the "In Together, Out Together" policy: we came into the Balkans together, we're going to go out together. The U.S. isn't going to go out early.

The other issue on which it was really prominent was on Iceland. Rumsfeld was bound and determined to pull out the four remaining U.S. interceptor planes that were part of the protection of Iceland. Iceland, although a NATO member, has no military. The U.S. had undertaken to provide protection from the Russian bear all of these years. Rumsfeld maintained stoutly that there was no longer a threat from Russia and that therefore the four planes no longer needed to stay. The Icelanders were dead set against this. That was a very big interagency issue that Rumsfeld never let go of.

Q: Was this Rumsfeld showing his authority, showing he's boss? It seems easy to make a mark on Iceland, for example. Sort of big wheels in the government have a delightful time being tough on little countries.

JONES: Well, it wasn't so much focused on trying to big foot Iceland or the interagency, I believe. Rumsfeld had in his mind to reduce and streamline the size of the U.S. military. That's what he believed that Bush had campaigned on to get the presidency and that's what he believed his mandate was.

As you'll remember, before 9/11 Rumsfeld had made himself very, very unpopular on the Hill for pushing exactly these kinds of policies, closing bases and reducing the size of the military all over the United States, where members of Congress had very, very strong domestic constituency issues to keep bases open.

He behaved the same way with troops in the Balkans and with the planes in Iceland, under the philosophy that, "The president pledged to reduce the size of the military. The only way we can reduce the size of the military is to reduce the size of the military, everybody else be damned."

So, he was focused like a laser on the one issue, without any consideration whatsoever for the collateral issues that were involved, that required a tremendous amount of negotiation vis-à-vis the U.S. Congress, on domestic military basing issues and then overseas. There were very serious foreign policy implications of any of these things that he might wish to do.

Q: Now, Paul Wolfowitz was his deputy and in a way one can say he was one of us, he'd been an ambassador, he'd been an assistant secretary. He knew the turf and he knew the issues and all that. But all of a sudden, there he is. Was he a friend in court, or what?

JONES: He was not. He and Rumsfeld, I kept being told, did not get along at all. We knew that he had no influence with Rumsfeld, because we knew that if Armitage called him as his counterpart to try to get something done, it didn't work. So we knew that in order to get anything done at the Pentagon, if we couldn't get it done at our own level, if I couldn't get it done with J.D. Crouch, then it had to go to Powell and Rumsfeld. That was number one.

Number two, Wolfowitz is very close to Cheney, was certainly then, so we knew that he represented Cheney much more than he represented Rumsfeld. Now, Cheney often, very often, agreed with Rumsfeld or was tougher on these issues than Rumsfeld.

So it was a cabal, really, of identical or virtually identical views. Almost never did we see any policy difference, but we would see a difference in emphasis. Rumsfeld would drive certain issues, Cheney and Wolfowitz would drive certain other issues. So, for instance, Rumsfeld drove reducing the size of the military and the Balkans and Iceland, and got into trouble with the domestic constituencies, whereas Cheney and Wolfowitz drove the "Let's go into Iraq" policy.

Q: Did Treasury play any role during the time you were there?

JONES: Treasury played a very positive role, from my perspective. We had extremely good relations at my level with our Treasury colleagues. Especially during the Iraq War, we were constantly working on ways to manage the whole issue with Turkey and the assistance programs for Turkey. We asked, is there a way that Treasury can help out in supporting some of our goals in Central Asia and the Caucasus? Are there ways that we can do things that makes sense with Russia?

Nancy Lee was the deputy assistant secretary for the region. She came to every single one of our interagency meetings. She was always very thoughtful and took initiatives, had good ideas about how you might solve problems one way or the other. She'd go with us. If we had a big delegation go to Uzbekistan for a lot of bilateral issues, she would always participate.

So Treasury, during my four years as assistant secretary, was a great ally. That said, they weren't in the core of the fight that we were having with the Pentagon on a lot of these issues. But nevertheless, when we needed to do all of the other things that we were trying to do, Treasury was right there with us.

The other interesting thing is that the civilian side of the Pentagon would be extremely difficult on any number of these issues. There were all kinds of NATO issues that

Rumsfeld was very difficult on, including Iceland and the Balkans, but also other issues as well, having to do with the EU military force. But, the Joint Staff, the military side of the Pentagon, was very much with State. They got it totally about why it was so important to think about the political context in which these decisions were being made.

But they were completely intimidated by Rumsfeld. At my level they could speak up, but the minute it got above my level, when it got to the Deputies Committee or to an NSC Policy Committee meeting, a Principals Committee meeting, they would not speak up. They would tell us, however, what their bosses would have liked to have said and we would tell Powell and Armitage what that was, so that they could represent that view as well. They wouldn't rat out the Joint Staff on it, they would just say, "We understand that there are others who believe X and Y."

Q: At the Pentagon, who was your counterpart?

JONES: J.D. Crouch was my counterpart for almost the entire time I was assistant secretary. The last year he was pulled out to go to Romania as ambassador. His deputies were under instructions to be really difficult on all kinds of issues.

I would like to note here that JD Crouch was a terrific ambassador to Romania. He was very collegial with me. He understood how to do the job, he consulted with me, the DAS or the desk as appropriate.

So, my practice was by three o'clock each day I needed to get a list from my staff of all the issues that I needed to go over with J.D. Crouch. I said three o'clock so I wasn't trying to find J.D. on the Beltway driving home or whatever, which often happened as well. So I started calling about three o'clock and said, "Okay, J.D., we need to get this cable out," or some other issue. I learned later that one of the reasons that J.D. pushed me so hard on my arguments for each change in a cable or in a policy or whatever it was, was that many times he was actually using my arguments to argue for a different policy in the Pentagon. So he was actually much more on our side than I knew at the time. He was the one who told me later that that was one of the reasons that he kept pushing me so hard.

Q: This does point out for anybody studying the business of the government and history, but basically there are times and this is the classic example of when the bureaucracy really isn't working very well but yet the people within the bureaucracy at certain levels are trying like mad to make it work.

JONES: I literally called J.D. almost every day on several issues for weeks, months, years, every day. There were times when I couldn't get agreement from him and he would say, "I cannot agree to this change. I'm going to have to take it to the Secretary."

I would say, "Fine, I'll go up to my Secretary as well. I'll call you back in 15 minutes." I did that very consciously, to make the point that I could get to Powell in 15 minutes and get an answer from him in 15 minutes if he was available. He wasn't always available,

but he was very, very, very accessible to us when we had that kind of a fight. He would regularly say, "Okay, Beth, I'll call Don Rumsfeld." There were a couple of times when he would say, "Okay, I've called him and he says okay."

