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

JAMES H. MORTON

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
Initial interview date: October 18, 1993
Copyright 1998 ADST

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background
  raised in Illinois
  Monmouth College, University of Chicago
  entered Foreign Service in 1964

Luxembourg
  political officer/ USIS

Thessaloniki, Greece
  consular officer
  Greek army
  coup d'etat
  CIA
  Anti-U.S. sentiment

Operations Center/ Staff Secretariat
  Department of State 1968-1972
  SecState William Rogers

Office of Director General of the Foreign Service 1972-1974
  William Hall, Director General
  Women and minorities in the Foreign Service

Bern, Switzerland 1973-1975
  Admin officer

Cyprus Desk Officer, Dept of State 1975-1976

Director of Greek Affairs, Dept of State 1976-1978
  Greek-Turk on Cyprus
  Congressional interest
  Greek lobby

NATO element
U.S. bases in Greece
Andreas Papandreau
SecState Vance

Congressional Fellow- Capital Hill 1978-1979

Office of Congressional Relations- Dept of State 1979-1981
African affairs

Foreign Service Institute 1981-1984
Minorities and women
CIA

Wellington, New Zealand 1984-1987
Political counselor
Anti-nuclear policy problem
ANZUS
Politics

Comments- After Retirement
FSI- training foreign diplomats

INTERVIEW

[Note: This transcript was not edited by Mr. Morton.]

Q: Today is October 18, 1993 and we are in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and this is an interview with James H. Morton. Jim and I are both here to help the Kyrgyz government establish its foreign service and I am taking the opportunity while I am here to catch him on his career and experiences in the Foreign Service. Jim, could you tell me a bit about yourself...when and where you were born and a bit about family and upbringing?

MORTON: Sure. I was born in Chicago, Illinois December 19, 1936 and attended Monmouth College in Monmouth, Illinois where I got a B.A. in history and economics. I went to work in the private sector for a few years and then returned and got a masters degree in international relations from the University of Chicago. I am married and have two sons.

Q: How about a little before. Where were your parents from?

MORTON: Three of my grandparents came from Europe. My maternal grandparents came from northern Holland, Friesland and when I was small I would hear them speak the

special language up there, Freisan. My paternal grandmother came from Sweden and the name I bear is actually Scots which comes from my grandfather who was born in the town of Monmouth, Illinois and that is how he met my paternal grandmother.

Q: What did your father do?

MORTON: My father was a banker at a small bank in Chicago and worked his way up. He did not have a college education. He worked his way up to be vice president of a bank in Chicago.

Q: I notice you went into private activity after you got out of college. What was that?

MORTON: I went to work as a sales correspondent for an electronics manufacturing firm in Chicago. It was really something that fell in my lap and I always had the intention of trying to go into the Foreign Service or some career that would take me to various parts of the world like Tashkent.

Q: What attracted you to the Foreign Service?

MORTON: I don't know. I think somehow it was in the blood, but one of the things that certainly sparked my interest in foreign places was the fact that I had an uncle who went to the University of Illinois and became an engineer and he was head of projects erecting oil fields around the world. He worked in Sinkiang Province and also helped build the fields in western Romania. After these trips he would come home and he would perch me on his lap and tell me about all these things foreign. So I think he hopelessly infected me with such things. I was also an avid stamp collector. I just couldn't get enough information about far away places.

Q: At some point did you point yourself towards this? How did you go about it?

MORTON: Yes. I remember that in high school where it was a pretty standard curriculum there was what we called a Career Day and we were able to choose anybody in the city that we could get a hold of in a particular line and I was able to find somebody who had been a Foreign Service officer and tracked him down. I think I was the only person from my high school who had indicated that kind of interest. I have to say also that I wasn't ever sure that I would enter a career in the Foreign Service or some other international thing, so I also was interested in teaching. I pointed my career towards those two things. I have always been an avid history buff as well, so I studied history of economics. Then after I worked in this electronic company for a while I realized that I really didn't like the private sector and I decided to give a full shot at the Foreign Service. Then I decided to go back and studied international relations under Hans Morgenthau and Mort Kaplan at the University of Chicago. It was during my final week at the university that I took my first Foreign Service exam.

Q: This was when?

MORTON: In December, 1961. It turned out that I didn't pass the exam but came so close that I said if I don't have to take it during final week I might be able to pass it and so I took it the next year and passed. Then I went to the oral exam and passed that.

Q: How did you find the oral exam? Do you have any recollections?

MORTON: Yeah, I have a recollection. I found it to be a bizarre experience. One of the things they asked me...there was rampant inflation at that time in Brazil, and they asked me how I would cure that particular problem. I gave them a great answer using the US Federal Reserve system and about three quarters through the answer realized Brazil probably had no such institution. But they liked my answer because it showed great knowledge of the US Federal Reserve system and I think I lucked out on that one.

I found the three characters who stared down at me from a podium to be rather a bizarre group, but nevertheless I was willing to take advantage of the fact that they gave me a pass. I went out to a room, sat there for about ten minutes and they gave me a thumbs up and essentially it was the physical and off I went. I joined the Service in February, 1964. I might say that I got my official letter of acceptance into the Foreign Service the day after John F. Kennedy was assassinated.
Q: Did you feel at all part of the Kennedy phenomenon?

MORTON: I did. I traveled to Washington a year before when I had passed the written examination just on the chance that I would pass the other steps to scout out housing and to see some friends I had. I felt, I have to say it, I felt what a lot of other people talked about, an electricity in that town at that time. I have to admit I was swept up in it. And at that time I had done my masters when I could get some regional courses in both Middle East and Africa and I was one who wanted to go off to Africa because we were just opening posts at that time. John F. Kennedy was founding the Peace Corps at that time and I was kind of swept up in this wave of kind of creating a new image for America overseas. I have to say that it was very depressing to arrive in Washington when I did, kind of the post-Kennedy era. A whole pall had kind of come over the city.

Q: You came into the Foreign Service when?

MORTON: I came in in February, 1964.

Q: Will you talk about your training? This is particularly important because now you are trying to train Kyrgyzstan diplomats. How did you feel your training was and what was your experience?

MORTON: I have to say that I was not terribly impressed with our training but I had no ideas about training at that time. I have strong feelings about how I would train now and hopefully we are employing those methods. At that time it seemed like it was a holding action until they could figure out what post you were going to be sent to and to send you

off to language training pointing you to your first assignment. So consequently it seemed like an endless series of people from other agencies bored you to tears and very few stimulating experiences, lectures, during that time. It was something you wanted to get through so that you could get on with the real work.

Q: As a consular officer did you have the infamous Alice Curran in the consular course?

MORTON: I did have Alice Curran in the consular course.

Q: How did you feel about that?

MORTON: She was one of the real characters at that time. I haven't heard her name in years. I actually came in as a political officer but it turned out that when we lined up in the room to get our assignments about three or four weeks into A-100, and I came in with a class of 24, I asked as I indicated to go to Africa. Most of the people in my class asked to go to Europe. As they announced the assignments, I was announced as having been assigned to Cote d'Ivoire and was extremely ecstatic. Almost all of my other friends were named to African posts as well. Some of them you could see the disappointment written clearly on their face and actually the wife of one of my colleagues shrieked when they announced he was going to Mauritania.
About four weeks later after I had gone out and bought five wash-and-wear suits, I got a call and was switched to Luxembourg, for all sorts of strange reasons. It was then that they found out that among other things I would be doing consular work so they quickly worked out my attendance in Alice Curran's class.

My recollection was that she was one of the great martinets in the world. She would not let people raise their hand and go to the bathroom. She locked the doors. I think I have to say, and I shouldn't be saying this on tape, we kind of sat in the back and ignored just about everything she said. I have to say I regretted that a couple of tours later when I got to Thessaloniki when some of the things she must have told us about, like seamen coming in and filing rough and boisterous sea reports happened. I said to myself, "You know, I wish I had paid some attention in Alice's class." Nevertheless, it was a experience you wanted to live through because, of course, everybody talked about mad Alice. I think I remember that she had closed up Liverpool and we thought she had closed up another post. We all thought it was understandable that once Alice was there you would close a post down.

Q: So your first posting was to Luxembourg. What were you doing there?

MORTON: I was general factotum as the DCM wrote me in a letter. There was the ambassador and four officers. One was Tom Boyatt, the econ officer; one was Joan Clark, administrative officer; and then I was there. The Ambassador was a guy named William R. Rivkin, who had been John F. Kennedy's Mid West campaign manager. He was a Chicagoan and really the reason I ended up there because he went through the files looking for a Chicago boy to have at post. So I was the assistant political officer. I was

the consular officer doing consular work a couple of hours a day. Joan Clark was combined admin/consular head. I was also the protocol officer. I had asked a couple of questions in Washington because I heard that it was the "Call Me Madam" post, a very protocol area post. I remember being told that I didn't have to worry about things, I could check with the protocol officer on my arrival. I asked for the protocol officer when I got to post and was told that I was the protocol officer. So that was one of my titles.

Another fascinating thing that I did and it was a great experience, I loved it, was to be the USIS officer there. I worked with support out of Paris and Brussels. I also was the press attaché which was a real baptism under fire but it was something I liked and have always had a love for working with the press since that time. I have put it to good use in subsequent assignments.

So I did a little bit of everything.

Q: What was Ambassador Rivkin like?

MORTON: He was a hard charger. He was a heavy drinker. He was a guy who went full force. He was very good about inviting us to dinner. He invited me in my third week there to a dinner he hosted for the Prime Minister. We hit it off very well. But he was the kind of guy who after a dinner was over would say, "Come on let's have a drink." We would sit with him until three in the morning, of course you had to wait until the Ambassador dismisses you, totally sloshed and then we would go home. We had to show up at work at 8:30 and he would kind of walk in about 2 in the afternoon.

But he was a good ambassador. He was extremely active. He had a program that when he left to say goodby in the ten largest towns in Luxembourg. Well, after you hit Luxembourg and Esch on the border, a steel town, the tenth town was called Larochette, which I think had a population of probably 300 people, and the mayor came and greeted us and he had big boots and mud and perhaps cow dung.

But he was a great guy and I hold him in great affection. Oddly enough not too long thereafter I got a telephone call, he had been named Ambassador to Senegal, and he asked me to come and join him there. I had heard about this Foreign Service phenomenon of hitching your wagon to a star and I decided that it wouldn't be a good thing, I enjoyed Luxembourg. Lo and behold three months later he died of a heart attack.

Q: We are talking about solid Cold War time. What was Luxembourg's role? We are talking 1964-66.

MORTON: Well, Luxembourg at that time was consolidating some of the elements of what used to be the Coal and Steel Community into Brussels. They were fusing the Higher Authority so that some of these offices were moving out of Luxembourg. As compensation they were making Luxembourg one of the banking centers of Europe, which it still is today.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Luxembourg in those days was that the Soviet Embassy was a very large operation and purportedly ran their spy operation out of Luxembourg. Other than that it was a very quiet, backwater post. They had one particular gentleman who was a prominent post war figure, Joseph Bech who finally died when I was in Luxembourg, but other than that it didn't bear much influence on anything. Although the Ambassador thought we were an important listening post, I don't think anything we reported had much impact back in Washington. But it was a very pleasant post and the people were extremely pleasant. I worked 60, 70 hour weeks mainly because Bill Rivkin spun his wheels a lot and we tried to keep up with him.

Q: There you are and we are talking not exactly about the navel of the universe and you are working 60 hours a week with the ambassador charging around. What was being done that needed being done?

MORTON: That is an excellent question. I have a theory, and I talk about it in my courses now, that if you open an embassy somewhere, for some reason, and I have been observing the embassy in Bishkek, somehow work occurs. Activity just fills in the vacuum. I don't think I would have been working 70 hours a week if it hadn't been for Bill Rivkin. On the other hand there was a fairly heavy consular load because among other things Icelandic Airlines terminated there and all the people who did Europe on a shoestring...

Q: Icelandic had the cheapest air fares.

MORTON: Icelandic did not belong to IATA at that time. Every American who did Europe on a shoestring would end up back at Icelandic Airlines in Luxembourg usually broke and we had an extremely large group of people who wanted money from the US Embassy. We had a little slush fund, which I think was illegal, and all sorts of problems. So there was a heavy consular load.

We did all sorts of other spot political reporting and we had a very active cultural program. I was also the cultural officer and during that time we had Artur Rubenstein give a concert there. They had a beautiful concert hall. We kept bringing in concert groups and that took up a lot of my time making arrangements. I think they made a lot of impact because they are very culture conscious in Europe in general, and Luxembourg in particular.

Q: How was it as a so-called listening post?

MORTON: Well, I have to say I don't think it was much of a listening post. There wasn't really many important to write about. One of my responsibilities was to keep track of the Luxembourg army. Now that was 600 men strong. But it was seen as a token and an important contribution to NATO, that they were doing their share. I would go off with the Luxembourg army on maneuvers in Baumholder, Germany, one of the pits of Germany. It was sort of like Iceland contributing its airport to the NATO cause.

But I can't remember, as I search my mind, writing much of anything of great importance to Washington. Nobody quite frankly cared. The Luxembourg political scene was fairly stable. One of the things I did that I still have some pride about is trying to work with the trade union movement in the south of Luxembourg where all the steel mills are. At one time Luxembourg was the sixth largest steel producer in the world, if you can imagine. I actually came back and recommended an International Visitor Grant for a guy named Jacques Poos, who later became the Foreign Minister of Luxembourg. So that was a payoff that came some twenty years later. He came back with a very positive opinion from that visit.

But back to your point about political reporting, I can't remember a single report that sticks out in my mind.

Q: Well, somehow I don't have a feeling about the cabinet and the President sitting around and saying "Well, what do you think Luxembourg will do if we do this?"

MORTON: Exactly. I can't even remember a request from Washington. Sometimes we would get things asking how Luxembourg will vote on this issue or that issue in the United Nations. And occasionally about their attitude re a NATO issue. But Luxembourg followed the US line pretty well.

