

Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

EDWARD R. PIERCE

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

[Note: This interview was not edited by Mr. Pierce]

Q: Today is August 12, 1997. This is an interview with Edward R. Pierce. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training. I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Why don't we start? Could you tell me when and where you were born and a bit about your parents?

PIERCE: Sure. I was born in Lexington, Mississippi, the county seat of Holmes County in the Delta region on September 25, 1911. My father was educated at Vanderbilt as a teacher and had come down to Lexington on assignment after graduating from Vanderbilt. He headed the school system in Lexington. He met my mother, who was the daughter of a prosperous doctor, Dr. Watson, who was also a cotton man and quite well off. They got engaged. My father comes from a missionary family. His parents had served in India before as missionaries, but it was in the family blood, sort of.

One of his brothers, Uncle Harry, was offered a job in the big education program that the United States was just starting in the Philippines, after we acquired the Philippines. So here was the offer that was made to my father by his brother: "Come on with me to the Philippines for two years as a teacher," and he had that experience. Anyway, he went. But he was engaged to my mother. He came back in about a year, he didn't stay there two years. But he did have that experience. He came back to Lexington and practiced law. Actually, he wasn't too fitted for it and he shortly moved up to Washington, D.C. [About the time] World War I [broke out], he took and passed the Foreign Service exam and was appointed as a consul or vice consul, I forget the title. He was sent up to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada as consular officer. The only thing was, that he liked it, but they had been married for quite a few years, and had six children, of whom I was the fourth. My younger sister Alice was born in Canada. So there he was with seven children, and the pay, you know yourself, in those days... was particularly [skimp]. So he gave it up, after four years or less and came back to Washington and

worked in the U.S. Patent Office. He had a good background for that. Everything went along quite well. Except, by the time he was early fifties, he had terrible asthma, which ran in the family. He really was just knocked out and couldn't work.

Well, by that time the family situation was that we had lived very briefly in Washington, after coming back from Canada, then moved out here to Cherrydale, Virginia, briefly, and then right here to Falls Church. I've lived here ever since. Of course, I've traveled a lot, been here and there, but I grew up right across Route 7, where you see the tall trees, that's now Falls Church City Park. That was our home, and later on, [I bought] this place. Actually, I've lived in Falls Church since 1923.

Q: Goodness. You went to school here?

PIERCE: I went to school in Washington. Because with my father working for the government, you were permitted to go to D.C. schools in those days. It was a pain in the neck, sort of, because of [traveling back and forth], but my mother and father thought it was beneficial because the schools were better. I went to school in Georgetown, grade school, then to Western High School, now Duke Ellington School for the Performing Arts, and I managed to skip two grades in grade school. I graduated from high school early, I was 16. I went over to Baltimore. I was reading Bohlen's book, by the way, he mentions that after he got out of Harvard he went on a tramp steamer, and went around the world. Most people don't know that about him, I didn't, either.

Q: We're talking about Charles Bohlen and his book, Eyewitness to History.

PIERCE: I spent four months on a U.S. Shipping Board ship out of Baltimore, went across to the British Isles, and back, very slow ship, a freight ship. I didn't find out until I retired many years later, that that was the beginning of my government career. Because the program of hiring young American guys was to beef up American-trained seamen. Hopefully one would stay in and rise on up to captain. Of course, I only made that one trip. I came back to Washington, went into a job as a messenger in the U.S. Patent Office where my dad had worked.

Q: When did you go to the Patent Office?

PIERCE: That was 1928-29. I made the voyage in 1928. I was in the Patent Office in 1929. I was 17 by then. Then, you get one of those big jumps in pay if you move from one job to another. I think it was about \$300 a year. I moved up to the State Department. I just simply heard a rumor, from some of the guys in the Patent Office, or some of the other messengers, that they were hiring people at the State Department. I just stopped by there one day, went in, asked for a job, I got it. As a mail-room messenger. You can't get much lower than that. I have to say I'll never forget how impressed I was by going in the front entrance.

Q: This is what later became known as the State-War/Navy building.

PIERCE: The enormously ugly, but very nice old building. Next to the Patent Office.

Q: It's now the Executive Office building next to the White House.

PIERCE: So I walked down the hall, filled out the necessary forms, and I got a job within a couple of weeks. Much simpler in those days. There were less than seven hundred people on the payroll in the Department of State, I'm not [counting] the Foreign Service [officers], when I got on the job. So impressive with all those portraits on the walls. Well, that was the beginning of my employment [with] the State Department.