I would call J.D. and give him that message and they still couldn't get it cleared. There was one time I had to call the Secretary of State three times to call Don Rumsfeld on one issue and Rumsfeld still wouldn't clear the cable. Finally Powell said, "Sign the damned thing out." I called the NSC and they said, "Oh, you can't do that!"
I said, "The cable's gone. The Secretary of State sent the cable. So sorry."

My counterpart at the NSC was Dan Fried. I talked to him forty times a day, at least, I think. But he regularly would say to me, "My job is to find ways to placate everybody. Your job is to fight with Defense," which of course to my mind is the exact opposite of the way the NSC should work.

Q: Absolutely. There has to be a management instrument.

JONES: My worst moment, I think, was when an instruction had been agreed either by the deputies or the principals, I don't remember which at this point, on a particular issue and an instruction needed to go out to one of our embassies on the subject. Even though this had been agreed at such a high level, I couldn't get the Defense Department to clear it. I took it Dan Fried at the NSC and I said, "You know that this was agreed. There's only one government here, so far as I know. Make it happen! Get them to clear!"

Steve Hadley, the deputy national security advisor, called me himself to explain to me that he couldn't get the Pentagon to clear the policy and would I please allow their version of it to go out. I said, "Steve, how can we have two governments? We had a policy. You guys had a Principals Committee meeting on this and you're begging me to agree to a change that the agencies at the meeting didn't agree to? I don't get this." I was appalled.

Q: Were you hearing murmurs from elsewhere in the, I don't know, White House or something about "What the hell's happening here?"

JONES: Sometimes, yeah, Dan Fried would say, "I'm sorry. We seem to have two governments here. I can't get it done."

Q: Okay, you have a decision, or a lack of decision, or something, in other words you couldn't get something out of the Pentagon. Did you find yourself trying to go around?

JONES: Well, on some issues you couldn't really do that, because it required a specific instruction that would get things moving. But there were plenty of times that we would be on email or on the phone with various of our embassies who were waiting for the instruction or would be affected by the instruction in some way. I would say, "Okay, this is what we're trying to get done. We hope to have the instruction for you in the morning.

Go ahead and get the appointment that you need in order to make the demarche that we're putting forward. I can't promise you I'm going to get you the instruction in time, but that's the idea."

The reverse was the bigger problem, to the point that I had instructions out to all my ambassadors and DCMs, literally, I sent emails to all of them saying, "Make sure in your country team meetings that you go to each of your other agency heads, especially the defense attachés and tell them that under no circumstances should they comply with an instruction that looks like it came in without any interagency clearance. For example, if there's a letter from Secretary Rumsfeld to his counterpart, make sure that your defense attaché knows to bring it to you, to make sure that you agree that this is an appropriate letter and that it looks to you like it's been cleared. If you have any questions about it, you must check with me about this."

There were several cases in point, but in one particular one. Secretary Rumsfeld wrote a letter to his German, French and I think Belgian counterparts at one point absolutely excoriating them for decisions that were made at what's called the Chocolate Summit to agree that the European military force would take greater precedence with NATO.

Two of the embassies had issued the instructions that I had asked for properly and their defense attachés brought them the letters before delivering them to the minister of defense.

One embassy failed to do that, but I figured if that those two had gotten those letters from Rumsfeld, they were scorching letters, you would never say that to anybody, let alone an official counterpart. I guessed which one might also have gotten such a letter and I called the other embassy. I said, "Did you get one of these letters?" Turned out they did. I said, "Get it back! It's not cleared, get it back! Explain to the minister of defense that that's not an official letter."

Then I called up J.D. and said, "What gives?" He didn't know about the letters, either. But we got them back and I went to the NSC and said, "Got to get this fixed. Can't be sending letters like that."

That was one of the perfect examples of why it was so important to tell everybody that we are in charge of the interagency process and in charge of making sure that there is coordination among the agencies before we go to a foreign government. It was also an example of why we had to be very, very aggressive with all of the other agency heads at our overseas posts to say, "Don't you dare deliver something to the host government that the ambassador or the DCM don't know about and haven't looked at."

Q: It does show that you as part of your life experience were learning how to be Byzantine and how to counter the Byzantine maneuvers of other people.

JONES: The other very interesting set of interagency issues that we had was with DHS, Department of Homeland Security, which was established during this period of time. It didn't exist when I first started. Grandfathered into DHS were all of the different attachés: the customs attachés, an Immigration and Naturalization Service officer every so often, Secret Service attachés in various embassies.

The difficulty was that there was no mechanism to coordinate among them, even though they all now worked for the same cabinet secretary. So I insisted that the DCMs go to each of those separate agency heads at their embassy to say, "Don't you dare deliver any kind of instruction to the government, to your counterparts, without checking with me, so I can make sure it was all coordinated."

It turned out I didn't do it in an aggressive enough way to prevent a couple of embarrassing situations. It was New Year's Eve in 2002, maybe 2003, when we'd gotten intelligence that there might be some difficulties aboard some American airplanes leaving from Paris and from London. The Customs Service went in to one counterpart in Paris and the legal attaché went in to a different counterpart in Paris, with conflicting instructions as to how the U.S. wanted to handle this, in terms of checking the passenger list or holding the plane.

The DCM in Paris found out about this because he got a call from somebody in the ministry of interior saying, "What gives? We've got two different sets of instructions here. We're not doing anything until you guys get your act together." He calls me, of course, and I said, "Oh, my God, yes, we'll force these guys to get their act together." I knew that there was intelligence about London, as well. I called the DCM in London, who had already figured out that there were conflicting instructions.

So we were able to go back to DHS and say, "We know that this is a serious problem, but we can't do anything with either government until you guys get your act together. What do you want the instruction to be? It cannot be conflicting." In one case they wanted the plane to go, in another case they didn't want the plane to go, they wanted all the passengers checked first. It was completely contradictory instructions.

So that was interesting. Then I went back, with various people at State and DHS to say, "You guys cannot permit this to happen again. It is unacceptable that Customs and Justice and all these different agencies are sending different instructions for handling the same case."

Q: Well I would think, being a veteran of the bureaucracy and all, when they formed Homeland Security by throwing everything into the same pot, this was a real nightmare. Since Homeland Security has so many agents of one form or another in our embassies and maybe in our consulates, too, how did this work?

JONES: That is a very good question and that was one of the big issues that we kept identifying as a problem: you've got all these guys out there that now all work for one

agency. There is a defense attaché that's responsible for the work of all attachés from the uniformed military assigned to a country. You need to do the same thing.