Q: Then in 1966 you went where and did what?

MORTON: Let me say first of all that after Bill Rivkin left, we received in Luxembourg the first black woman ambassador in history, Patricia Roberts Harris. She was appointed by Lyndon Baines Johnson.

Q: Was she there while you were there?

MORTON: She was there. I worked for her for a year. We hit it off very well as did Joan Clark. But there was a division in the embassy and frankly I think she was responsible for the ending of the career of our DCM. She found in him her worst suspicions about career Foreign Service officers and they did not hit it off terribly well.

Q: People admired her because of her career and rising up and all, but at the same time I heard she was not a very loveable ambassador.

MORTON: She wasn't. We got along but she could be pretty nasty about things. I think she came with a large chip on her shoulder. I think the DCM brought troubles on himself. But her reaction was an overreaction, I think. It was a very unfortunate thing because this small embassy was driven into two camps. I was in a position as a junior of not wanting to get into a camp because the DCM happened to write my report. And I have to say I think that when he perceived I was in his camp, she would tell me to make up a guest list for dinner and say not to show it to the DCM, and he would come in and ask me to see the guest list, so it was one of those situations.

Q: How did you deal with this problem?

MORTON: I tried the best I could to keep my fences mended in both camps. I did the best I could to serve two masters and sometimes I would just have to say, "Mr. DCM, the Ambassador asked me to do it that way. All I can suggest is that you talk to her about it." It was very difficult. I was a junior officer. I was at that time quite hopeful of getting a rapid promotion and that sort of thing. I went out of my way when we were all together not to show that I did have a special relationship with the Ambassador.

Q: You saw her operate for a year, how effective did you find her?

MORTON: I don't think she was an effective ambassador. She really came into an alien world. Her father had been a porter on the railroad. She came from a poor background in Atoon, Illinois. Again I say she had a chip on her shoulder, and I think everybody bent over backwards in Luxembourg officialdom, but somehow I think part of her lack of effectiveness was that she felt like she was a fish out of water in one of the most protocol conscious areas of the world. I think she just didn't like to play the game and consequently conversations would be brusque and impatient. People would say that she was a tough woman to deal with and we are not sure she is doing the best job for America's image here.

Q: Well, then you left. How did you come out?

MORTON: I came out of it very well because to be perfectly honest the DCM knew that he had to write a good report on me in both instances and she wrote glowing reports. I got two very rapid promotions in the Foreign Service out of that one post. I said to myself at that time, "I am moving too fast. This is ridiculous, I shouldn't be moving this fast. I have done nothing." And, of course, later on I felt I was moving too slowly.

Q: You left in 1966 and then what happened?

MORTON: I had asked to go to Africa and ended up in Luxembourg. I asked to go to Africa again, I had not lost this sense of things. By this time all these posts were turning over again in Africa and I thought I had a good chance again. Lo and behold I got a telegram one day, or perhaps Joan Clark called me down and said, "Jim, you are going to Togo." I was ecstatic. A couple of days later she called me down and said, "You are going to Tehran." I said, "Okay." In those days you didn't question the personnel system. So after they had shipped my car to Tehran, she called me in and said, "Jim, you are going to Thessaloniki." So it was Togo, Tehran and Thessaloniki. I call it my three T experience. The reason that was given to me was that there was a very difficult consul general at Thessaloniki...

Q: Who was it?

MORTON: A guy named William Hamilton. He was before your time, although his legend lives on. ...and the person I would be replacing, was a guy named David Rowe who was a bachelor, and they wanted somebody who was married as I was, and they somehow looked at my reports and thought I was this kind of person ...perhaps the corridor knew of the difficulty in Luxembourg, that I was capable of dealing with difficult people.

Q: The curse of a corridor reputation.

MORTON: So lo and behold the car went to Tehran, but I went to Thessaloniki. And that is when I ran the consular section there. In those days everyone did a consular tour and often times it was the second tour. So I ran the consular section there for two years and also did some political reporting there as well because the coup happened during that time.

Q: Before we get to the 1967 coup, you say Bill Hamilton was difficult. How did you deal with him?

MORTON: I think I can say without reservation that he was the most difficult man to work for I had ever run into at that time and then the rest of my career. I have never had a problem like Bill Hamilton. And I still don't know why we didn't hit it off. We were the people sent there to hit it off and we didn't. I had a deputy principal officer named Walter Silva who was a wonderful person. He helped, as I think people in this position are often required to do and he did a good job of it, of buffering the differences that we had. Hamilton was simply an old curmudgeon who had run out to the end of his tour. He was very bitter about many things and Thessaloniki was seen at that time as a post where elephants go to die and it certainly seemed to be the case of consul generals around there. He just seemed to have an ax to grind and I simply was not capable at that time of playing the game and I did have some pretty heated discussions with him about many, many things. He asked me to issue some visas that I refused to do and this did not go over well. They were for some big general's daughters and you know that doesn't go over well.

Personally, as I look back at it I could have done more to try and ameliorate that situation, but it was a very bad situation.

Q: How did this impact on your family?

MORTON: Well, another part of the problem was that his wife and my wife did not hit it off. I can't say that we cared much about it. We didn't see him socially at all. We kind of went out and made friends in the community. It was a large international community there because there were a lot of tobacco buyers and that sort of thing, plus the American school. We got very friendly with a lot of the teachers. And there were even people there who took care of British battle graves, took care of Gallipoli and things like that, traveled into Turkey.

So by in large, as opposed to Luxembourg, I was rarely invited to social events there, only when he couldn't avoid it.

Q: Let's talk about the political situation before and after and how you felt Thessaloniki was different from Athens.

MORTON: First of all Thessaloniki had been the birth place of the Greek Communist Party because it had industry as Athens didn't at that time. So it was a hot bed of political activity and as opposed to Luxembourg there were interesting things to report. Also it was a post where you had to learn Greek. You could not get along in English as you often could in Athens. I know some of my counterparts in Athens never got beyond a 2/2 in Greek, if that. Up there it was total immersion, you just had to learn. I went to post without any Greek because I was switched at the last minute. The political situation was, to say the least, turbulent. There was the Lambrakis trial.

Q: Will you explain the Lambrakis trial? This is the movie Z.

MORTON: The movie Z. It had all happened before I got there but it involved this character Lambrakis and it was perceived to be a fixed trial. It was by in large a situation that was extremely potential for demonstrations, and political rallies. The Greek is one of the most political animals I have ever seen. He lives and breathes politics. The Greeks tended to blame everything on the Americans, more specifically the CIA down to family divorces and that is only a slight exaggeration. So there was a lot of anti-Americanism during this time. There were farmer strikes because of the government's policies toward agriculture. It was just a whole boiling pot of political issues and a lot of political chaos.

Q: The overall government was very unstable at that time.

MORTON: Very unstable.

Q: You had Papandreou, Sr., with his son Andreas, who was just last week reelected...

MORTON: Unbelievable.

Q: ...stirring up the pot and we were unhappy about this. But the government was not very strong.

MORTON: Not very strong at all, and one expected it to fall any moment and another one to come along.

Q: They were waiting for a coup. How did you find northern Greece? The army was concentrated up there. Did that make a difference?

MORTON: Well, obviously the army was there for two reasons. One, it was close to Turkey, where they thought the danger was in their view, despite being NATO allies.

Also the army was up there certainly to keep an eye on the leftist activism that was so numerous and active in northern Greece. Northern Greece is Macedonia and different from the islands or Athens. It is the Balkans and it is Macedonia. You know Macedonia, it takes a while to live there. But there was very little in common between the two parts of the country. But, yes, the army was on constant maneuvers, on the roads, etc. as a show of force so that the leftists didn't get out of hand.

Q: This is pre-coup. How did you go about your political work? One of the things we are trying to go out of these interviews is to help new political officers and many do get this part time assignment. Did anybody tell you how to do it?

MORTON: No. We did it often over the objections or without the knowledge of the consul general, who was totally disinterested. He did not feel that that post had a political reporting responsibility. I had my own agenda. I was trying to do some political reporting because that was my line and I was hopeful that somewhere in my report it would show up that I had taken some time to do this and maybe even that I had written some worthwhile reports. This was done at the encouragement of the deputy principal officer, Walter Silva, who was, himself, kind of a political animal. He thought there were some things that ought to be reported. So he and I would conspire and I would go off some time after hours...the real work of a political officer in my view was making contacts, developing those contacts and then using those contacts to gather information. One particularly rich vein in Thessaloniki was the university where a lot of this leftist agitation was going on. I use "leftist" advisedly and in a positive sense because it was just that these were people left of the spectrum in Greece. As I tell my people in classes about the life of a diplomat, it is essential that you go out and develop contacts if you are going to be a good reporting officer, or any kind of officer for that matter. A strange thing can happen along the way, you can even make friends. Some of your best sources can become friends that last a lifetime. And that is the best kind because you can sit over a beer and this trust has been built up. You know by that time what you can use and what you can't use. This is bringing one of these contacts to ultimate fruition, when you establish trust and to be effective you can call that person up and get a piece of information on the phone rather than spending three hours to go out and ferret it out.

Q: Stay with the students. One, you are an American, and two, you are with the Consulate General, which obviously meant you must be CIA. And you were messing around with the university. How did this go over?

MORTON: Some times not too good. Everything you did was viewed with great suspicion. Besides just the battle of building contacts and trust you had this overlay of CIA wherever you went. Every American was CIA and when out on the street was up to some nefarious goal. So it was tough. But I think in the end that, as with Walt, I was relatively successful in establishing good contacts and getting beyond this CIA factor and producing worthwhile information.

Q: What sort of information were you getting?

MORTON: Well, we were getting information that indeed there could be a coup. There could be a move from the right. That there was this group of army officers who were very displeased with the government and that they were about ready to take things into their own hands. We, of course, were up where the army officers were, so we had good contacts in the army there and they were telling us, "You know we are good Greeks and this would be a rape of democracy, but we can't stand around and let this happen. Some of our colleagues may make a move." We reported some of these things.

Q: Jim, let's talk a little about the CIA. I came a little after you, I started in Greece in 1970. Obviously this is an unclassified interview but also we are talking about 1993. Over a period of time I became to feel that the CIA had a pernicious role in our embassy. It was too close to the wrong people. It seemed to have too much influence over the Ambassador, etc. Did you get any feel about the CIA? I am not talking about the Greek view of the CIA, but within our own mission.

MORTON: Yeah, I have to say that I had the same feeling, but it was kind of at a distance. I would go down to Athens, we would carry the pouch down and go to staff meetings and that sort of thing. I would see some of the traffic and yeah, I think my view was that the CIA had kind of undue influence during the time. I didn't have a hell of a lot at that time to judge it by. First of all it seemed to me like they were doing a lot that the ambassador may or may not have been approving or have knowledge of.

Q: Who was ambassador at that particular time?

MORTON: Phillips Talbot and of course dare we mention the name of the station chief, Clair George. We know what has happened since that time. I only mention the name because the general perception was that they were extremely active. Our guy in Thessaloniki was all over the place. He was a Greek-American and seemed terribly effective, I must say, but just all over the place.

Q: Again speaking of this and one can read it in whatever context one might have, I found that because of the language business we had particularly in the CIA and in the military an undue number of Greek-Americans who wanted to come back and who tended to be very super-patriotic Americans, which meant that they didn't like anything that smacked of the left. I do not feel this served us terribly well there.

MORTON: Well I have a problem often times with ethnic Americans going back and serving in their countries. I know that theoretically on paper the Department has the same kind of problem, but nonetheless it seems to happen a lot.

Q: And in Greece particularly.

MORTON: Because of so many. You know the old saying, there are at least 6 to 7 million Greek Americans . And I have to say this, I worked, of course, three years in

Washington when we were trying to lift the Turkish arms embargo and I was seen as the traitor at the Greek Embassy because I was working toward an American policy interest. I am jumping ahead, but the point I am trying to make is that in Thessaloniki and my days in Washington as someone who was deeply involved in Greek affairs, it was the rare Greek American I found who was totally objective. Greeks, more than most, maintain an allegiance to the old country, even three generations out. One of the guys, by the way, and you mentioned his name, one of the few Greek Americans that I found in official service now was Nick Veliotes.

Q: Nick Veliotes is...

MORTON: He was almost the other way and I loved him for it.

Q: You know, I found the same problem. It's another one that we have had for a long time with Jewish-Americans too, because when you have both a state and a religion which are closely identified with each other, it gets passed on from generation to generation. I found it was not helpful. Okay, let's talk about the coup. The word was there was going to be a coup and some generals were going to take over in the name of the king and it wasn't. How did the coup hit you all?

MORTON: Well, I will tell you my couple of days with the coup. It so happened that I was in charge of the post that day and the coup was carried out in Salonika. The odd thing is our consul general was out of the country boar hunting in Bulgaria without permission. He had not informed anyone that he was going. Silva was on the way to Athens carrying the pouch. And suddenly there was a coup.

The way I knew it was I got up in the morning, I lived in a neighborhood of army officers in a little suburb of Thessaloniki, and we got to the end of the street, I drove in with a neighbor, and we thought something was wrong when we saw a machine gun nest at the intersection where we always hung a right. We went back to our house and before they cut the phones off I was able to touch the Embassy and indeed got one of the local employees who said there was a coup and there were military movements all over town. We decided we had to get in and rammed the machine gun nest and luckily we were not shot. We held out our diplomatic passports and made it down to the Consulate.

The word then became that a coup had occurred but that elements of the army that were loyal to the government were going to march on Thessaloniki and were going to start shelling the town if the coup forces didn't surrender. So throughout the night, jets were buzzing overhead and there was sporadic gun fire, although it was almost a bloodless coup, the Embassy kept calling and asking for Bill Hamilton. We tried to protect him by saying he was not available. We new Walt was on the way, he got caught in a road blocker or something. So what we did was kind of report what was happening in Salonika and we were doing it by one-time pad type of arrangement which was very laborious and slow. But we got the word out that we had seen the king and that he was on his way out. We were the first ones who reported that the king was leaving Greece. And also that the

forces who that morning said they were going to oppose the elements of the army that carried out the coup had decided not to and had more or less backed down. The next morning things returned to normal and we had our colonels. And that was it.