Q: When you were a messenger did you see Secretary Hull?

PIERCE: Hull came later.

Q: Who was the Secretary when you were there?

PIERCE: Kellogg. Incidentally, the War Department had offices in that building, too. But, sure I saw everybody. As a messenger, and also as a rather brash young kid who had taken that trip to Europe, I didn't feel...I'll tell you the honest truth. My father being incapacitated had a lot to do with my personal attitude in employment and work and everything else. My brothers all went to work, too, and my older sister, we had to keep the family going. That makes you sort of independent. That sort of influenced my attitude. But now that I look back on it, it was absolutely fortunate because I could have wound up in something quite different and not really as interesting.

Q: What was the atmosphere in that building at that time?

PIERCE: At the time I went in, it was very dignified and impressive. It was considered if you were going to be in the Civil Service clerical, administrative, and fiscal ranks [CAF] if you were going to be in CAF, it was considered the best place in Washington to be for prestige, not necessarily for money. But it carried a lot of prestige, because the personnel people rejected 19 out of 20 people that came in looking for jobs. The atmosphere was also very stratified. In this sense: That the amalgamation of consular and diplomatic Foreign Service people came I think, in 1924.

Q: 1924, the Rogers Act.

PIERCE: Well, this was after 1924, but the strata system was still in effect, very much so. Up at the top were the really big shots, the Secretary and the Under Secretary, and the Assistant Secretaries. The desk people in the geographic divisions who had to deal with foreign embassies in town, and then overseas and all that. Well, they were one group of people. Then under them, next strata, were the junior Foreign Service people, still Foreign Service, who held other jobs in the geographic divisions, mostly. Then you had the clerks and accountants, and what not. It really worked that way because in that building, you could go from the absolute bottom up and you'd be going up by grade all through [school].

The atmosphere was really dignified. It wasn't particularly warm because there was still this...and if you were perceptive and at all inclined to be a little bit rebellious...that's the thing about it... They had an actual Departmental memorandum not long after I came in there that said...summertime came, or something...didn't have air conditioning in those days, they had those big fans..."Gentlemen and clerks will keep their jackets on, or something, during working hours." They actually had that memorandum. They were making that distinction between "gentlemen" and "clerks." Under the circumstances, I'm not surprised, but it's something you would notice.

Q: Were there many women working there?

PIERCE: No. Well, I'd have to say that women had begun to make quite an appearance. Of course, there weren't any on board that ship I was on and there were practically no women working in the Patent Office. That was mostly technical stuff, practically all men. In the State Department, as soon as I got promoted up a little bit out of the mail room, up to the first floor where there was the Division of Foreign Service Administration, a man named Herbert Henksler was head there for many years, there were women, I'd say, at least 40%. The confidential receptionist and chief secretary was a lady, Betsy Bell Lawtons, I knew her a short time. Incidentally, we had two Afro- American older men sitting around outside in the little office, they were the messengers. I had been a mail-room messenger myself, working out of the basement. These two elderly men, and they were both really fine... I remember them, William and Henry. I never did know their last names. They were fine-looking men, they had been in the government service for many years. They came to work every day dressed properly. The one thing about them, they weren't very fast carrying out messages. When you sent William or Henry out, you might not see them for an hour or two. Even if it was just across the street. Why not, that's the way they did things in those days. We'd look upon it now as sort of quaint. But it worked fine.

Q: When you moved from being a mailroom messenger to being a division messenger, what were you doing then?

PIERCE: The main places I had to go...and, incidentally, in between any trips I made as an actual foot messenger...I had a desk of my own. The mail room messenger who had taken my place would come by there on his rounds pushing a cart as he did for two floors, I think somebody else did the other two. He would leave a bundle, pouch of some kind, with all the mail that had come in that could be tracked down to people who were home on leave from overseas.

Because the way things worked... say, you were coming in from the Bahamas or somewhere, and you were going to be on a couple month's leave. You came into room 115, which was a famous room, because everybody had to go there. When they first arrived in the building they would take that right-hand corridor going down along 17th Street to the absolute end. Down there was room 115, Department of Social Administration. In that room perched on a big safe they had a great big, like a hotel register, only very elaborate. Big heavy book, you know. You were coming in, a Foreign

Service person of any rank, ambassador on down, you were supposed to go to room 115, check with Miss Dix, she was the person who had been there so long, my boss, and sign the register.