They finally did. By 2005, DHS issued an instruction listing every embassy in which they had multiple stovepipe leads, shall we say.

Q: "Stovepipe" meaning a straight set of responsibilities.

JONES: One for customs, one for immigration, one for whatever. DHS named one of them to be the lead for the entire group at that embassy, which we thought was great, from the State side. I pushed it hard and talked to the DCMs to make sure it worked. Well, the report that I got back was, okay, that's fine, customs has been named the lead in London, but the customs guy in London had in effect zero authority over anybody else who he supposedly was the lead for. It was a *pro forma* sort of reorganization, as it turned out and had very little effect. Maybe it's working better now. I sort of doubt it.

Q: How about Justice?

JONES: I had very little to do with our legal attachés, except on particular cases where we had policy issues with Justice on this or that case. We had one big case in Kazakhstan where I had a tremendous amount of contact with Justice about sorting out how to manage a particular case. But they tended to work extremely well, I shouldn't say, "on their own," because they were very much embedded in their embassies. But we tended not to have any serious interagency problems at all with Justice, interestingly enough.

I had a friend, Tim Carroll, who was quite senior in the Department of Justice who was called the "protocol officer." In fact, he did all the foreign policy stuff. He would regularly coordinate with me on visits of ministers of interior from any of my countries.

We did a tremendous amount of work with the EU home and justice affairs ministers to coordinate better after 9/11. So we had a lot of back and forth like that on EU types of issues for better coordination. They were great. They would just do what they needed to do and were very collegial and cooperative. It was great.

Q: I don't want to get into intelligence operations abroad in your area. I assume the CIA was not doing a thing there. But, as an agency, as far as a supplier of information, how useful was the product?

JONES: There are two aspects to the interagency relationship with the CIA. One is the product, which I actually managed through INR, through the Intelligence and Research Bureau. I did not call the CIA directly if I wanted a piece of intelligence on something. I did that through my colleagues in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, at their request. They said, "Please let us be the interface. We know the bigger picture. What do you need? Let us help you get that, because we know exactly where to get it, or we have

it ourselves." My Dad had had a senior job in INR toward the end of his Foreign Service career, so I was particularly attuned to working collegially with INR.

Of course, this was terribly important at the time, because this is when there was this gigantic interagency fight in the intelligence community about whether there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq or not. State was one of the very few that stood by its guns and said, "There aren't." And State turned out to be right. So, on the information side, I always worked through INR.

I had two counterparts on the operations side, because they had one for Europe and one for Eastern Europe, Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia. I dealt with both to them quite a lot and with their deputies, and got to know them quite well. One of the deputies had been a friend for a very long time. So, we had a lot of back and forth on operational matters. If something came up that they knew was going to be a difficulty, they would ask to see me right away. They would come over and sit down and say, "Okay, here's the problem." I'd go to either Marc or Armitage and say, "You need to talk to George Tenet or his deputy. Here is what we think we need to do on the policy side to keep this operational issue from blowing up in our faces."

Q: You had a very proactive group with Cheney and others and they didn't seem to pay much attention to stop lights and I would think that this would be a place where they would have wanted to have actions done and I would think State would say, "Wait a minute, there are consequences for this."

JONES: There were a few issues that have since come out in quite a bit of detail, like the detention centers for terrorists in Eastern Europe that didn't come to my level, that were kept above my level. I didn't know about it until it was in the newspapers. So that didn't come to me.

Q: These are people who were captured or involved in terrorist activities and were imprisoned in secret

JONES: Secret prisons in various places.

Q: In the "stans" or other places.

JONES: More Eastern Europe. That did not come to us, at my level.

Other operational issues that were difficult, when they came to me, I would do a variety of things, depending on how sensitive they were: make sure the ambassador in the place we were talking about was involved. I could get a good sense from him or her what they thought the fallout would be of this issue or that issue. Of course, we had good classified phone communications and I could really get into it with them.

Then I always brought in either Marc Grossman or Mr. Armitage, or both, on these issues, because I didn't know how much they already had been briefed about these issues by their counterparts at the Agency. I never had any difficulty, really. Sometimes the Agency would say, "Oh, well, we don't really want to go to the host government" about this or that issue. I would always insist that it was much better to go to confession on this issue or that issue before it blew up in the press.

I have a firm belief, in these situations that it is best to fight about substance than about process. It is much better to talk about the issue at hand, rather than whether or not we notified them enough in advance so that they could be prepared. What I found, too, and they eventually found is that the more I could persuade them to do that (I always won on that point), that the reaction was much more muted than they expected. They realized that we were talking with reasonable people who had issues that they wanted to sort out. They so much preferred knowing about it before it was all over the press and before they had to answer questions in parliaments or whatever.

I felt I had an extremely good relationship with them, with one exception: I was very, very disappointed. There was this whole issue about when did the CIA know about the bad information that was coming from the one German source, whose code name was Curveball. He was the one who supposedly had all the inside information on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Q: And also I think connection between al Qaida *and Iraq.*

JONES: The CIA person, one of my counterparts, who has since complained that he briefed George Tenet about the lack credibility of Curveball and that Tenet didn't listen, was somebody who I knew quite well. He failed to call me to tell me to tell Powell. This was all related to Powell's testimony at the UN. He could easily have told me, "Beth, tell your boss to watch out." I could easily have told Powell there was a problem with the intelligence, because before he gave that speech he spent dozens of hours with George Tenet personally. He could have asked, "Are you sure that you have total credibility from all of these sources?"

Had he known that George Tenet's people were very concerned about the credibility of this particular source, he would have been able to really raise a lot more questions. Anyway, that was my one serious disappointment.

Q: Did you have the feeling, particularly on intelligence matters that rose to the top and for media attention, that there were an awful lot of people that were trying to destroy whatever polices we had? This was not a popular administration with the normal bureaucrat and particularly in the liberal community.

JONES: One of the things I should have said is that the CIA was very much with State, in terms of the difficulties that were being perpetrated on them by White House and by the Pentagon.

So, for example, Rumsfeld's big push to create his own little intelligence agency and circle in the Pentagon was very much decried by the CIA. I had been told many times that Secretary Powell and Mr. Armitage would coordinate behind the scenes with George Tenet on how to keep the White House or Rumsfeld or Cheney from pursuing a particular thing. In the end, it didn't work on the one particular issue, when George Tenet just went off with great enthusiasm on an issue that turned out didn't have a lot of credibility behind it. But in the grand scheme of the interagency process, whenever we were in an interagency group, the Joint Staff and the CIA were almost always with State on the information, on the substance, on how to pursue it.