Q: How did the colonels impact on Thessaloniki?

MORTON: Well, I have to say, and I used to get into great arguments with people, that people judged the colonels from the outside as the rapers of democracy, that they were these awful people. For the most part the coup was welcomed in Thessaloniki, amongst the Greeks, but no one ever liked to admit this for a couple of reasons. They were restoring order. People were tired of the disorder and the uncertainty. And secondly, the colonels either shrewdly or inadvertently, I am not sure which, took some acts like forgiving agricultural debts and things like that that were very popular throughout the countryside. So for a long time, it wore off eventually, the coup was basically seen in favorable terms in the northern part of Greece.

Q: You were there until when?

MORTON: I was there from 1966 to August, 1968.

Q: First there is a little more to the story. How did Hamilton, the Consul General, deal with this when he came back?

MORTON: This was interesting. We finally, in the morning, because they closed the borders and he got locked in Bulgaria...

Q: I know, my wife and I were up in Belgrade planning to take a vacation and we had to wait three days after the coup due to the closed border.

MORTON: I think the borders opened after two days. He was locked out and there was no way he could hide it. We know that there was a communication between the Ambassador and Hamilton that was not a terribly favorable one. And there was also, from the Ambassador, an accolade to me for the reporting that had been done in very difficult circumstances. And I think they realized that I had tried to protect Hamilton's ass and there was even some good regard for that. The funny thing was you don't rat on your superior. As much as we were at odds the whole time this was not what I was going to do. I tried to cover his ass all night long.

He got back and he was worse than ever towards me because I think he knew he was wrong and maybe he thought I ratted on him, I don't know. So things went downhill from there. He was even nastier and vindictive after that. And to project this ahead, when I went back to Washington after I left, we were still in the days of the secret part of the efficiency report, he tore me apart on that thing. Now here is the Ambassador in Greece giving me...and nothing was ever mentioned about my reporting on the coup but that is how it was in the old days. When the boards met I was told by the career adviser, "Don't

worry, everybody knows what Bill Hamilton is like. This won't hurt you." But later on I didn't get promoted and probably I should have. There was probably something negative in the file.

Q: People might know at the time, but later they don't know the circumstances.

MORTON: Yeah.

Q: Well, how did you do your reporting? Coups usually tell everyone to stay where they are and cut off the telephone. How did you find out the king was going?
MORTON: This was probably 10 in the evening by the time and someone came into the Consulate and we heard reports that the king was at such and such a location. I didn't go because at that time I thought I was in charge of the post. We were even dusting off the evacuation plan because I thought I might have to make a decision if they started shelling the city that we might have to start pulling the Americans out.

Q: There were a lot of Americans there.

MORTON: Exactly. And Americans were streaming into the Consulate. They were trying to make their way through the streets and gun fire. It scared the hell out of me quite honestly. I was saying, "Jesus, I wish Walt was here to do this."

The head of the VOA relay station there volunteered to go out and kind of try to track down the king. We never saw the king but found people who had seen him and finally we were told that he had gotten on a plane and left. A couple of our army contacts dropped by voluntarily to tell us this information. I never knew quite what side they were on, very honestly. Other than that, we were describing atmospherics. The planes were dropping leaflets that the people should remain calm and that they should not oppose a coup, there could be dire repercussions if that happened. We tried to give them a flavor of what was happening there. I guess the biggest piece of news was we finally heard that there would be no assault on the troops that participated in the coup by people who were loyal to the opposition forces.

Q: Okay, then after the coup the colonels were in power. Did you find a difference as far as your contacts with the military, universities, etc. were concerned?

MORTON: No, not really. If anything, more people seemed to be willing to talk, particularly in the universities. They opposed the coup from the beginning and got more vociferous, although in a very private way and in hushed conversations. The army officers got a little more aloof and we didn't have as good contact. They were busy governing the country by this time. But there was not any kind of noticeable change.

Q: I was wondering whether there were people going around accusing the Americans of running the thing at that time, or did that come later?

MORTON: No, almost immediately, but it was kind of whispered. I did not feel it personally affected my job. Now that was perhaps testimony to the fact that I had established these relationships and they didn't seem to back off. The army officers did because I think they were busy. But most of the contacts continued.

Q: What were you getting from the embassy, because we were going through a very cool period I hear with this? Were they telling you to be cool with the authorities?

MORTON: Well, yeah, there were some general guidelines as I recall. It is a little fuzzy in my mind. But, yes, there was an official policy where we would not have normal contact for a while, as I recall, with members of the army. But I think most of that was carried out in Athens. We were kind of a backwater city up there. It was just that the coup had happened there and quickly the action shifted to Athens.

Q: Then you left in 1968, wither and what?

MORTON: I was reassigned to Washington and went first to the Operations Center, which at that time was seen as a good assignment for people on the rise. The full impact of Bill Hamilton hadn't hit me yet, and I don't know if it ever really did that much. I was in the Operations Center doing shifts. This was in early December, 1968 and worked there for about 18 months. Then I shifted over to the Secretariat and became a line officer with responsibility for Africa and numerous other functional activities.

Q: Go back to the Operations Center, will you explain how it was run at the time and what you were doing?

MORTON: There were three shifts of eight hours and there was a senior watch officer and an associate watch officer...a SWO and AWO. We would catch on with a senior watch officer and that would be the team. You would work with that person. And then it was a three-person team after you had been on answering phones and reading traffic and doing alerts, and you would edit the nightly report that went to the principals and that sort of thing.

A couple of things stand out in my mind at that time of a humorous vein. I got an IMMEDIATE cable at three in the morning coming in from Caracas which had to do with an insurrection in in Amacuro. Now this was an area in Venezuela down by the Guyana border where there were apparently cattle ranchers and there was some kind of fracas. I can't remember the details but it was along the border. I still don't know why someone sent an IMMEDIATE cable. But Bill Woessner, my senior watch officer, said, "Jim, I guess we had better call the ARA duty officer." I talked to the ARA duty officer and he said, "Oh, boy. I think you ought to call Pete Vaky." Pete was the Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs. I had only been on the line for only three or four weeks and here I was experiencing my first time of waking up a principal. I stood in awe of anybody in that exalted rank. And, of course, I got Mrs. Vaky. She said, "Yes, he is here." And I said, "Hi, this is Jim Morton and I am the associate watch officer in the State Operations

Center and I have been advised that we should alert you on this cable." He said, "Fine. No problem." And I said, " Let me give you the gist of the cable. There appears to be some problems in Amacuro..." and I went on to describe it. He listened and then said, "That is great Jim, thanks for calling me. I appreciate it. But just one thing, where the fuck is Amacuro?" I said, "Oh, I forgot to mention that."

One other time just the opposite. I was there on a lazy Sunday afternoon and we got an IMMEDIATE in from London and it was some kind of international coffee talks. I said to myself, "Sunday, coffee, wait a minute. We are not going to alert anybody about this," and I put the cable aside. Suddenly a couple of hours later there was a scorching call from London and finally Jules Katz called up and just about had me fired because I had not alerted the appropriate person. They were waiting for instructions.

But that was sort of the life on the line. It was generally more mundane than that. We would get calls from embassies all over the world about happenings. A couple of times I briefed the Deputy Secretary and that sort of thing. Something was always happening up there. Sometimes you would go up in the morning and brief the Executive Secretary before he would go in and brief the Secretary.

Q: Then you went on to the Secretariat. This was when to when?

MORTON: Now we are talking about early 1970. The Secretary at that time was William P. Rogers. In that job I made six or seven trips with Secretary Rogers and one trip with Under Secretary John Irwin. My boss, a great guy by the name of Jim Carson, later died from diverticulitis...

Q: We were in Frankfurt together. I had a nice interview with Ginny which was in the Foreign Service Journal, maybe you saw it.

MORTON: I don't know if I did, but I just adored the ground Jim stood on because he was awesome in the Ops Center after a while.

...Jim came in and said pack your bags you are leaving for Tehran at 6 this afternoon. I handled the African beat up there and of course they would dole out these trips.

Q: What was handling the African beat in the Secretariat?

MORTON: Essentially I had Africa, the fisheries areas and some other functional areas. Any piece of paper that was coming up from the bowels of the bureaucracy would filter through the Secretariat. We would look at it for all sorts of things. Content, but mostly for correcto, white out fluid, in other words it had to be a perfect document going to the Secretary.

Q: This was pre-computer era.

MORTON: If the poor secretary made a mistake on the second to last letter, that was it and it would go back and have to be done all over again.

Q: It sounds like an awful waste of time.

MORTON: It was an awful waste of time and I hope they are not still doing that. Particularly important was any document that was being transmitted to the White House, that had to be letter perfect. I think perhaps I was exaggerating, a little white out was allowed at the bottom of a memo going to the Secretary.

It wasn't an enviable position because we were looked at by the bureaucracy as these people who impeded the flow of information and were nitpickers and essentially we were asked to be nitpickers. Some times things would slip through and we were called to task for it.

Q: Let's talk about your trips with William Rogers. Could you talk about how he was used...because this was the period when William Rogers was Secretary of State, but the feeling was that Henry Kissinger was getting stronger and stronger and that Rogers was being superseded. How did all this impact on you?

MORTON: This is the worm's eye view and to see Secretary Rogers close up was not entirely reassuring. He was a wonderful guy, no doubt about it. He would be prepared as any Secretary would with elaborate briefing papers and from my experience from before and later, he very seldom read his briefs and often went into meetings less than well prepared. One of the trips we took was to Tokyo and as word had it he kind of messed up on some delicate textile negotiations because he just didn't want to do his homework and would go into meetings largely winging it. This was not just my observation. Most people thought that. Whether in the great scheme of things our republic was set back immeasurably by these things, I don't know. I have to say honestly that he was viewed as a country club lawyer. That he was the guy in the law firm that went out and played golf with the clients and didn't get into the serious briefs. And he was a country club Secretary of State. In many ways Henry Kissinger started, as he is so good at doing, filling in the vacuum that Will Rogers willingly created.

Q: Obviously when you are part of the scheme you look to your principal, did you feel kind of let down or wish the guy would do a little more?

MORTON: Yeah. Foreign Service officers judge Presidents by the number of career ambassadors that they promote and they willingly take the State Department's side between two political appointees. If it is a political appointee of the National Security Council and the State Department, there is a built in loyalty this guy has that he may or may not take advantage of. Besides most people were fond of him personally. It was bothersome. And another thing is none of us particularly liked the personality of Henry Kissinger and we saw many of the things that he was doing undercutting the Secretary of

State...I think one of the most frustrating things was that we didn't feel Bill Rogers was doing anything to prevent what was clearly an open crusade to undermine his influence.

Q: Can you talk about a trip or two...what you were doing at your level, etc.? What was your level then?

MORTON: This was before they changed the ranks, I was an FSO-4.

Q: So this was about the major level in the military

MORTON: What we did on these trips, we would look where we were going, what the issues were, and in those days, we would literally pack large aluminum cases full of reference...footlockers. We just hoped and prayed we had what we needed. Now in this age of information and computers, it is almost unbelievable. It was almost like probably with the potentate two hundred years ago. We just packed footlockers full of files and old references because we had to have instant reference to them if something happened.

We then would get to post and set up our little communications center. As we did in the watch center, we would look at incoming cables, because in those days everyone would info the Secretary's party wherever they may be if they thought they had something important. Well, everyone thought they had something important for the Secretary to see. So we winnowed out this kind of stuff and then when we would get something that we considered important, we didn't go to the Secretary ourselves, there were yet more staff along including one or two people from his personal staff, usually career guys, to whom we would bring the information to their attention. And then there would be a further winnowing down process on papers that were going to the Secretary. We would review outgoing traffic, memcons from the Secretary, to see that they were in proper form and got sent out, etc. And we would keep going until the Secretary pooped out and sometimes we would go out on the town at 2 in the morning and come back at 8 without any sleep and set up shop again and fall asleep at the desk.

Q: I think you mentioned one time that the Secretary would some times do it with you.

MORTON: Yes, that is correct. William Rogers, I don't know how much this is known, on a couple of occasions went out with the boys. One was in Manila. He enjoyed that and we enjoyed having him.

Q: This was when?

MORTON: This was 1971 and 72. Back there I start to forget when I went from what post to what post, although I remember a lot of my life as to what post I was at, so I didn't have a reference point for that.

Q: Was there anything that happened on these trips that was particularly memorable that you can think of?

MORTON: Well, we went with John Irwin, the reason we left on such short notice was because there was an OPEC crisis..and there were many OPEC crisis and I can't even remember what kind of crisis it was except I think they were threatening yet again...

Q: This was when you went to Tehran.

MORTON: This is to Tehran. So we left on very short notice, I had four hours to go home and pack my bags. We didn't even know where we were going when we left except that we were going to Tehran, which was the first stop. We didn't know how long the trip would be. We landed at Torrejon Air Force Base in Spain and went on to Tehran. Then it was determined that we would go on to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. In Saudi Arabia we landed and were ushered into this palace that looked like out of the Arabian Nights. I had never been in the Middle East at that point. People would serve us in what had to be a royal guest house or something. The people who came in were blacks from Nubia, southern Sudan, with turbans. It was just out of the Arabian Nights. But the thing I remember that was so funny was that there was one room where we had an office which had kind of a sweeping, curved wall with a bench along it. We had a copying machine that didn't collate and we had to collate a 62 page document in 15 copies. So the staff lined these papers up on the floor and we were all crawling around on the floor collating these things. We were human collators. I stepped back and looked at this scene and said, "This is as bizarre as it gets." And there we were in this Arabian Nights palace, this human collator. We were so punchy that sometimes we would just absolutely burst out laughing.

Now, at the end of that trip...by the way Nick Veliotes was along on that trip, he was special advisor to Irwin and made the trip a delight, and John Irwin was a real gentleman...at the end of this trip one of the tasks that the Secretariat team had responsibility for, and I was the head of that team of four people...two officers, two secretaries pounding out cables, etc....was to do the wheels up cable.

Q: Explain what a wheels up cable is.

MORTON: We would say, "The Secretary (or the Under Secretary) and his party departed Riyadh at such and such hours." We would send that around so that everybody in the world knew where they were. We did it for the Secretary and the Under Secretary.

This was a particularly zany group that I was mixed up in and we were all feeling punchy, we had been working around the clock with very little sleep. We were going to Tunis for a rest stop...John Irwin insisted that we get a rest. So we left Riyadh, our last substantive stop, and I put the usual cable, "Under Secretary Irwin and party departed Riyadh 0830 hours." The cable would say OPEC trip, so I then put in "Oil is well." We were flying along and the cable was distributed on the plane and Nick came back and said, "By the way, John Irwin appreciated your little sense of humor. You did that Jim, didn't you, I know you?" I admitted it and said I was sorry, but Nick said, "That's okay. He loved it." I

got back and was officially reprimanded by Ted Eliot the Executive Secretary of the Department for being flip. And he was quite serious about it. For a while I thought it was a career ending faux pas. I couldn't let it go, I should have shut my mouth, I said, "Ted, Nick stopped back and said John appreciated it," "Well, that may be but this is not what we expect from you."

Q: Well, you left that when?

MORTON: In 1972 I went from the Secretariat to Switzerland. This was a very strange assignment.

Q: Where in Switzerland?

MORTON: Bern, where I did a job that was half administrative and half political. It essentially, I have to be honest, was a product of the fact of my relationship with Joan Clark, who was in charge of EUR/EX in those days.

Oh, I take that back, there was one other stop, I knew there was something missing. I wanted to go off and study Serbo-Croatian because I wanted to go to Belgrade because I had been smitten with the Balkans while in Thessaloniki. Instead my CDO told me that the Director General of the Foreign Service, one Bill Hall, needed a special assistant and for some reason identified me. So instead of going to Serbo-Croatian I was asked to go and take that job, which I did. I worked for Bill Hall as his special assistant for two years.

Q: What was the role of the Director of the Foreign Service in those days? We are talking about 1972-74.

MORTON: For one thing he worked for Wild Bill Macomber, in my view a mad man. One of the special things that he watched after in those days was the CORDS program and I took three trips with him out to Vietnam, among other things to help rewrite efficiency reports which were written by military officers, to see that these people got a good assignment. But by in large he seemed to have a fair degree of influence and power over the selection of ambassadors, personnel decisions and that sort of thing. I don't think the Director General has ever had as much power as it is perceived to be because that was usually held by M, the Under Secretary for Management, who was Macomber at that time. It is now Dick Moose as we described earlier.

Q: What was your impression of how the system was working at that time?

MORTON: There were all sorts of problems. It was during a time that they put out the book, "Management for the 70s," if you remember that. In fact Jim Carson had been on one of the task forces. There were all sorts of problems. They were working out the role of the woman in the Foreign Service. There were some cases stemming out of the Foreign Service officer who had been involved in My Lai. There was a lot with Vietnam because of the CORDS program, I mentioned, and Bill Hall took a special interest in that. We

took three or four trips in various parts of the world, usually Vietnam, visiting other embassies, checking out...

Q: This was during the time when we basically pulled troops out but we had these consulate generals.

MORTON: Yes, and people assigned as provincial advisors. We went all over Can Tho, Ban Me Thuot, Da Nang, on and on. We just traveled to every conceivable place.

Q: What was your impression of our staffing in Vietnam at that time?

MORTON: I felt that we had an awful lot of good officers in this program. There were few complaints, they did their job well under some times very hazardous conditions. We didn't spend much time in the Embassy so I had no feel for the situation there. But there was a good group of officers, many of whom went kicking and screaming but I think when they got there did a good job by in large. We felt they were being disadvantaged among other things by having their efficiency reports prepared by military officers. Now these military officers, I think, meant well, but they wrote their way and their system and it just didn't work. Bill Hall went out of his way to try to see that these people got good ongoing assignments. He was a very compassionate, wonderful guy and he wanted to see that these people got a fair shake after they had gone through this experience.

Q: Jim, I'm interested in the Vietnam thing. You said the Director General wanted to do the right thing. I know I served in Vietnam and everybody said if you serve in Vietnam everything will be fine. Most promises in the State Department are worth close to nothing because things change. Did you have any feel about how the system was working in regard to those serving in Vietnam?

MORTON: Well, I think you put your finger on it. I think there was an honest effort made, a very personal commitment by Bill Hall, to do right by those people. But I think the moment he left these were promises made and promises not looked after. I would have to say on balance and I made a lot of friends while I was out there...a couple of times we got shot at and you form friendships. I don't think by in large the promises were delivered. At one time there were these articles that they thought these people who served in Vietnam were the new elite in the Foreign Service and would rise to the top. Some of these people became disaffected and left, some that I know. Others, like Ken Quinn, who you may or may not remember was in Vietnam, is now Deputy Assistant Secretary in East Asian Affairs, but Ken is a real talented guy and I think rose in spite of it.

Q: I am starting something which I hope will continue and that is to get a history of the role of the Foreign Service in Vietnam.

MORTON: I think that is fascinating. I just think that is a fascinating time. The other thing too is to get the people who were there and interview them.

Q: We have already started a collection and I am trying to get the Foreign Service Institute...we have a proposal to start a history. We will see what happens.

MORTON: Someone you have to get a hold of is Lionel Rosenblatt.

Q: I want to.

MORTON: Quite a guy.

Q: Now, were their any other aspects of your time with the Director General that spring to mind?

MORTON: There was one little vignette that I think showed the character of Bill Hall and someone in the system trying to do things right. It happened to involve an A-100 classmate of mine. The A-100 class is the orientation course at FSI which you take when you come in. You bond with your class and try to keep track of each other throughout your career and possibly the rest of your life. At the time this particular situation was discovered this particular officer was serving in Tokyo.

One day Bill Hall called me in and said, "Jim, you know here is an officer whose file was not submitted to his promotion boards and he was due. He has a good record." And it turned out as much as Bill Hall talked to people there was no way to rectify this by giving him a promotion. It had to wait until the next year's board and then be an anonymous file with no mention of it whatsoever. So, on one of my trips to Vietnam we went to Tokyo and Bill Hall called this officer in and told him what had happened, apologized abjectly for it and said, "What can we do for you?" And he said, "Well, I am bidding on principal officer in Fukuoka." He said, "I will do what I can do." And he got the job. That was just Bill's way of trying to help him out. No one felt worse about it than Bill Hall.

So it was good to see the personnel system inside because as viewed from outside it seems like such an inhuman type of operation, with no human sensitivity involved. To see someone like that who cared for the human dimension was indeed encouraging.

Q: What was Hall's background?

MORTON: Hall had been Ambassador to Ethiopia beforehand. That was the last assignment that I know about. I have to say I don't know much about his earlier career other than he was a great guy to work for. I'm sure we talked about it because we had a lot of talks on these long plane rides, but I don't remember now. He was a real gentleman. He died of a heart attack about four or five years later. I did some diplomatic training in Honolulu about four weeks ago and ran into a guy who was just absolutely devoted to the guy as well. He was one of those real gentlemen in the Foreign Service.

Q: When did you leave?

MORTON: That was 1973. So the period of the Operations Center and the Secretariat ran about to 1971 from 1968. I'm changing my dates a little bit but as I lay these things end to end...So in 1973 it was time to go overseas again and I went off to Switzerland, which really was kind of a weird assignment.

Q: This was from when to when?

MORTON: 1973-75. Switzerland is a great place except it is full of Swiss. It was very pleasant. Again from a political standpoint nobody much cared. During the whole time there were two issues. One was a referendum to throw out all foreign workers, in which case most outside observers said 80 percent of the Swiss industry would grind to a halt. It almost came to pass which shows the attitude of the Swiss. And the second one was that a Swiss Canton was thinking of withdrawing from the federation. Now that did not exactly catch the attention of the policy makers.

Another thing we were doing was selling jets to the Swiss Air Force which generated a little more interest.

So it was a very quiet two years.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

MORTON: A fellow by the name of Shelby Cullom Davis, who was a reinsurance magnate. A man who usually fell asleep at staff meetings and a man who...and this is no exaggeration...would get in a car and say, "Drive me south." The chauffeur would drive him south and when he hit a border he would wake him up and say, "What direction now?" And they would bounce off the border and go elsewhere. He would disappear two days at a time like that. An unbelievable character and we were mostly happy he was gone most of the time.

Q: What were you doing and how did you work in this situation?

MORTON: We seldom saw the Ambassador. When we did he was affable, glib, and we knew nothing was taking. He wasn't absorbing anything. He just was there because it was a nice life style. He frequently, when he wasn't driving in the car, he would be out of the country. We had a very good DCM, a guy named Roy Percival who took it all in stride. Nobody was too up tight in Switzerland. So we just functioned. We more or less didn't have an ambassador, so we went about our business and worked for Roy.

Q: What were you doing?

MORTON: It was very strange and it happened from Bill Hall's time as Director General. Bill Hall felt very strongly that political officers in the Foreign Service always were the ones who got up top, for one reason or another, not necessarily good. But they were the ones who got up to the managerial level and became the managers of the Foreign Service. That was one reason that the Department was so poorly managed because political

officers never had any management experience. The "New Diplomacy for the 70s" was the first time I can recall that emphasis was put on management in the Service. So Bill Hall felt strongly, and I think a lot of people agreed, that they had to do something with these narrow political officers to broaden their horizons. One of the things was...most political officers as junior officers did a consular tour, but they didn't get near admin. So what Bill Hall decided to do was to set up a system whereby at some stage, possibly mid career, a political officer would go off and do an administrative tour or management tour. So when I left there Bill said, "I want you to be an example of this. You are going to go off and do it." Well, I believed it was true as well and at that time I thought I would like to be a top manager and thought this would help. So I got in line. The thing is somewhere along the way I turned around and no one ever got in line behind me. I went out and was a one person experiment.

I have to say, as a political officer all of my career, that this was one of the most challenging things that I did since my consular tour when you really have to work and make some people decisions and that sort of thing. But Bill left by that time and nobody saw the wisdom of that way.

So I was the administrative officer in Bern and then tried to keep up and do some political stuff as well. I engaged such important issues as complaining bitterly to Washington about the lack or tardiness of Washington in increasing our cost-of-living allowance because the dollar was sinking against the Swiss Franc. These are important diplomatic issues. So that was some of the battles I fought, other than managing the budget of a mid-size embassy.

Q: I want to go back to the Director General's time. What was the attitude towards women officers at that time and what were the problems?

MORTON: Still then, at that time, women officers were great just so they worked in the administrative or consular function. With few exceptions they just couldn't hack it in these tougher disciplines of political work. Really, that attitude still existed back then. This was during the time that on paper they emancipated Foreign Service women and spouses, etc.

Q: Were you all engaged in this issue or was this more a papering over operation?

MORTON: I would like to say we were, but I don't think anybody was engaged in the issue. You know, by the way, it was the time when Alison Palmer had launched her kind of ground breaking class action suit about women. That was handled up in Macomber's office by in large. It was seen as a nuisance case, she was seen as a nut. Things were just starting at that time, but I have to say that nobody really saw the problem from my view point being in the Director General's office. Nobody was doing anything institutionally from within to kind of make up for past sins.

Q: What about minorities, particularly blacks?

MORTON: The same sort of attitude. I think there was an attitude that blacks don't want to be in this business. They don't feel comfortable in this milieu. Even then it was perceived as kind of the preserve of the Eastern establishment. It has always been that despite statistics. The year I came in the University of Minnesota provided more officers than any other. We were getting geographical diversity by that time, but that doesn't mean necessarily that it wasn't an Eastern establishment. And the attitude of the old boys was still prevalent.

Q: Well, going back to Switzerland, were there any other things you wanted to cover?

MORTON: The personalities are always interesting. After Davis we had former Senator Peter Dominick from Colorado come. He was dying of Lou Gehrig's disease so we kind of lived through that. He was a nice gentleman and this post was sort of a last plum for him.

Q: Were you getting a little bit worried careerwise? If somebody looks at it...Greece, if you are in a coup people say,"Greece that is nice." But Luxembourg and Bern. This looks like you are one of these lightweights.

MORTON: Very true and I was. You know when Bill Hall and Joan Clark cooked up this assignment for me, not that I went kicking and screaming to leave Switzerland, but I realized already that I was not becoming a specialist, that I was not establishing credentials with any particular bureau. As a matter of fact I curtailed my tour, I was supposed to be there three years but I said I wanted out and to get back into my speciality, political reporting. Because I had some friends in the Bureau that was when I was selected as Cyprus Desk officer. Then I became the Greek Desk officer and then the Director of Greece, Turkey and Cyprus.

Q: Why don't we stop at this point and pick up later because we want to go into your Washington assignment in more detail.

MORTON: Yes, there is some fascinating things about the Greek lobby in Washington.

Q: Today is October 21, 1993 and we are still in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Jim, first I would like to start this off with dates. You left Bern and you went to the Cyprus desk when?

MORTON: The fall of 1975.

Q: And how long were you on that?

MORTON: I was on the Cyprus desk for a year and then moved up and made Director of Greek Affairs.

Q: Did you take this job with a certain amount of trepidation because Tom Boyatt, I know, about a year before had gotten really in a tight spot it worked out in a way well for

him careerwise, but at that point it wasn't sure that it really had. He had gotten into quite a head-to-head with Henry Kissinger.

MORTON: Yes, very true. Not so much the sense of trepidation. The context is interesting in that it was about a year after the Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

Q: Which was on something like July 14, 1974.

MORTON: At that time there had been a bureaucratic reorganization of the geographical divisions in the State Department. Greece, Turkey and Cyprus were given to EUR, an unwanted stepchild to say the least. They were never comfortable with it. I heard, and I think it was true, that when the invasion occurred that literally the file cabinets were being wheeled along the corridors by the movers to the new offices.