Of course the CIA was very careful not to recommend policy. That is always their big constraint. But nevertheless, they were very much with us on how you might handle something. So as far as I was concerned, in the big problems that we had with the Pentagon and with the White House, they were an ally.

Q: Maybe we ought to talk about Congress and its staff. First place, with the staff, particularly those who have been around a long time, both Senate and House, these staffs are very knowledgeable. How did you find dealing with them?

JONES: Well, there were two things that are very important to know to start out with. The first one is that when they first started as Secretary and Deputy Secretary of State, Powell and Armitage, particularly Armitage, were very aggressive with us about the need to be in touch with Congress and brief Congress on a regular basis. The constant theme that I heard from them and particularly Mr. Armitage, was, "I never want to hear that this member of Congress or that member of Congress is complaining that they weren't briefed. If they don't like the substance of the briefing, that's different. But I never want to hear a process complaint."

So we offered briefings all the time to staff, to members. Of course we had lots of issues that we were pushing hard. We were pushing hard on various issues with the Balkans. There was all kinds of legislation on sanctions on various of the Balkans countries, various ways that we had to deal with the Balkans, that we wanted to get changed. We wanted to get waivers, and especially after Milosevich was captured, we wanted to get sanctions changed. So, we had a whole group that was constantly on the Hill briefing on various of the Balkans issues and trying to get changes and improvements.

Then there was the whole issue of NATO enlargement. We had the second NATO enlargement that we needed to brief Congress on all the time: how was each country doing, what were we trying to get each country to do, where were the allies in terms of which of the NATO aspirants were ready and which ones were not? So, we were very aggressive on NATO briefings.

Then we had all of the Russia issues. We needed to brief all of the people interested in Russia. We had a lot of Caucasus and Central Asia issues, particularly after 9/11: what were we doing with the basing, what were we doing with access to the bases?

There were sanctions on Azerbaijan, because they had not resolved the Nagorno Karabakh issues with Armenia. We had to spend a lot of time with Congress to get that changed; we ended up getting a waiver for it.

So, we were on the Hill all the time, to the point that the feedback was, "Okay, we're briefed enough!" I kept saying to my guys, "That's what we want! When we have staff saying, 'You've briefed us enough, we don't need any more,' that's good."

The second thing that was very much to our advantage in our relationship with Congress is that I had a unit that no other regional assistant secretary had and that was an assistance coordination unit.

When I first became assistant secretary there were two such units that had been authorized legislatively. The one for the Southeastern Europe economic development portfolio had been authorized by Congress. It required a State Department coordinator, not AID, to coordinate all assistance programs including AID. Then there was a separate assistance coordinator that was responsible for the Freedom Support Act, which was the act that provided assistance for Russia and all the other former Soviet republics.

When I first started as assistant secretary we requested, and received, authorization to put those two coordinators together, to double-hat one person I guess is the way to put it, and bring those assistance programs together to get some efficiencies and coherence. We were authorized to do that. But the big benefit to me was that those guys had fabulous contacts on the Hill among the appropriators and the authorizers. So, as we needed to do substance on the Balkans, we would have our assistance coordinators go up, too, and talk about, okay, what does this mean for the authorizers and the appropriators as well, not just the substance. So I had the benefit of having that right with me in the bureau.

So we did really, really well with Congress, to my mind. One of the jobs that I wanted to have put into our global affairs office was a congressional liaison person. I charged that person with making sure that she kept track of every single briefing that we did on the Hill, with staff, documents that we sent up, hearings that we attended, all that kind of thing, so any time Mr. Armitage might say, "Well, so and so called and complained that you haven't briefed on such and such," I could then pull it up immediately and say, "As a matter of fact, we briefed this staffer or that staffer and so that guy's all wet."

It turned out that nobody ever called to complain and we didn't really need to produce that list. But when I would then go and ask for money, in my briefing to Armitage I could say, "We have briefed the House Foreign Affairs Committee x times on this issue and y times on that issue." So, I had impressive statistics, which I learned very early worked well with Mr. Armitage.

Q: Also, you were coming of age in a time of the computer and fast retrieval of things.

JONES: That's right, but we just kept a spreadsheet, basically, of any time any of us went to the Hill. We always coordinated with our colleagues in the Department's congressional liaison bureau as well. In the previous administration, under Madeleine Albright, we had not been permitted to have any contact with the Hill unless specifically asked to do so by our colleagues in that bureau. We had nothing but complaints about leaving the Hill out, nothing but complaints.

Q: Did you run across a time problem? You had a very active bureau going up to the Hill.

JONES: Here's what we did: we sat down pretty early on, as we were getting requests to testify and we delineated who would do which kinds of testimony, so that if it was testimony on a particular country, one of my deputies would do it, whichever one was responsible for that country or issue.

If it was about a region or multiple issues, I would do the testimony. So, for instance, if the issue was testimony on the Balkans, the Balkans DAS would do it. If it was on religious freedom, I would do it, because I had the breadth of information across the entire bureau. Or if it was on the OSCE, or if it was on NATO and NATO enlargement, I might have my NATO deputy do it, but I might do it, too, depending on how sensitive the issues were.

We did that because I just couldn't testify all the time, which is what they of course wanted. But I made the argument that my deputies were actually better at testimony, because they knew the issue better than I did. They very quickly made their mark on the Hill and very quickly my argument was bought by these guys. All of these people were fabulous on their issues.

Q: This is something that all of us have found. There's a tendency for people from outside who want to get something done, they want to go to the top. When I was consul general, people would come up to me with complicated immigration problems and, hell, I didn't know. My visa section chief knew those matters backwards and forwards.

JONES: That is always a struggle. One of the things that we did with Congress was we offered to co-host with Congressman Smith of Washington state, who was very interested, a discussion on religious freedom. It started out with religious freedom in Russia. We expanded it when I got there as assistant secretary to religious freedom in Europe and Eurasia. We invited him to come to State to have a roundtable discussion on religious freedom. We also invited various people from outside the State Department to talk with us.

So we tried to do things where State sponsored something that involved Congress, so that we appeared to be much more collegial, rather than just reluctantly go up for testimony

on the Hill. We really wanted to do outreach with them, to bring them into our discussion on whatever the issue was.

Q: Dealing with the Hill, as one watches the sound bites and all, there are always members of Congress who are making essentially cheap points by pontificating. Were there any people there who were burrs under your saddle?

JONES: Definitely. There was one, who was actually not reelected. He was very much an apologist for the Russians at times and for some of the Balkans countries at times. He didn't want to coordinate with State when he traveled to these places, and he would meet with all kinds of disreputable people when he was there. He got in a lot of trouble because his daughter was hired by some of these guys, it was really a pretty big mess. He was very much a difficult member of Congress. He was always wanting exceptions made. He would always want to invite people - that we knew should be in jail - to the National Prayer Breakfast. He would be very upset with us when they couldn't get visas, that kind of thing.