To get to your question, I looked at it as a great challenge. I had served in Greece as we talked earlier in this interview. Before I left Switzerland I had the opportunity to visit Cyprus...the Department funded my travel there. I was at that time blissfully ignorant of many of the things that were problems for Tom Boyatt. By the way, I served with Tom at my first post so I knew Tom.

Q: Would you talk a bit about what you saw? I have an interview with Bill Crawford, but would you talk about your impression of seeing people going around with flack jackets on, etc.

MORTON: And also Rodger Davies had been killed there. Again I am a little unsure of sequence of events, but I think Rodger Davies had been killed no more than a year before and Bill Crawford had come down there.

Yeah, I flew over but had not been to Cyprus before. I remember driving past buildings that had been blown out. Of course we had to fly into Larnaca, the old RAF strip in the south of the island in an old Viscount turboprop plane because all of Cyprus Air's jet fleet had been more or less caught on the runway of the Nicosia airport and it was closed, and I think it is still closed to this day. The place was still kind of in a shambles from that. There was, of course, the famous green line that divided the place. We also traveled around. We were able to go into the Turkish section and up to what was called Kyrenia at the time, a beautiful part of Cyprus. But it was a pretty tense place at that particular point in time.

Q: First impressions can be very important. What were you getting from Bill Crawford as far as was there somebody at fault...I'm talking about Greeks, or Turks?

MORTON: I think, and I had previously served in Greece, basically the feeling amongst most officers serving in Cyprus, and it wasn't a large embassy, was that the Greek Cypriot community had brought it on themselves. The distribution of population was such that small isolated pockets of Turkish Cypriots were kind of sprinkled around the larger Greek

sea within the island of Cyprus. We heard stories of how for fun on a Sunday Greek Cypriots would jump in their car and ride through villages and fire and even shoot and kill women and children in these pockets. The Turks were totally vulnerable. Finally because of all sorts of events...the coup, Nicos Sampson and a lot of stuff that has been recorded elsewhere...the Turks had just had it. I feel personally, and I can say it now more than I could say it then, that they were fully justified in coming in to protect their brethren.

Q: I have to say, as an outsider, but I have been consul general in Athens and left the first of July, just a couple of days before this happened, from what I have heard the Greeks, as they had done in 1923, had blown it.

MORTON: Absolutely. The Turkish behavior later on and their unwillingness to negotiate, maybe you could be critical of, but I think they had no other choice but to come in and protect their brethren down there. Of course, you could never say that to a Greek.

Q: When you got to Washington, what was the situation as far as we were concerned in Washington and what were the problems that you were handling?

MORTON: First it was the Cyprus Desk for a year and then the Greek Desk for a year but I never really left the Cyprus problem and when on the Cyprus Desk you deal with Greek issues, so the two blended together. And, of course, it was an unusual office because we also had Turkey in there. Geographically it was nice, but here were these sworn enemies, so the desk officers would pounce on each other with daggers or something. This never happened by the way, I think because both of us were able to see...

Q: Who was the other Desk Officer?

MORTON: At that time it was a guy named Harmon Kirby. When I first came back as Cyprus Desk Officer, a guy named John Day was doing the Greek stuff. John had served in Greece and was well thought of by them.

The situation was that when you got back there we had a lobby in Washington that has often been described as the second strongest lobby in the United States, and that's after the phenomenal Jewish lobby. The Greeks had 8 million strong. The thing about the Greeks...immigration patterns are interesting and I did some studies later on...when Greeks came to America they weren't like Ukrainians and others, and massed in areas like Cleveland or Detroit and dominated an industry, the Greeks opened restaurants and little businesses and since they didn't want to get in competition with their cousin, Petros, they would move on to the next town 50 miles down the railroad line. So Greeks were uniformly spread around the country. So when we would be working this issue, when we would be either with the Cyprus issue or later on the lifting of the Turkish arms embargo, we were dealing with a lobby. We were dealing with a situation where every congressman in the United States had Greek constituents who in their own way were very good at applying pressure. The Greek Orthodox priest would preach sermons on Sunday to write

your congressman and that kind of thing. What you found was an incredibly one-sided view of the world, both working the Cyprus settlement and also working on the Turkish arms embargo, the views toward Turkey, because the numbers were thus: There were something like 8 million Greek Americans, and because of all sorts of reasons, Turks did not immigrate to the United States in large numbers, so there were less than a million Turkish Cypriot Americans. There were something like 100,000 Greek Cypriot Americans and something like 30,000 Turkish Americans. So everything was weighted against us from that standpoint. We all know the effect of lobbies in Washington.

Q: You had been moved over to European Affairs and obviously there was a certain amount of distaste among Europeanists.

MORTON: They didn't want to have anything to do with us. Among other things we brought a lot of bureaucratic problems and kept them late at the office because the Greeks and Turks were always fighting. Bruce Laingen was up there as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State under Art Hartman. I wandered up there with telegrams and things probably eight in the evening and Bruce would be sitting there knowing I was coming, and if he had just his normal European clientele, he would have gone home at 6. But the Greeks and the Turks kept everybody up late. That was just the way it was.

Q: What were you trying to do in this context with your other colleagues?

MORTON: First of all we had continual inquiries from the Congress of the United States. There was something like 12 Congressman who were either Greek Americans or had a strong association. One was John Brademas who was a Greek American. Not many people knew that, it was kind of an odd name. And there were others. There was constant pressure.

The pressure during the first year when I was on the Cyprus Desk was to push the Turks...one of the main things they captured was the town of Famagusta, which was the second largest town and a kind of wealthy, resort town on the eastern part of Cyprus...to turn Famagusta back and withdraw their troops.

Congress passed a law that the State Department would every six months write a report on progress toward the resolution of the Cyprus problem. It fell to me to write this report and the trouble is that there was never any progress on this. So every six months it was my duty to kind of fabricate a report or to write something that this thing is happening or that thing is happening. But any negotiation almost immediately was aborted because the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots didn't even want to talk to each other. We had a guy up north named Rauf Denktash and, of course, down south we had Makarios. So there are hard lines on both side of the issue.

We essentially worked very hard to try to foster these talks. By "we" I mean the State Department. We would prepare position papers and try to get the Turks to come to the table; Denktash came to visit, that kind of thing. But I think all of us working on this

knew it was hopeless. The Turks had done their thing and they were going to dig in and stay a while. The big issue, of course, was would northern Cyprus declare a unilateral declaration of independence.

Q: Separation seems to be a much better solution even though it is rough at the beginning than trying to get these people to live together. Certainly the Greeks were not very good neighbors. Was there the feeling that okay it has gone this way and no way in the world are we going to get these people to co-mingle again? What was your feeling?

MORTON: Oh, absolutely true. Let me tell you a little vignette that went on when I took over the Greek Desk. One of the first things that I did was to open the New York Times and there on the front page was a little girl marching in an Epiphany Day celebration in New York. She was a beautiful eight-year-old with a frilly lace dress and had one of these sandwich boards hung over her that said, "Kill the Turks." So this was kind of a sobering reminder of the fact that they have hated each other for centuries. I would agree with what you say that anybody working with this issue knew that you could never put humpty dumpty back together again. Cyprus would never return to what it was before. The Turks would never put people back in these vulnerable positions, especially after the animosities created by this war. And so consequently we in many ways played the game of trying to foster negotiations even though we knew what we had de facto was a fait accompli and that ten years from now, which is now as we sit, the situation would be the same on the ground and indeed it is.

Q: Were you ever looking at it that maybe we should separate Famagusta or something to make the Turks...in other words to give something to the Turks to try to assuage people? Was there any feel that you should do anything?

MORTON: Yeah, I think that was a feeling but the Turks would have none of it. They had just had it. I think it got mixed up in internal Turkish politics where they couldn't be seen giving anything away, unfortunately, as many of these things do. Frankly they seemed to relish their position on the ground and they were going to lord it over the Greeks for quite some time. So there was a sense of hopelessness.

Q: Tell me about some of your relations with Congress?

MORTON: This was a high profile issue and I, first Cyprus and then Greek Desk Officer, was in contact...by the way, not only were there 12 Congresspersons of some connection in Greek ancestry or real strong interest in Greece, none of Turkish, of course, but a great number of staff members with Greek names. There were a lot up there.

Q: It is an interesting phenomena if you look at it. Greek Americans very much parallel in slightly smaller numbers, Jewish Americans into the professions, into politics, disproportionate to their actual number.

MORTON: Absolutely, and there were some powerful staff members who just gave us a hard row to hoe. They were on the phone all the time; they were after information; they would come over; they would ask us to come up; they often times were very unpleasant. I can remember a couple of times some of them losing their temper with me when I would say, "Let me tell you how the Turks feel," and suddenly it was as if I was telling them my opinion and I was qualifying it. It was extremely, extremely difficult dealing with them.

And then, I don't want to jump ahead, but we did get to the point where, of course, you know the Congress slapped an arms embargo...

Q: Was that while you were on the desk?

MORTON: It went on shortly after the invasion so it was in place when I came on the desk. Then the move to lift the arms embargo came after I was there. Then, because it was official US policy, even though I was the Greek Desk officer, I spent a lot of my waking hours along with others lobbying with Congressmen to overturn the arms embargo on a NATO ally. And Steve Solarz, by the way, was the leading proponent of this. Steve I thought saw the US interest in this kind of thing. Turkey was very distressed but it said it had acted in the interests of its citizens. It was at that time that I was branded a traitor in the Greek and Cypriot embassies because I was seen up on the Hill lobbying to lift this arms embargo. They were not able to make the distinction between my activities as acting in the interest of our government. They thought I should be loyal to their side.

Q: We are talking about ethnic politics in the United States. I think it is a very interesting phenomenon because you get people who come at this...the other great one, of course, on the matter of Israel. But people who are brought up often religion is involved and all, and they don't see what are American interests and goals.

MORTON: As a matter of fact, a couple of stories. I had a professor from Wayne State University in Detroit come in to see me. He told me he was third generation, but he was Greek. I was explaining to him how the Turks saw the situation and he exploded in my office saying I shouldn't be in a position like I am in and that sort of thing. I know how strong the Jewish lobby is, but I don't think there is any other ethnic group like the Greeks who maintain their ties so strongly to the homeland and who are unable even as second and third generation to take on and see the American interests. They still see it through Greek eyes. It is very interesting that second generation families still would send their sons home to get a bride in the villages in the Greek hills.

Q: And the religion is so tied into it.

MORTON: Exactly. As I said earlier, we would get letters like crazy because the Greek Orthodox priests were just preaching anti-Turkish statements, write your Congressman don't let them lift the arms embargo, etc.

It is amazing, there should be a book some day written on the Greek lobby as there has been on the Israeli lobby because it is phenomenally strong organization. Some people have said that it is right up there with the Israelis. There was a guy from Treasury, Eugene Rossides, another one, and they just had a network. These guys are from American families, but boom. As I mentioned the other day, the only guy, one of the few people, who saw things Greek objectively, was Nick Veliotes. In fact, Nick was kind of the other way, very critical.

Q: We were trying to lift the arms embargo. Turkey was a NATO ally holding a very important stretch of territory whereas Greece frankly didn't. What were you getting from the Europeanists? How were you dealing with this problem?

MORTON: Well, my recollection is that just about everybody saw the wisdom that we had to lift the arms embargo on Turkey. And they saw the Greeks as being totally unreasonable. But everybody knows the Greeks and therefore found it understandable. So the Europeanists, a phrase you used, felt that the most important thing was NATO. Turkey was the anchor over there. We had to right this wrong that was done in an emotional reaction by the US Congress, spearheaded by Greek American legislators. I don't think I heard of anybody who wasn't a Greek who didn't think that we had to lift the arms embargo against Turkey, against a NATO ally. This was the Cold War factor.

Q: Were you getting any nervousness on the part of saying you are really weakening NATO, at that time?

MORTON: Absolutely. Some people saw the worst case scenario that Turkey would pull out, say that is it, we are out of here. Most people said we could do without Greece, but we can't do without Turkey. It was as simple as that, a black and white situation.

Q: Were you getting any feelers that the Soviets were playing the game of trying to make the Turks...?

MORTON: That's a good question. I think we saw evidence that the Soviets were happy to stir the pot and continue this kind of squabble within NATO. I can't recall any vivid examples of that, but that was happening at the time. Clearly they were happy with that situation.

Q: Then you went to the Greek Desk. Was there any change? You moved in 1976 and how long were you there?

MORTON: Two years. Yeah, I started doing bilateral things with Greece, but again much of it was Cyprus. Everything revolved around Cyprus during that time. But then we got into the election of Andreas Papandreou. It is almost noteworthy that while I have been on this trip he has been reelected.

Q: I know. October, 1993 and he is back again.

MORTON: And it boggles the mind. Nonetheless, back then what I then devoted much of my energies to was staffing out and being part of the renegotiation of Greek bases.

Q: You know, one of the things that used to bother me when I was in Greece was the bases which had become such a burden. The Greeks used them for all sorts of pressure. We had a few airfields and a number of communications sites. What were you getting as to the importance of these bases and how were we looking at them at that time?

MORTON: Well, it depended on who you talked to. I have used this example when we discuss negotiations in training foreign diplomats, that often times the real adversary is not the other government you face across the table, but within your own government at home when you hammer out common negotiating positions. I think, very honestly, although no one would ever agree with me and no one would ever admit it at the time, but the State Department, if it had its way, would have just as soon seen those bases go. For one thing it would have cleared up the bilateral problems with it. We have Andreas Papandreou who made an election commitment to do it, although we knew... I predicted at one time that when he left government that American bases would still be there, and, of course, they still are there. I am not one to say how strategic they were at one time, but I think we could have reduced greatly our presence there, if not our entire presence...I mean we had stuff in Crete, Soudha Bay, Nea Makri communications, and on and on and on. But that was Cold War and you had the Pentagon dictating policy on these bases at that time. They said that all of these things were necessary and consequently we got into this long, protracted negotiation with Greece from which in many ways the Pentagon wanted no result and I think in many ways, Andreas Papandreou wanted no result. So both parties in the negotiations were going to the table just for the appearance of negotiating, but none wanted any progress. So it dragged out forever. There was no real resolve. The only thing that happened was something they called streamlining or Hellenization of the bases...they took the American flag down and put the Greek flag up and a few gestures like that. And everything went on its only merry way as it had gone before.