Then there were others who were just extremely interested and therefore very aggressive with us about certain policies. So, for example, Tom Lantos, of course very interested in Hungary, very interested in the Hungarian minority in Romania. He wanted us to open a consulate in the region where they lived.

Congressman Lantos, for example, was extremely upset that an opposition leader had gotten to be the prime minister in Hungary. He would like to have dictated a policy under which we wouldn't deal with this guy. So I used to have some pretty heated discussions with him about who was going to meet with this guy and who wasn't. He'd call up the U.S. ambassador there and try and browbeat him about this.

Of course, the poor ambassador was a political appointee and didn't know what he should be doing. So I spent a lot of time negotiating with Congressman Lantos. We got to be quite good friends as a result. I got to know him quite well. I would say, "I know you can't stand this Hungarian politician and I agree with you, he has some reprehensible positions, particularly on Jews, completely unacceptable. But I need to talk to him, because that is the only way that we are going to bring him around. It is the only way we are going to be able to moderate his views. I would much rather have him yelling at me about the substance, rather than yelling about a process under which no one from the American embassy or U.S. government would meet with him."

Q: This brings up, so often policy, from afar, is "You don't talk to people." We withdraw our ambassador at a time of tense relations, when it would be better to keep lines of communication as open as possible.

JONES: That was the big struggle I had even with some of my colleagues, who would insist, "So and so said a terrible thing. I'm not going to talk to him anymore." But, that is exactly the reason to go talk to him.

We had a particularly good instance of that in Belgium. The defense minister would say the most outrageous things. We had a political appointee ambassador there who was timid. He was terrified of this guy, just wouldn't do anything, didn't do very much on any issue, actually.

But then we got a new ambassador in there, Tom Korologos. We had a very good relationship. I said, "Tom, the only way to get these guys to calm down a little bit is to go talk to them." He ate it up, he was fabulous. The minute somebody said something that was off about the United States, he would call to ask "Can I take you to lunch?" He was wonderful. He got the conversation much more civilized as a result, even in the very worst of times with some of the Europeans. For me, he represents how you do this kind of thing. He remembers how he did it, because we've talked about it since then. He remembers particular instances. He was a wonderful addition to my team.

Q: It's easy to castigate, from the point of view of the Foreign Service, political appointees, but often they bring strengths that are particularly useful. Many times, they don't. But our Foreign Service colleagues don't always make the best ambassadors.

JONES: I would say I had the full range of political appointees, but also of my career colleagues, too. There were some who turned out great and some who weren't so great. But on the political side, a couple things. First, none of them understood the intensity of the work they were about to get involved in.

One of the things that I did, I made a point of briefing every single one of them, first in a group when they were in the ambassador training. I had a set of talking points that I used about how to behave with me, how to do the interagency process and all that kind of thing.

Once they got to post, the other thing that many of them really didn't understand is how to give bad news to their host government, or what they would perceive as bad news. Of course, there was tons of bad news during the Iraq War period. Most of them understood how important it was to establish good relationships, they all got that completely, with only one or two exceptions. They would say to me, "Beth, I've bonded with the prime minister," "Beth, I've bonded with the foreign minister," "Beth, I've bonded with," whoever, the king.

It got so I would say, "And what have you done for the U.S. taxpayer with all of bonding? What have you done for President Bush with all of that bonding? Yes, you have bonded with them and now you are the one who needs to go in and say, 'We know you are really upset about the fact that we are about to attack Iraq, but we really do need your overflight clearances for our planes,' or 'We really do need our matériel to go on your trains through Belgium,'" or whatever it was.

I very quickly learned that I had to say to them, "All of the people you are going to be talking to expect you to represent the United States, good or bad news. They are hearing already what President Bush is saying about these things. They expect you to come in and say the same thing, or explain it in the context in which you are working in your host country. So don't have the DCM do it. You need to do it, especially on something like this. The reason we have you there is so you can put it into context, you can explain to them how it is in their interests to help us with this or that. These are the ways we can reduce the public outcry on this or that. Because I realized that too many of them were saying, "Ooh, that's bad news. The DCM needs to do that." Almost all of them got it once we explained it that way.

There were still some who had two different problems: some still thought they were on a grand European vacation and were hardly ever at their posts. One of the things I did very early on is I established a matrix in our administrative office to record every time an ambassador asked to be out of the country, was it official or was it personal. That way I could keep track of, okay, who is abusing the ability to leave whenever they wanted to. That was number one.

So, some of them were just gone all the time doing God knows what. A couple of times they would ask for permission to leave and I'd call them and say, "I'm going to turn this down, because you can't be out of the country when there is an EU summit going on in your country. I might need you to go in and make a representation about what the U.S. needs as the result of a discussion that the foreign ministers or the heads of government are about to have."

The couple of times I did that, they would say, "Oh, great, okay, I'll stay, absolutely." There was no recalcitrance about it. They just didn't really realize that they shouldn't be wondering around on vacation during an EU summit in their capital.

The other issue that we had was that there were other people contacting their counterparts from Washington. Whenever it was Secretary Powell calling the foreign minister or the president or the prime minister, Powell was extremely good about letting me know what it was or his staff would let me know what it was. And I would brief the embassy.

When Rice called her counterparts in various places, she refused to tell ambassadors what the discussion was about and wouldn't even tell her staff what it was about. It got to be a nasty issue with some of the ambassadors, who were extremely upset. They would get a call from whoever it was that Rice had talked to about how to follow up on whatever he and Rice had decided. The ambassador wouldn't have any clue what it was. That got to be quite a bone of contention.

Q: Why would Rice do that?

JONES: I don't know. She just didn't understand, at all, how the U.S. government works, that's my answer to it. She didn't understand how damaging it was for the ambassador,

appointed by the President of the United States, for whom she also worked, to be so disadvantaged and then considered to be out of the loop. I would try, I would try really hard and so would Dan Fried, to get a briefing for these guys, but it was tough.

Q: Okay, after Rice, the national security advisor, calls the prime minister on some issue, then what would happen?

JONES: The prime minister calls the Ambassador and says, "Oh, about that agreement that we made with Condi. Can we talk it about it further?" The poor ambassador would have no clue.

Q: Could you go to the NSC and say, "What the hell was she talking about?"

JONES: Yes and I did, as much as I could. Sometimes I would get an answer and sometimes I wouldn't. It was that simple. It was ridiculous.