Q: How about Andreas Papandreou. When you arrived on the Desk, Karamanlis was the President. He was sort of a central figure, highly respected. What was your view of the politics of Greece at that time and the way they developed?

MORTON: I think that the individual Greek is the most political animal I have ever seen in my life. I have never been anywhere and I have never read anything, they live, eat and breathe politics. A Greek is only truly happy in a situation of near or total anarchy. They just love to get into it. Consequently the Greek political system is always kind of flowing back and forth more so than most political systems. There is always continuing scandal in the Greek government. The only way to get anything done is through payoffs and that sort of thing. So one thing you know about Greek politics, and this is not too unusual from other places, is that it's going to be constant debate, raucous, shifting alliances back and forth, shifting of parties back and forth.

Q: Andreas Papandreou came back when? Were you on the Greek Desk at that time?

MORTON: Yeah. Andreas Papandreou came back in 1976, I think, just about the time I was getting to the Desk. He was a demagogue, no doubt about it. He was a reaction against what had happened with the coup and then Karamanlis with the colonels. You know it is very difficult to describe. Greece was just ready for one of its love affairs with a leftist government and Andreas, of course, had come back from the University of Minnesota where he had been a economics professor. Early on I think he provided a reasonably good government for the Greeks. He started, of course, some nationalization and that sort of thing.

Q: Did we learn to kind of live with him?

MORTON: Not a lot of people learned to live with him, but I think we knew he was a fact of life. A lot of people were very uncomfortable with him. When he came in a lot of people said this was the end of the bases and that sort of thing. But others, and I count myself amongst them, thought he was a very pragmatic politician and knew that those bases were more important to Greece than they perhaps were to the United States. But he had to play it out politically for the man in the street.

So, yes, we were never comfortable with him, "we" the United States, but what are you going to do. Greece was perceived as being strategic.

Q: Our embassy was very controversial before, I was part of that country team with Henry Tasca and all very close to the colonels, at least the feeling was that. What was your feeling when you were on the Desk, and also maybe spilled over from the Cyprus times, about how we were dealing with the government, particularly in reports from the embassy and all that?

MORTON: I was usually in daily telephone contact with the political counselor and the DCM.

Q: Who were they?

MORTON: George Barbis was the political counselor and my main contact.

Q: He would be a Greek American.

MORTON: Yes he was. That is another issue we have talked about. You know at that time I think the criticism was that the embassy had not done enough to cultivate contacts in the opposition, which was PASOK, Andreas Papandreou's organization. Consequently when Andreas was in, it was felt that the embassy had no real connection with the government. I think over time there were some officers there...a guy named Townie Friedman, for one...who were reasonably successful in establishing a contact. But it was a

very uneasy relationship during that time. There was a guy there named Monteagle Stearns who was ambassador.

Our feeling back there was that the embassy was kind of out in right field.

Q: Was there concern that there were too many people in the embassy, and particularly in the military and CIA, who were still close to the right, mainly because of a lot of the Greek American connections?

MORTON: Yes, I think that is right. Papandreou and company really held them off as well. It was not for lack of trying. Well, yes, but aren't most American embassies that way?

Q: The tendency is there. But there, of course, it is important, other places it is not very important.

MORTON: But it is kind of the way we would gravitate to.

Q: Since things involved the Turks so much, how were your relations with the Turkish Desk? You were both the stepsons in the European Bureau, nobody wanted you. You were sort of the urchins who had to be brought in to be nice to.

MORTON: That was not a problem because everybody in the office, I have to say it, was sympathetic to the Turkish side. This was a product of the Cyprus issue. Consequently, within the office there was no real division at that time. I lobbied very hard along with the rest of my colleagues in the office to try to lift the Turkish arms embargo, which was successful. So that was not a problem.

Q: What about the Turkish arms issue? You say you lobbied to lift it. How does one lobby to try to get something done in Congress when there is so much specific opposition to it?

MORTON: That is one of the activities that I have been involved in in my career that I was personally fascinated with and got intrigued with. I did a demographic study where Greek Americans lived in the United States. I had Census Bureau data from the last census. I was amazed to find out during this exercise how precise Census data is. They can tell you congressional districts, how many of what ethnic groups are in that district, it was just amazing. We went after the hard ones targeting something like 150 of the congressional districts that had the highest percentage of Greek Americans. Then we wrote off some as hopeless because of the high percentage. We then started calling for appointments and going to see Congressmen who may be hearing from Greek Orthodox priests and telling them that there is another side to the issue. That American national interests require that this Turkish arms embargo be lifted. I think sometimes we did some good.

I remember distinctly going to see the Representative at Large from Nevada, they only had one Congressman. He said to me, "Everything you said makes eminently good sense and I agree with you. My problem is that I fly home and when I get off the plane in Las Vegas there are eight Greek restaurant owners who come up and buttonhole me and give me all sorts of hell. I just wish I had some Turks in the district to offset them." He was talking about eight people. This was the kind of disproportionate influence the Greeks had.

Essentially that was what we did. We made call after call after call and spread the gospel that this was in the US interest. Yes they were going to get some flack from their Greek American counterparts, because, we would present them the figures, there are no Turkish Americans in your district. We know that you are going to be better off if you vote for the Greek side, but it is not probably going to be an issue that is going to cause your reelection or defeat in the next election. So it was just doing our homework and slogging around the Hill. I spent probably the better part of three months most of my time, four hours a day up on the Hill just being a lobbyist.

Q: How were you received by Congressmen? Did they look upon you as a la-di-da Foreign Service officer?

MORTON: In some way, yeah. And often we had trouble getting access and spoke to staff a lot. But sometimes we were able to get through. Sometimes I think they said, "My God, they really feel strongly about this, come back and see my Congressman at such and such a time." Solarz in some ways was orchestrating it. Steve Solarz threw a wonderful party at his suburban Virginia house when this was all over and we all felt like we had worked our tails off. Everyone had contributed. We were never sure of the outcome because of the Greek lobby and people like Brademas and others..at that time Sarbanes, who I regard as one of our better Senators, but on this issue...

Q: There is a mind set there that you can't penetrate.

MORTON: You cannot penetrate it and people who I admire on practically every philosophical level, on this one, blinders. I can still get in trouble with Sarbanes. I like what he stands for but he was one of the Congressmen.

But that was a fascinating exercise and one in which I think the State Department functioned beautifully as part of a team.

Q: Who was Secretary of State then?

MORTON: Cyrus Vance.

Q: This is a new Democratic administration. Were you finding support at the time?

MORTON: I think with this issue there was good support.

Q: Vance, of course, is really very familiar with it. He had been a principal figure in the negotiations.

MORTON: So he knew it well. I think Vance had had it up to here with the Greeks as well...I am pointing to my throat. I never got terribly close to him. I used to write the reports that he would sign and send to Congress. And I will tell you a little aside here. I worked in the Secretariat and you know how careful they are about any piece of paper, no errors and all that sort of thing. I finished one of my every six months reports on Cyprus and proofed it and it was all typed out with the cover letter which the Secretary would sign transmitting it to Congress. It went up to the Secretariat and probably, I'll bet, 50 different people looked at this piece of paper and finally I heard that the Secretary had signed it and it had gone to Congress. About two weeks later I got the comeback copy and was just sending it to my secretary to put it in the file when I looked down and there was the Cyrus Vance signature, but underneath his name was not spelled Cyrus Vance, it was spelled Cyprus Vance. Nobody had seen it. It went to Congress like that. The secretary had been typing the word Cyprus so often that she got to Cyrus and typed Cyprus. I marked it for filing and hoped no one would notice it.

Q: So you finished there in 1978?

MORTON: Yes, 1978.

Q: Were there any other issues with Greece that you would like to mention?

MORTON: There was another interesting story. During that time Jack Kubisch was Ambassador. William Schaufele, who had been Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs was nominated as Ambassador. I, as Greek Desk Officer, had the task, and it was a pleasant one because he was a wonderful guy, of briefing him along with a whole bunch of other people. We prepared him for his Congressional hearings. Bill Schaufele was the kind of guy you could tell was uncomfortable because we would say things like, "You really shouldn't get into that area," or "If they ask something about this you shouldn't go any farther than this." We tried to give him a feel for the Greek/Turkish sensitivities and how one misplaced word could land you in all kinds of trouble. He said, "Okay. I appreciate what you are telling me."

So he went up and went to his hearing and he did reasonably well. Toward the end there was a question, I can't remember from whom...it was an open hearing and of course there were Greek journalists in the background...they got into this issue of the seabed and drilling for oil.

Q: Oh, yes. You have all these islands and who has control over them, etc. The Greeks go ballistic over this.

MORTON: Yes, and there are all these islands nestling up near Turkish territory, Lesbos being one. He got into that issue and I, to this day I can't remember exactly what it was he said, but it was something that sent the Greeks through the respective bulkhead. I remember getting back with him after the hearing and the head of the office saying to me, "You have just lost us our Ambassador. He is not going." His name was Nelson Ledsky and I said, "Nelson, you always exaggerate. It is bad, but no problem."

Boy, was I wrong. Two days later the Greek Ambassador comes in and even though they had already given him agrément they declared him non grata. And that was because it had created a storm out there and they didn't feel that somebody who would say something like that, which they perceived as being pro-Turkish, could come out there and work. Again the Greek lobby at work. He would have been a great ambassador. The Greeks should have been flattered to have had a man of his caliber.

Q: One time while in Greece I mentioned to an American who was talking about something that happened and I said, "Well, you know Balkan justice isn't the same as all other kinds of justice." And that got in the front pages of the Greek press. I thought I was done. The Greeks take these things very seriously.

MORTON: One vignette before we leave this fascinating time. I was in the middle of a busy workday on the Cyprus Desk. The phone rang and I suddenly lifted the receiver and someone was saying, "Congressional Research Service," and I am thinking that I am talking to an ally here, we are all in government. They started talking about the Cyprus situation. Finally this person said, "Well, what do you really think?" Of course I was attuned to the press and all that kind of stuff and said, "Well, on background (I went on background even though I thought I was dealing with the Congressional Research Service and I thought they were doing some research for a Senator or something), if you are asking me, I tell you that there is going to be a deadlock and the two sides are going to settle in and that sort of thing."

Two days later the Hartford Current, of all papers, printed something a Greek stringer had picked up from the person I had spoken to. It mentioned a high level State Department official...when they want it to have impact, they will make a low bureaucrat like myself a high level official...had said that it would take this and that for a final Cyprus settlement. There was an election in Cyprus and the story got over there and pretty soon they were talking about the Morton Factor. It just spreads like wildfire. You know what it is like in that part of the world.

I have to say that I got a call from Art Hartman, who was Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, and a guy who didn't like to work on this subject being more interested in the Soviet Union, etc. His secretary said, "Mr. Hartman would like to see you." I knew what it was all about and I went up with my tail between my legs. He smiled, sat down and said, "I agree with everything that you said, Jim. You are right on about the Cyprus thing. But we are not going to say that to anybody else anymore are we Jim?" He laughed and dismissed me. But it lasted for a couple of weeks.

Q: And it is a very upsetting thing to know how vulnerable one can be, and if you don't get support...
MORTON: I have to say that one of the things in my career I like to be frank to people and I always thought I knew when I could trust them. But there were just times...I hated to be a robot and just spew forth the government line. That was what Schaufele was like as well and that is why he got his proverbial tit in a ringer.

Q: You left in 1978 and what did you do?

MORTON: Well, oddly enough and happily enough, I was selected as a Congressional Fellow, so I went up to the Congress for a year. I don't know if you know about that program but one of the things you do is to get to wander around and knock on the door of a Congressman and get a job.

Q: You are not assigned?

MORTON: You find yourself a job yourself. You have a seminar that is done at Johns Hopkins on the way the American legislature works, and by the way I think it is a great thing because I think there is still a tremendous gap between the executive branch and the legislative branch, particularly the State Department. It is seen as adversarial. It could be so much more than that. It doesn't have to be like that. So I went up and ended up working for a guy named Jim Leach from Iowa, who is now the Chairman of the East Asian Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He was a former Foreign Service Officer and very highly thought of. He was a Republican and I wanted to do a Republican and a Democrat. You work one in the House and one in the Senate. I went over and had some great times with Jim and did some district trips with him. He is a wonderful guy. I worked his foreign affairs portfolio but also some domestic issues like nitrates in pork and meat and that sort of thing. It was really a broadening experience I would have to say.

Then I went over for the second six months and worked on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for Jerry Christianson, a former Foreign Service Officer, who in effect was working for Claiborne Pell. I worked a number of foreign policy issues for him as well.

Q: Any stories or feel that you had for any of the foreign affairs issues?

MORTON: You would try to work an issue and find you didn't have enough votes and that kind of thing. What I take away more from the Claiborne Pell experience...of course he had been a Foreign Service Officer, and his very first posts were Prague, Bratislava and Genoa. As a matter of fact, here we are in October 23, 1993 and just two weeks ago I entered the new American embassy in Bratislava and there up on the wall was a picture of Claiborne Pell because he had this special affection for the place.

I remember sitting in a meeting one time with Claiborne and he told a story on himself. I don't think he does this very often. He said that after Genoa his father had sat him down and said, "Claiborne you had better get out of there because you are not going anywhere in this profession." So indeed he did. There are wonderful stories about Genoa where he arrived and rented a house that was three times grander than the Consul General's. He got a limousine that was bigger than the Plymouth official car. He had all sorts of large receptions, etc.