Q: It was more or less a personality quirk, would you say, almost, or she was unsure of herself?

JONES: I think it was a complete misunderstanding, lack of understanding, of how government works. Government works through connections of information. The minute you cut out an important player you've screwed yourself. Whereas she, I believe, thought that this was all very close hold. She thought her work was so fabulous and wonderful that it could only be done by her. It made no sense.

But there were times, if I thought it was particularly sensitive, I would actually call Secretary Powell and say, "I know that Rice has talked with the French national security advisor. Rice refuses to brief Dan Fried on that conversation. If you have an opportunity, can you get the answer to this question?" Sometimes he would and sometimes he wouldn't. I asked him for that kind of help very rarely.

Q: How did you feel the relationship between Powell and Rice was?

JONES: I thought it was good. I'm pretty sure that he was disappointed that she was such a doormat, that she refused to adjudicate any issues. She would even say, "I am the secretary of the National Security Council, I am not the leader of it." Ridiculous. I was disappointed that she didn't represent State's interests, at all, to the president. If Powell wasn't there and he couldn't be there all the time, any point that we needed to have made she wouldn't make.

Q: I would think that you would be concerned about Secretary Powell traveling, because he was such a key figure in trying to work out the problems.

JONES: That was actually a very big problem, because the press would say, "He's not traveling as much as Albright did." He or Armitage would say, "He can travel a lot and

he does travel a fair amount, but the minute he is away, the alligators come out." Armitage would say, "I can play defense when the alligators come out, but I can't play offense the way Powell can."

It was really a bad problem and he was very, very, very aware of it, very sensitive to it. Whenever there were these invidious comparisons with the overseas travel schedules of Secretaries Baker or Albright, lots of times we'd come back and say that on background.

But also, openly, "Powell, when he goes overseas, goes only for meetings. He doesn't go hunting, the way Baker did. He doesn't go shopping, the way Madeleine Albright did. He doesn't do tourism. He goes, he has his meetings," number one.

Number two, he was on the phone all the time. He would call the people at the drop of a hat. I could get a communication from overseas suggesting that if the Secretary should call their host governments in the next day, that would be great. So, I would send him an email or call and say, "Okay, here's what is going on. Could you make the call?"

"Yes, I'll make the call."

I would put down the phone, call the Ops Center and say, "The Secretary of State is about to call" a foreign minister, "Get ready." And they often said, "Oh, he's already called." It was amazing. He was fantastic that way.

I mentioned how I would big foot J.D. Crouch. I used to tell Powell that I used him that way. I said, "I got big stars from everybody because I could get to you so easily. It wasn't that I could get to you, you let me get to you. I really appreciate that. It made a big, big difference with other agencies." And with foreign counterparts, I could do the same thing, rely on swift, direct feedback from Powell. He was great.

Q: When I came into the Foreign Service in 1955, I was with the refugee relief program, giving visas, and we were dealing with the Tolstoy Foundation and various church-affiliated organizations, these were all organizations that helped immigrants, we worked very closely. But this was at the consular level and we treated them as equals and all. But in the normal course of events, non-governmental organizations were treated with a certain amount of I won't say disdain, but damned close to it.

JONES: There were a lot of American NGOs who had quite a megaphone with Congress, still have, and we knew that.

Q: This is a development, over the years.

JONES: Yes. So Human Rights Watch or the International Crisis Group, Amnesty International, all of these different organizations, they all had a tremendous amount of access on the Hill and we knew that. So, we knew that it was in our interest to keep them briefed, to coordinate with them, to consult with them, whatever it was, so that we knew

where they were on some of these issues. We also knew who was going to be upset if we adopted this policy, or took money away from this to give to that, whatever action we might take. So my staff would stay in very close touch with the NGOs in Washington to make sure that they were all briefed on anything we were doing that they could possibly be briefed on.

We took the same attitude to the NGOs that we took to the Hill. We need to keep them in the loop, mostly because otherwise they'll screw us, it was a defensive move on our part. But also, we needed them to help us pursue some of the policy issues, on anti-corruption, religious freedom, democracy promotion, we needed to have them with us so we could do this more effectively. Some of these were organizations that we were funding, of course, to do this kind of work. So that was number one.

Number two was that at regular intervals my deputies would come to me and say, "We need to do an NGO roundtable. Time to have the whole group in. We have got this or that set of issues. So, you call them in and do a briefing, have a question and answer session and that will help everybody feel that they are in the loop on policy as they are talking to the assistant secretary." We did that every couple of months. It was very collegial. They would have tough comments and I would have my responses. But it made a big difference, I thought. We really worked at it.

For example, if International Crisis Group was out in the Balkans working on X or Y, we needed them to understand why we were doing something so they wouldn't trash us out there, too.

Q: Most of these are people of a liberal bent, they want to do good and they are internationally inclined and all and you were a representative of the Bush Administration, that's almost setting up a clash.

JONES: Yes, but the difference was, first of all, they knew all of us. They were probably pretty aware that we weren't the originators of the bad policies, although we had to carry some of them out. But on very many of the issues that we were dealing with them on, it had nothing to do with Iraq, so the issues tended to be human rights issues in the Balkans, anti-corruption, things that weren't controversial. So, while the overlay was all quite negative because of the Bush Administration, the fact was that all the work we were actually doing in these countries that related to them was okay, as far as they were concerned.

Now I am sure had they been talking to Bill Burns, the assistant secretary for the Middle East, he would have been raked over the coals, but I didn't have to defend the Iraq policy, I had to defend why we were pushing the EU to get Turkey in as an EU member, in spite of what was going on with Kurdish radio. It was those kinds of issues where the controversy would be, rather than the bad stuff in Iraq. So that was good.

It is true that some were on the liberal side, but there were some that were really conservative, in the sense that they had friends in various countries that we thought were bad guys. Every so often you would see that, that they were apologists for some people that we did not think were really great to be in touch with. That would be on the one side.

The biggest issue we had with some of the NGOs was the whole "name and shame" issue, particularly on human rights abuses. I always took the position that as much as I would like to name and shame, we had to keep the goal in mind. From my perspective the goal was to change the behavior of the various governments on human rights issues. I took the position that rarely does name and shame change the position, it hardens the position. Whereas quiet cajoling is much more likely to get countries to behave in a different way. So, it was on that point that we often had a disagreement with Human Rights Watch or Amnesty International, the human rights kind of groups.

Q: I would imagine that with the NGOs corruption would be a problem. Not that they're corrupt, but that world out there is pretty damned corrupt, including our own, I'd say. The place is awash with money buying influence, and all, and these are people out seeing the horrors of this and reporting on this.