Q: He came from a wealthy family.

MORTON: The Pell family owns most of Rhode Island and points north.

Q: Well after you left this Congressional internship, what did you do?

MORTON: In 1979 I moved to the Office of Congressional Relations and ended up with the African portfolio in Congressional Relations. I, of course, had nothing in my background on Africa except that earlier in my career I had asked to go to Africa and had actually been assigned there but never got there. This happened to be the opening that was available and they didn't pay much attention to whether or not I had served in Africa. I think they felt Dick Moose was the creature of the Hill anyway and I was just sort of staff paper and all that sort of thing. Brian Atwood, the head of AID at the moment we are speaking, was the Deputy Assistant Secretary and the Assistant Secretary was a guy named Doug Bennet. Brian later moved up. We flogged a lot of African issues on the Hill. We were essentially paid lobbyists again. I was back in my lobbying mode.

The biggest thing at that time was the Clark Amendment which was an amendment that the Democrats put in which prevented assistance to Angola. There were continual attempts to overturn that in Congress. That was one of the big fights we had.

And then a whole lot of little issues like fighting for the military assistance money of 1.5 million to places like Gabon. Things that stirred the interests of Washington at that time.

Q: I can't think of anyone I have talked to who has had more experience in the lobbying halls of Congress.

MORTON: As a matter of fact, as I was doing it I thought, "You know, when this career doesn't pan out (as the career didn't pan out), this was one of the talents I was building up." I made a lot of connections on the Hill. Sometimes I actually enjoyed the life of the lobbyist going up there and flogging issues. Although I am one who feels that the closer you look at Congress, the more abhorent you become. The more repugnant that institution is in the way it functions.

I think probably I spent four years of my Foreign Service career either as a lobbyist or in a job where there were heavy lobbying responsibilities.

Q: We are talking about the 1970s when you are doing this. Could you talk about the power of the staff members and what your impression was of them?

MORTON: Well, everything that people have feared and said about them...tremendous power, but after all that institution you read statistics like Congressmen voting on 900 bills during the course of the year and there is no way that they can keep up with them. You would actually see them as they go on the floor go up to a staffer and say, "How should I vote on this issue?" The staffer had made up his mind. Now hopefully the staffer knows how the boss thinks and that sort of thing.

My view on the foreign affairs side was that most Congressman had very young idealistic people on the foreign affairs beat. Perhaps like a lot of Presidents, as many Congressman feel themselves as their own secretaries of state and formulate their own opinions, but by in large the foreign policy decisions in Congress were a product of a very young youthful group of staffers. Of course many Congressman outside the foreign affairs committees paid no attention to foreign affairs whatsoever and you just dealt exclusively with staffers who would for one reason or other determine the vote of their member.

Q: Well at that point you would be older than many of the staff members. You are coming from this field. Did you find yourself up against the arrogance of youth and all that?

MORTON: Sure. I found myself flogging African issues where I would call somebody up and say, "There is a vote coming up on the military assistance funds for some African country. I would like to come talk to you about it." There would be this dead silence on the other end of the line. It was tough getting in. It was tough enough on more major issues. Again I tried to orchestrate campaigns just to make people aware of this kind of thing. I was working where Dick Moose was handling all the high level stuff. He had his own legislature guy in the African Bureau, so I was working some of these ancillary issues. I also, by the way, had other areas of responsibility besides Africa. They handed out responsibilities like they did up in the Secretariat, you would get some functional bureaus as well. But, yes, by in large you would come in and I would be talking to someone 15 years my junior who looked like they had just started shaving, if that. They were very much aware that I was the person who was making the pitch and they could do with it what they would.

Q: Well, after being the pitch man for the Department of State, it is 1981 and the Reagan Administration is in. Did you get involved in that changeover?

MORTON: I did. This is the only time in my career where politics actually forced me out of a job or I felt I had to get out of a job. Just very briefly. The Democrats disappeared very quickly, as one would expect. We got in a new group that were the most politicized people...a guy by the name of Richard Fairbanks was made head of Congressional Relations. He brought in a bunch of people highly politicized and it is the right of the President to do that. But suddenly we were told things like, "You can't go to the Hill without our permission." We always used to free wheel. We would go up when we

thought we had to go up. And we said, "Oh, my God." Some issues remained fairly constant, but in the African Bureau we went one day from trying to prevent repeal of the Clark Amendment (and again this is an indication that there wasn't much going in the African Bureau, this assistance to S____________) to total flip flop to going to active repeal of the Clark Amendment. And I said to myself, "I cannot go up tomorrow and say this when I was saying that a few days before." I just couldn't do it even though it was with the same people and they were aware of the situation.

And that was when Brian Atwood had found his refuge and some other Democrats over in good old Arlington, Virginia at the Foreign Service Institute. Brian called me up one day and said, "Jim, I know what it is like there, would you like to come over here and run the diplomatic training for a while?" So that is how I ended up over in Rosslyn. It was also at a time when my son was having some problems and I had been working 12 hour days and I thought maybe it was time to get an 8-5 or 9-5 job.

I mention this only because of the business I am in now, six years beyond my having departed from the State Department. I got back into what was a kind of form of teaching which I had pointed towards early in my career of perhaps being a professor or teacher in a college. I went over there and thoroughly enjoyed it. My responsibility was the training of all incoming officers. During those three years that I was there I processed through and got to know about 900 Foreign Service officers. So I had my Mafia all around the world. Wherever I go I find these people.

Q: Then you served when to when in the FSI?

MORTON: From 1981-84.

Q: What were your main responsibilities when you were doing this?

MORTON: Essentially my job was to oversee the orientation or the in-processing of the initial diplomatic training of all incoming Foreign Service officers. I think we were running three, four or five classes a year depending on money, etc. Some times it was a class of 15 and some times a class of 40. We brought them in for their eight weeks of training before they were assigned and sent off to language training. We also were in charge of any orientation of people coming in to work for the State Department Civil Service side.

One of the things we were doing during that time was radically restructuring the training curriculum because up till that time it had kind of been a lecture type and we got into the more experiential. This was kind of a revolution that was sweeping FSI at that time. I certainly didn't lead it but was part of it and became committed to it later on.

I also participated in all sorts of other activities within the Foreign Service Institute, some area study training and that sort of thing. That was essentially it.

Q: Let's talk about the new officers coming in. There is no doubt about it that it is a highly selective process and although both of us are products of it and I think we can say without undue modesty it is a pretty special group that comes in. The selection process should produce pretty good people. What did you feel you had to do with them? What were your goals? What were your impressions of these people?

MORTON: Let me start with impressions first and then I will go to goals. By in large by this time you know the age limitation had gone and the average age of the class was older and people were bringing in greater experience and that sort of thing. And also a most significant thing had happened and that is that they were starting to not just go by the written examination and then a brief oral examination, but they were getting a process whereby they would test interpersonal skills. This to me was one of the greatest steps forward because there were too many people coming in who were brilliant, who could pass any test in the world, who could pass a good oral test, but put them out there on the front lines of diplomacy and they bombed out. They would be great out there in the ivory tower in a research situation, but they just didn't have those people skills which I think are so fundamental to successful diplomacy.

So by in large I was greatly impressed with the people we were bringing in at that time. I thought that they were head and shoulders above earlier periods when I would tune in and see what kind of people were coming in. I thought we had made some very fundamental changes and some good changes. We were basically bringing in some good people. At that time our classes were becoming more diverse. More women, more blacks, more Hispanics. There was a mid-level entry program which was somewhat controversial. But by in large my impression was that we were bringing in good people. There was always two or three who you would say, "How the hell did they get through?" And often times they bombed out. But we were not there to judge these people, that was for later on even though there was some thought that perhaps...

Q: It was not a weeding out process. It was to make them good workers.

MORTON: I looked at what we were doing in several ways. One, it was a holding action until we could figure out where to assign them. As long as we had them, what was the best thing we could do for them? One of the things we did was try to prepare them for their first overseas post. Now I have to say that most of the people we brought in were thinking people and a lot of them thought they knew what they needed to know from this course. We kept saying that we had lived through this and we think we have a few things to offer you that you might need when you get to your first post. So we would just teach them somewhat the same things we are teaching these foreign groups. Just kind of the basics of diplomacy and what they might find overseas and what they might need and the jargon of the trade, etc. And we had them a very brief eight weeks.

We would try, and most times it worked, to build a kind of esprit and the groups would bond, and make them aware of what kind of special culture they had entered into, what sort of special responsibilities they had, the issues of personal feelings versus public

policy, and that sort of thing. We would go to off-sites and thrash a lot of these things out. By in large I think it was a fairly decent eight weeks. As I look back on it I would have done it differently today, but that is hindsight.

Q: We are making a tremendous effort to make our people coming in more diverse. What about the problem of the blacks and the Hispanics?

MORTON: My impression was that we were not getting the best of those two groups, that the best of those two groups were going elsewhere and making more money. If they were really good, blacks and Hispanics essentially viewed the State Department as not their kind of institution and consequently the ones we did get were not the best that were out then. I don't know if that is true of the white group or not, but that is how I saw those two groups.

Q: In the first place the pool of qualified blacks and Hispanics in that period was much smaller and there was a great desire because of legal and social public affairs things to have more blacks and Hispanics in positions in firms, etc. So they are a much more sought after commodity than the whites or women.

MORTON: They were not bad but you knew that they were not the best of their particular category.

Q: Were you having problems with anybody who was coming into this new thing and you felt the system had made a mistake?

MORTON: No, not really. What we did get was certainly capable of performing at a good level. As I think back, the real problems we had were in the area of the white majority. There were some people who just got through and were miscast and couldn't function.

Q: What did you do when you saw somebody like that?

MORTON: We felt that some of them were so bad that they certainly would be weeded out along the way. We actually at some point talked to some people about writing a memo in cases where it was really an egregious case, but the answer was no, that they would do it another way.

Q: You were not in a rating or judgmental position or anything.

MORTON: We told the people that when they came in. They didn't believe it, but we told them that this was the only part of their career when they would not be rated. You go into language training and you get rated and from then on from your first post throughout your career. But during the time in the orientation program they were not rated. Now they didn't believe us because they were convinced that when we went and held exercises that we would get back and whisper in somebody's ear...the famous corridor gossip and that sort of thing.

Q: Were there any pressures put on you by anybody saying something like, "God damn it, these people can't write, let's do something."

MORTON: No.

Q: I take it you weren't getting an awful lot of feedback from the field.

MORTON: None whatsoever. Nobody cared. It was bring them in and put them in the meat grinder. It was a holding action in many ways. Nobody really cares. The facilities were awful. A very bad physical plant. To show up for work in a place like that was is to destroy morale from the first day.

We also had at that time some problems due to integrating some CIA officers through our classes as well.

Q: What were the problems that were caused by this?

MORTON: Well, I will tell you a little story because it has been put in the book. Most of the CIA officers, because they wanted to give them a more credible background so they could talk about going through orientation...

Q: So we are not talking about CIA officers who are going to remain CIA officers.

MORTON: That's right. And they would go through A-100 training and there were three or four a class for a while. But we fought for this and got an agreement that they would be identified within their class, but only to their class members who they were, and that this was one of the first responsibilities these new officers had was keeping this secret within the group. And it worked quite well. And everybody was happy that they knew, because there were always these suspicions. When I went through, somebody came up to me and asked if I was the CIA guy.

An interesting story. Somebody came to me one time and said, "Look, we got one of these who we will not announce to the group, it is so deep cover we won't do it." I went to my boss, Steve Low, and said, "This is awful. This is going to destroy the integrity. If that gets out than no one is going to believe anymore that we are really identifying the real ones. This is the first time this has happened." I said, "We can't do it." Well, it was overruled by Larry Eagleburger who said that we would do it. It turns out that this guy was Mrs. Howard. I don't know if you remember Ed Howard. He was the guy who defected and ended up in Moscow.

But to show you how these things work, Ed Howard showed up at our opening coffee and she was like seven months pregnant. We knew nothing about this, of course. There is a guy and his wife in the class saying, "Oh, hi. How are you doing?" "Fine." I am standing there as well, and this woman is looking at Ed Howard's wife, pregnant, and finally they

take me aside and say, "This is really weird because I was pregnant and we were supposed to come in three classes ago and it is State Department policy that you don't bring a wife in pregnant, you wait until you have the baby. Why are these people coming in?" Of course, the CIA never caught that. And so we had to cover that one up.

One of the problems was that in the public bidding when they bid for their positions if we had three CIA officers in the class we would have to put up three posts where they were going which the class couldn't bid on themselves.

All sorts of problems caused by this. The only reason I tell this whole story is that Ed Howard, and we were promised from the beginning that this secret would never get out, was fired by the CIA just shortly after our A-100 class, went back to New Mexico, fled one night and got by the FBI and lived in Moscow until recently. I don't know if he is still there. But everything we predicted happened. Everyone in the class said, "Oh, you didn't tell us about Ed Howard." So after that the credibility of that program was shot.

Q: After you finished this in 1984 what happened then?

MORTON: I got an assignment as political counselor to Wellington, New Zealand. On the way out I got to Honolulu to consult with the POLAD, the political advisor at CINCPAC. I walked in and he said you really are going to be busy down there. Of course, I knew there were going to be elections scheduled for November and this was July. I say, "Yeah, but I have some time to get my feet on the ground." He said, "Well, the election is in three weeks." The Prime Minister had called what they call a snap election. Everyone knew the Labour government was going to win and they were the ones who were going to institute this anti-nuclear policy which would mean that US ships could not visit which would mean a confrontation between ANZUS partners. And indeed that happened. I got off the plane and went to an election rally. They have mercifully short elections in New Zealand, three weeks. Everything is done in three weeks unlike the Americans who stretch it out well over a year. Before I knew it there we were with that new government which began to implement this new policy. So that is where I ended up.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

MORTON: A guy who probably or should have come out of central casting for a political ambassador. A guy named H. Monroe Brown, a cattle rancher from California. A close friend, as he said it, of Ronald Reagan, who refused to accept the reality of the moment that there was this little democracy out there with which the United States had had friendly relations for 150 years, and it could suddenly turn around and say, "Uncle Sam, I don't want your ships in here."