JONES: Yes, but that was also why we, in our assistance programs, wanted to pay an NGO to do the work, rather than put money in the hands of a ministry. So, for example, if we wanted to work with the Roma in Hungary, we wanted the money to go to an NGO to do the work, not to a government ministry to pick an NGO to do the work. So that was the way we tried to deal with part of that problem.

Q: There were reports at the time about the tremendous corruption in Bosnia, I'm sure if it was the government there, during your time, money was moving around where it shouldn't go. Was that a problem?

JONES: It was definitely a problem. I wouldn't single out the Balkans. It was a problem in Russia, it was a problem all over Eastern Europe, it was a problem all over the Caucasus, Central Asia, everywhere.

The problem that we had was that the anti-corruption regulation that was published by the White House, which we helped negotiate, to try to make it a little bit more realistic. The first draft required that any foreign government official who was corrupt couldn't get a U.S. visa, ever.

We said that with such a requirement, we are going to cut off relations with huge parts of our world and that is really not appropriate. As much as we want to fight corruption, that is not the way to do it.

We got some criteria put in there: it had to be corruption that went against an American company, or that undercut a U.S. assistance program. We were all pretty skeptical about how to go about doing this, but Marc Grossman, who managed this for all of us, said,

"Okay, we have got this now, it is down to a manageable level. You need to come up with some people that we can put forward for a visa ban in these categories."

So, we worked it that way. When the Orange Revolution occurred in Ukraine, we had a tremendous amount of political toing and froing ahead of time. There was one particular person who was paying a lot of money and they bounced U.S. Steel out of a bid on a deal that U.S. Steel otherwise would have won. They spent so much money in a particular constituency that it closed down a USAID project on free and fair elections there.

But we had to have proof of every one of the allegations, it could be in the intelligence, it didn't have to be unclassified, before we proposed to Marc that a person be denied a visa under the new White House criteria. We did that with one person in Ukraine, one person in the Balkans. It is a permanent bar on travel to the U.S., so it is very, very serious.

That was one of the ways we dealt with the corruption issue. I maintain that it was not the most effective route. It is true the visa ban had a huge effect, I must say. A lot of other people took notice that the Americans are serious about this. Of course there were others from other bureaus. But, more systematically, we really worked at closing down the loopholes that corrupt people could use in order to make money. It is still a big problem in all these places.

Q: Did you find much cooperation on the corruption issue from our principal allies?

JONES: To a degree, yes, especially from countries that were EU aspirants, because they had to pass certain kinds of legislation required by the European Union in order to make their legislation conform with EU rules. So we had a lot of collaboration and cooperation because of that, I would say, mostly because of that. That was effective. Now of course it is the implementation of those laws that is the issue.

We had a particular focus on the Nordic and Baltic countries together, for two reasons. One was that the Nordic states had decided already, got on their bandwagon to be the mentors for the Baltic states, both in terms of NATO membership and EU membership.

We would regularly meet with the Nordic-Baltic group at the political director level and my level, or my deputy, to talk about the whole set of issues involved with EU membership and NATO membership. That had to do with capabilities as far as NATO was concerned. It also had to do with policies on minorities, nationality, corruption, all that kind of thing. So that was the angle that we used with the Nordic-Baltic governments.

The U.S. has a big Baltic constituency. We would meet regularly with them as well, mostly my deputy did, but I did at times. We got Mr. Armitage to meet with a Baltic group at one point. They had been invited to join NATO and they were so excited. It was so important to them to participate in this big push to get these countries into NATO.

But Scandinavian countries separately, especially the Swedes and the Finns, were excoriating about U.S. policy on Iraq. Secretary Powell spent quite a bit of time with Anna Lindh, who was the foreign minister of Sweden (and who was later murdered, much to his great sorrow and dismay), about how to maintain a relationship and the issues on which we needed to maintain a relationship, even though we had this sharp disagreement about the Iraq War. To a degree we had disagreement about how to deal with Scandinavian citizens who either were held in Guantanamo (there were a few in Guantanamo) or were in Sweden, in terms of making sure that they were investigated properly, to make sure they couldn't do something awful in the United States or elsewhere. We had the same kind of discussion with the Finns, although it wasn't as sharp a conversation. We didn't have as many issues with the Finns as we did with the Swedes on this.

The Danes were stalwart allies throughout. The Norwegians as well, although we did have a terrorism issue with a Norwegian citizen. We wanted to make sure that they watched him so he couldn't wander off and do something awful. We actually wanted him arrested and sent back to northern Iraq. That certainly didn't happen while I was there. Iceland was a different case. We already talked about that.

All the Scandinavian countries and one of the Baltic states had political appointee ambassadors. They were the ones who came to me at one point and said, "Beth, what's going on in Washington is terrible. The kinds of things that the president says are awful." These were all friends of his. "You've got to do something about this."

I said, "Guys, you know Karl Rove. I don't. Some of you stay at the White House when you go back to Washington. You need to talk to them yourself. You need to get the message back somehow that what is coming out of the White House and coming out of the Pentagon is not working in foreign policy. Secretary Powell says it to them all the time. He needs your back up on this." I doubt that they did. Anyway, that was pretty interesting, I thought.

We had very little to discuss on Africa and Latin America, until it came time for UN Security Council vote on something that was important to us. So, it was then that I would have a lot of dealings with my colleagues in the relevant bureaus. Not so much Asia, for whatever reason they weren't on the Security Council at the time. So that is when I would engage pretty heavily, it was just on UN votes, principally, or UN Human Rights Commission votes, that kind of thing.

Q: How did you find the UN as an entity, from your perspective?

JONES: I wanted the UN brought in. I was very against all this UN bashing that the White House and Cheney did, because I knew from many Europeans that they needed UN cover in order to do some of the things that we wanted them to do with us.

So, for instance, the Dutch said, "We're with you, we'll send troops to Iraq, but we cannot do it without a UN mandate. It's not enough to have a NATO mandate. We need to have some authorization from the UN to do some of these things." This is one of the reasons Secretary Powell worked so hard to get the UN Security Council resolution that he did finally obtain in November of 2002, to give them the cover that they needed for their parliaments to authorize sending troops to help us. So, I was very much a proponent of trying to figure out a way to work with the UN. I knew that the Europeans and others would be much more comfortable if the UN was with us in Iraq, in terms of development issues. Of course, that lasted only until the UN headquarters in Baghdad was blown up and the head of the UN mission was killed there.

We had huge problems with the UN, of course and with various of our colleagues in the UN Security Council, but it was something that we knew we had to work on. So I was on the phone all the time to my colleagues in the Bureau of International Organizations Affairs, the part of the State Department that deals directly with the UN and its agencies on various issues.