Q: What was he doing and what were you doing?

MORTON: Well, this was a fascinating dynamic. First of all he really did refuse to accept reality, that this had happened. It would be some months before push came to shove that

we would request a ship visit and that the government would be in a position of saying, "No, we have a popular mandate." The polls showed that 80 percent of the New Zealand people were "anti-nuclear". I was the primary reporting officer at the post. He would just not let any reporting go in that showed that there would probably be a crisis in no time.

Q: You say the ambassador won't let any reporting go in, but after all there are ways of getting around it. Were you doing any thing? You had to be letting somebody know.

MORTON: We did it by phone and by other ways. But there was also a tendency in Washington of not wanting to hear the situation on the ground out there, though we would be talking to people who were at the country director level. I mean you have Casper Weinberger and George Shultz and everyone saying that these are alliance partners and they will accept our ships. So we had a problem at both ends.

Q: What were you getting from our military people? Did they really care a damn about this?

MORTON: I'll tell you the real problem. No, no one gave a damn about New Zealand. When I was having my briefings before I went at the Pentagon they said that they send a ship or two down there once or twice a year just for alliance purposes. The real problem was something they called the New Zealand disease. They were afraid that this precedence of an alliance partner selectively not wanting to accept the responsibilities of partnership in the alliance could spread to Norway or Denmark and other places. So it was the precedent angle that got the United States hung up. I happened to agree with this thing. We had certain things to do. We had this "neither confirm nor deny" (NCND) thing.

Q: Will you explain what that is?

MORTON: The way we got into the real problem with New Zealand was that they did not want a nuclear propelled or armed ship to come in. It was against the anti-nuclear provision of the Labour Party. What New Zealand really wanted was to continue to accept our ships here but not one that is nuclear armed or propelled. Well it is easy to tell a nuclear propelled ship but not easy to tell a nuclear armed ship. When does it have a nuclear tipped missile or a conventional tipped missile? And we don't want to tell them. That was the "neither confirm nor deny." When a given ship at a given time was going to a given port, we didn't want the Soviet Union to know that at that point in time it was not nuclear armed because it takes so long to get a ship re-provisioned and the Soviets would have an advantage. New Zealand was asking us essentially, "Can't you just send us a clean ship?" and we are saying, "We can't tell you we are sending a clean ship or not." That was the nub of the argument. We understood that. This eventually got to the point of New Zealand being "expelled" and we withdrew our security guarantee. In other words ANZUS fell apart.

My whole problem with this was that diplomacy failed and much more scar tissue was created than was necessary, when the two interests of these countries who had been friendly for 150 years clashed so dramatically. I think probably the New Zealanders had to go their way and we had to go our way, I understand that. But we had people like Cap Weinberger in Washington, H. Monroe Brown in Wellington issuing outrageous statements when quiet diplomacy would have gone so far. Editorials in the papers..."The Americans are bullying us." This is a little country and here is Uncle Sam just laying all over them. The same thing would have happened, but there is no reason for all this scar tissue. And there was fault on both sides, by the way.

Q: Were you able to do anything?

MORTON: Personally, I think yes. And there were some other people who felt the same way. We worked very closely with our New Zealand colleagues. We respected each other as diplomats. Here is this culture working again. I would come in with the Ambassador and I would read the demarche out and the Ambassador would screw it up and then I would clean it up afterwards. We would kind of look at each other and almost wink. We kept up extremely close and good relations with the Foreign Ministry. I was able in the height of the contact to go in and see the Pacific Affairs officer and they would turnover their reporting files from their embassy so that I could report on events in some of the islands in the Pacific. Our horns were locked in this battle.

So, I think some of us, and people said that when I left there that the trust was there and that we never during the worst of these things lost our professional relationship and courtesy. I was very close friends with a lot of journalists who said the same thing at least at the working level of the American embassy. H. Monroe Brown was a laughing stock of the place. I will tell you one very funny story.

Yes, I think we did do something, but at the official level, scar tissue and it shouldn't be there.

Q: But again this often happens, at the official level you have to keep your cool while the political people, you might say, sound off.

MORTON: Yes, and again a good diplomat on either side understands the institution with which they are dealing. They knew about H. Monroe Brown and why he was there. They knew what Casper Weinberger was like.

The Prime Minister at that time was David Lange, a fascinating character. There have been books about him. He was one of the most witty men I have ever seen and also one of the best debaters which is why he rose to the top in New Zealand politics. Their parliament is strictly hard nose debate. In a press conference one time he was asked about H. Monroe Brown's latest outrageous statement. The guy just shot from the hip. A little background. H. Monroe Brown was a cattle rancher, but he was also a horse breeder and he had a horse that he ran in the Melbourne Cup, which is one of the biggies in Australia.

The horse's name was "Lack of Reason." Back to the press conference...some one said, "Prime Minister Lange, what do you think of H. Monroe Brown's latest comments about your comments on such and such?" He said, "Well, what do you think about a guy who names a horse after his country's foreign policy?"

Q: Well, you left there when?

MORTON: I was there for three years and that is when we worked all the way through that crisis, it is still going on.

Q: Was Brown there the whole time?

MORTON: No. H. Monroe Brown finally left, he didn't want to go. He was replaced by a career Foreign Service officer, Paul Cleveland.

Q: Did you get any feeling why Paul was sent?

MORTON: I am not sure why he was sent. People in the embassy had some problems with Paul as well. We were so happy that a career guy was coming. However, we felt we got a whole new set of problems because Paul came and felt that he could solve the problem, that it had not been worked properly. We, in our opening briefing said, "Hey, there is a real problem here. We don't think it is going to be easy to switch the people of New Zealand around no matter what kind of public education problem we use." I think Paul later on realized that we were speaking the truth and there wasn't much to be done until there was a change of government or the Cold War melted down. Now NCND is dead. Bush has declared an end to that. But in many ways the problems with New Zealand still remain because they still have the law on the books that the Labour government passed.

Q: Did we just not send ships there?

MORTON: We never sent a ship in.

Q: Did we cut out anything else?

MORTON: Oh, we cut out a lot of things. One time, shortly after we slapped them in the face and said they were no longer in ANZUS, the Canadian government was celebrating, I think the 50th anniversary of their Navy and Australia and New Zealand sent ships. The Australian ships docked in the Navy place in San Diego and got refueled. The New Zealand ships went to the commercial port and paid going commercial rates. It was just that kind of thing. And, of course, that kind of pettiness just drove the Kiwis wild that Uncle Sam was doing this. There was never anything terribly serious. They couldn't participate in maneuvers, they didn't get a cut rate on ammunition and all that kind of stuff. By that time New Zealand said that it was foolish for this country way down here in

this corner of the world with 3 ½ million people to have armed forces anyway. So that played into the hands of Labour.

Q: So then you left when?

MORTON: In August, 1987. That was my swan song. I left the Service at that particular time.

Q: Jim, it is moving on into the evening, but still I have you here. Will you talk a little about your training of foreign diplomats and your impressions of some places, because this is well within our theme of foreign affairs?

MORTON: I love doing it and came to it in a rather strange way. I was married to a Foreign Service officer. She was assigned to Toronto, so I sort of hung up my spikes and trotted off to Toronto where I started doing research on a book that I am still working on. At that time I got a call from the Foreign Service Institute because I had blipped up on the screen because I had Pacific experience and some training experience. The Pacific experience being in New Zealand where my portfolio also included traveling to a lot of the island countries and reporting on developments there. The training experience was from FSI that we talked about earlier. They had just lost someone and they needed a replacement to run this program called the Micronesian Diplomatic Program, which was for these two new countries that had come into existence when the trusteeships were terminated during Ronald Reagan's time. So, essentially we took over the training of their new diplomats.

This is a program that is still going on today which is funded under the compact of free association. We had a core of about 30 diplomats from each of these countries and we were trying to enhance their skills. At the same time, and the reason we are in Bishkek tonight is that the Cold War was melting down and countries were coming in and suddenly it was fashionable to ask Americans for help in training their diplomatic personnel.

It is one of the things we don't realize because FSI often is perceived in Washington...most Foreign Service officers don't want to be caught dead at FSI. It is almost like being in the consular cone or administrative cone. If you go over there it inhibits promotion. We don't need training. We are great Foreign Service officers. But foreign governments recognize it as probably one of the premier diplomatic training institutions in the world...languages and many other things. So they came to the Institute and were looking for training.

Just as an example of a country that looked for it was Albania, where I ended up last January. Here is a country that had something like 180 to 300 diplomats and only two survived from the Enver Hoxha regime. So they just went out and found people who spoke English...engineers, philologists, sociology majors, whatever...and said you are diplomats. We have been working essentially with these new countries. Bulgaria was

included at that time. Now we are doing a lot of the states in the former Soviet Union. We sit here in Kyrgyzstan tonight. Some colleagues trained in Kazakhstan next door a couple of weeks ago. We almost did Belarus, but that got canceled. We will be doing the Ukraine. And then we will be doing a big show in Washington in January for people all over the CIS, if they are still using that term. There are requests in from all over the world now. Persian Gulf states...Oman, Bahrain. From India. It is amazing some of the governments that have looked for some kind of training from FSI. I think by in large the training will be limited to former parts of the Soviet Union.

Q: When you are talking to Albanians, or Slovaks or as now Kyrgyz, what are the main things you are trying to inculcate in the school?

MORTON: One thing we are not trying to teach them is the American way. What we are trying to inculcate in them basic diplomatic skills. There has always been a great debate of what you try to teach a diplomat and what a diplomat needs. I say that once you go much beyond three weeks in the classroom that is it. I mean, you have to get out there, on the job training is so important in diplomacy. Is a diplomat born or is he made? I think to some extent he is largely born and then there is some training you can give to enhance that individual's performance. So we just do very basic stuff that we think is important for someone who can start functioning at their first overseas assignment. That is really what we are pointing them towards. So they can get out there and function. I look at diplomacy as a culture and we are trying to teach them the language of the culture, the behavior of the culture...that includes protocol, etc...and what tools are needed out there...such as how to report analytically, how to record diplomatic conversations and commit them to paper and transmit them...

Q: Memorandum of Conversation.

MORTON: Yes. Diplomacy is the art of precise exchange of information, that nuances can be deadly and can cause misunderstandings that are amplified and can lead to crisis, etc. We try to emphasize that. We talk about how diplomats exchange information...Diplomatic Notes...and proper forms. And a little bit about the importance of representation, of making contacts, of the fact that they are out there pursuing the national interests of their country, and how they go about doing that and how important it is to establish a good network of contacts so that it makes the reporting job easier, that they are representing their culture, their country, etc.

So we try and create a diplomat who is prepared to go out and pursue the interests of their country. We also try to get them to define what those interests are. A lot of diplomats I have talked to get out there and say, "Why am I here, other than to go to cocktail parties and chat with people? What am I supposed to be doing?" The diplomatic function is always one that has limited resources and it is one where it is terribly difficult to manage because you have these little outposts around the world with a few people at each one. We try to express how important effective management of this function is and how all these scarce resources must be effectively utilized.

Q: Could you give any stories or characterizations of...let's see you have done Albania, Slovakia, and the Micronesians?

MORTON: And I have also trained diplomats from a number of Pacific islands as well in a different context.

Q: Are there any characterizations that you have seen that may have set some of these people apart, but also any stories?

MORTON: I think by in large every experience to date I have had the feeling when I am going into these groups that I might be pitching the course at too low a level. That I might be insulting their intelligence. And then I find that they need the basics wherever I have been. Slovakia...a very intelligent group of people, but they didn't have a feel for the rules of the game. We would talk about the Vienna Convention and nobody seemed to know how to read and interpret that document and it is an extremely good and concise document. It is amazing how well it has held up over time. By in large most of them come up and say, "We are so tired of theory and finally we find something that is practical." Again, as I said, we use this hands on approach and people seem to appreciate that, although it takes them a little getting used to.

Q: Before we started tonight's conversation we were all talking among ourselves about how often in diplomatic training in other countries there is a heavy emphasis on international law. We had at least three people with a good hundred years of experience here and you asked the question how much do we use international law. The answer was, "Damn little." As a necessity we turn it over to experts. It is almost as though they don't know what to do with these guys so they make them study international law.

MORTON: I have tried since I have been doing what I am doing for the last five years, to answer that eternal question. What the hell does it take, what do you need, what are the rational components of a course that will train a diplomat? That is to say getting a diplomat at some kind of basic level. I mean, the ideal time to train a diplomat is before they go to their desk. But most of the people we find show up for work and are shown to the desk and they then learn things as they rise, if they learn them at all. We are trying to put this in context before they get there.

But we keep hearing that this diplomat has gone to training in Malaysia or this one has gone to Leeds or this one has gone to this school or this one has gone to the Fletcher School. They put them in at graduate level courses and they come out with their eyes glazed and say, "Wait a minute. We need some stuff to help us do the job." So many times when they say they have diplomats and somebody says to design a course for them real quick, they throw in huge chunks of international law. And my question is an honest one and an innocent one. How often do you need this and why waste time? There are other things that they could be doing than international law. I don't have a clue what international law is except some of the basic conventions, and the Law of the Sea and

things like that. That is for experts. If you need help, which you don't often need in day-to-day diplomacy, then you go to your experts.

Q: In fact it is dangerous to think you know.

MORTON: Exactly. As a matter of fact, the Schaufele case and the bit about the seabeds, etc. it was for an international lawyer, not a diplomat...Schaufele learned, he became an international lawyer on that day and he should have stayed out of it and said, "That is a very tricky legal question." The only point is that I am fascinated with the continuing debate of how you train a diplomat. I am still looking for the right answer, but international law is not something you want to put into most curriculums.

Q: Well, why don't we close at that point.

MORTON: I think that is an excellent idea.

Q: That's great.

MORTON: Okay.

End of interview