Q: You would delegate an EUR type to go up to the sessions?

JONES: Actually, we delegated two: one for Western Europe and one for Russia and Eurasia, to go up to the UN General Assembly session to help corral all the people we wanted to meet with during Leaders Week.

Q: How did the Central Asians fit in at the UN at that time?

JONES: Well, the Central Asians weren't particularly active. The countries of the Caucasus were active, just in terms of Armenia-Azerbaijan or Armenia-Turkey, that was always the problem issue, where Nagorno Karabakh was involved.

But whenever there was a General Assembly, it was a perfect opportunity for me to see an awful lot of people with just a trip to New York, rather than a trip around the world. So, I would spend almost two weeks in New York every September and have meeting after meeting after meeting with either my political director counterparts or foreign ministers. Then of course I would sit in on meetings that the Secretary, sometimes the President, was having with any of my guys. It was a fabulous opportunity to see an awful lot of people very, very easily.

We would always have a political directors' meeting. I would host one with my British, French and German counterparts, to use that as a way to talk through all of the issues that we needed to talk through.

It was difficult because my schedule was so packed, but every time I would think to complain about having to go up to New York for the General Assembly, I would think, "It is only a four-hour train ride, instead of two overnight flights," which it would be to get to Central Asia.

The thing that helped me a lot, too, is that the Secretary would spend a few days up there. Of course, the president did as well. But the Secretary would see a lot of the guys I needed him to see, my foreign ministers. Then Marc Grossman would stay up for quite a long time and see anybody the Secretary didn't see; he would see as many as he could. I would sit in with him on meetings. The Secretary would have a meeting with all the Balkan foreign ministers, for instance. It was a good way to use the proximity to see a lot of people.

Q: By the time you left, were the Balkans at least convalescing? How'd you feel about it?

JONES: Well, we had a big effort with the three disappointed NATO aspirants - Croatia, Macedonia and Albania - to work on how to get them involved in NATO and the EU. We had a very positive, aggressive set of efforts with them.

With Serbia, there was a reformist prime minister elected while I was in office. One of the first things I had Secretary Powell do as soon as he was traveling after the Iraq War is stop there. The idea was to meet with the prime minister, but then he was assassinated, so we had him stop in to pay his condolences and meet with the new prime minister and the new foreign minister. So that was a big effort.

As the Serbs found it difficult to find and arrest Milosevich and some of the other war criminals, we were constantly going there. Everybody was. We would have General Jim Jones go there, who was the European forces commander. We asked him to go and make representations as well, to try to push them to do things. The same with Croatia, with a couple of their war criminals.

I would say they were very much on a good path. We pushed the European Union really, really hard to keep open the prospect of EU membership, as a way to entice Serbia into good behavior on a whole set of issues.

The backdrop of all of this was the constant Rumsfeld push to get all of the U.S. troops out and our push to keep them in, in some way. So, one of the big issues that we had was should NATO leave Bosnia? The Pentagon wanted to say that NATO's work was over and therefore an EU force doesn't need to go in. We said that NATO's work was not over, but it can be done just as well by an EU force now. We finally worked that out, but it was a very, very big fight between us and the Pentagon over how to characterize the situation in the Balkans in terms of NATO troops leaving.

Q: The euro as a currency, was that an issue at all?

JONES: It was introduced while I was there. It turned out not to be an issue. It was rolled out very well.

The one thing with the EU that was an issue was the whole question of an EU constitution. It was an issue for the Europeans, it wasn't an issue for the U.S. There was a lot of toing and froing in the administration early on about what our attitude should be to Europe and the EU. There were some, coming mostly from the Pentagon, that wanted to say basically the EU was our enemy.

I kept saying, "The EU is not our enemy. The EU is not our competitor. We are close friends and allies with the EU and with the European Union member states. We are doing everything possible to support the enlargement of the EU, in terms of our own assistance programs. We are coordinating very carefully with them to make sure that our programs support the EU goals. We constantly look to find ways that we can coordinate and cooperate with the EU to accomplish our mutual international goals, whatever they might be."

We won on that in the end, but one of the big issues was: what position does the U.S. take on the EU effort to write a constitution? The policy that we finally got accepted was, "We applaud the European Union effort to engage in this grand experiment to produce a constitution. If you're able to do it, that is great. We have no opinion on the substance of the constitution. We do appreciate the fact that because of the EU there is a greater space for peace and freedom and stability in Europe than there would be without the EU. That's why we also support EU enlargement, because it would increase the area of peace and stability on the European continent." It was hard to get that agreed with the Pentagon and with Cheney.

Q: On the issue of Turkey joining the EU. Marc Grossman had been ambassador there and we were supporting this, but was this a really agreed-upon U.S. position?

JONES: About Turkey joining the EU? Oh, no, there was no disagreement in Washington about that. We had a big fight with the EU about it all the time. The only issue for us in Washington was how to modulate our position in a way that didn't drive the Europeans crazy.

I think I talked about the perfect storm we had concerning Turkey, pushing the EU on Turkish accession, the whole issue with Turkey and Cyprus and Cyprus being on the verge of joining the EU and then the whole issue of Turkey and Iraq. This whole perfect storm was happening just as Turkey was changing its government.

Q: It's been a long voyage.

JONES: It has. It has been ever so interesting for me.

I decided to retire from the Foreign Service when I learned that the President told Secretary Powell that he was not going to be Secretary of State in the next Bush administration that Condi Rice was. I had been in the Foreign Service for 35 years, so I

thought that was an honorable length of service. Marc Grossman and Al Larsen (Under Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs) retired at the same time as I did.

I took the retirement seminar in March 2005 and then started my own consulting business in June 2005, with offices in the same suite as Mr. Armitage and his team. It was so very hard to learn to do everything for myself, my own scheduling, my own research, my own press up-dates. I had always appreciated how well I was staffed, but at that point I REALLY appreciated it!

Secretary Rice very kindly hosted my retirement ceremony and good friends hosted a very fun retirement dance party celebration for me.

A couple of months after I retired, I also went through a period close to depression. I didn't really understand why, as I was perfectly happy to leave the very stressful assistant secretary job in an administration whose policies were sometimes hard to justify. I finally realized, talking with friends, that I missed being useful to others. I missed having people ask me to solve their problems. I missed being needed. I missed my colleagues and my team. I like to mention that as a warning to others that they might experience the same thing when they retire.

Q: It's been fascinating for me. Your role has been pivotal, during a controversial administration, during a controversial time, so many issues have come up. I hope we can get this out as lessons learned.

End of Part II