On that register it was like that form you just showed me, only it showed more information, your name, your rank, where you came from, what post, your home address, your immediate relatives for the next several weeks, anything to help forward mail to you. It was my job to take that information daily off the register, and I had a card index on the desk, which I inherited from whoever had it before, which had a card in there for everybody in the Foreign Service. Or if it wasn't there, you created it. When a piece of mail came in you could handle it as well as you could. Sometimes there were pieces of mail that really had some terrible things happen to 'em...back in the States...and mail had to go all the way out to Istanbul or something...it happened. [My duties also included] any special trips that the chief, Mr. Henksler, or Miss Dix, or anybody wanted me to take. I had to go out to the White House fairly often to pick up various things. In those days the grounds weren't even sequestered. You could walk through there going from the White House and if you did it enough, the guards knew you and waved at you. Also, if you were an employee, like I was, you'd go into the bottom, there was a bottom part there, that's where I really went frequently...but it was very simple. They had security, but it was only after you passed the steps and you could wander on down, have lunch down there and walk back out and walk through. Long time ago. You can ask me a question, I'm kind of rambling on.

Q: No! We're trying to capture the feeling for the period.

PIERCE: It was a help that this was between wars. I went in there, I'd say, July 1930.

Q: So this would be under the Hoover Administration?

PIERCE: Exactly. The salaries, of course, were strange according to modern standards. First job I had in the government was \$600 a year. Pay raises were \$720, \$800, ridiculous, you know, really, but they meant something.

Q: The dollar went farther.

PIERCE: When I got a little further along, up there in FA as we called it, Foreign Administration...some were good friends of mine and we used to play softball together and what not. These guys were grade 5 in the clerical scale. They were making about \$2,000 a year and raising families. Northeast Washington was completely filled with government employees of that type. Guys who went to Eastern High School and all that. \$2,000 a year! \$2,600 was the next raise, then went up to \$3,200, then on up. Division chiefs like Mr. Henksler, they got about \$6,500.

Q: At that time how did you feel about overseas work? Your father had been in the Foreign Service and did you have a hankering towards this?

PIERCE: I didn't. I was dead against it because I thought it hadn't turned out well with my dad. Because now, I realize, what an actually foolish thing he did going on such a slim financial status. It was just a bad set up. I just had landed there by chance, really.

Q: So this was not any attempt to replicate your father's...

PIERCE: No. It evolved for me into a very interesting career, really.

Q: Were you there when the Roosevelt Administration came in. This would be March of 1933.

PIERCE: Of course, I was there. By that time I'd been there...'33...I'd be 23 years old. I'd been there four years.

Q: I was wondering, first place you had two things going. One, you had a new administration, a much more active one. Two, you had the Depression which was on. How did this effect you?

PIERCE: Immediately they put in an economy move, first, before there was any expansion of any kind. They had a 15% reduction in government pay for a year or two. We had to take that, but of course, you lived through it. With the Roosevelt Administration, Cordell Hull became Secretary of State. He was a man that we used to see...very nice, gentlemanly man. Tall, dignified, he was sort of distant. He wasn't any back slapper, or anything like that. So there wasn't any change in the attitude of the second floor, that's where all the big shots were, towards anybody else. As the Depression began to wear off and things got better, it seems to me, looking back... Of course, the whole city was affected and the whole government... Well, a change in attitude. There was more opportunity, we could feel it.

There's another thing to consider. When I first got on the government payroll, there were only five or six major departments. State was considered number one. Possibly the War Department, it wasn't Defense, it was War Department and the Navy Department, might be two, I don't know. Then on down to Government Printing Office. With every advance in science that has occurred, major change, you had a government agency set up to take care of it. Now there's hundreds. But in those days it was a one-ended street city, Washington was.

I went to high school, and I later went to night school, went to Strayer Business College, learned to type, some short hand. That's what really got me started, because it was a wise move. I went to George Washington University at night. I finally got a degree in government affairs. Which really didn't mean much except it would be on your resume and make you eligible for certain jobs. But I never really got a job because of that. I'm trying to make the point that the government blossomed out. People, I guess, who had really regarded it as just a last resort, to make a living, started coming in and doing a lot of things. Roosevelt and his wife really revolutionized, of course we all know now, many things and he carried us through World War II, of course.

Incidentally, just for a human interest thing, starting when I was a mail room messenger, I used to fill in occasionally for the guy who [delivered to] the top two floors. Up there on the fourth floor, on the side toward the White House, was where the Communications Division was. There was a legendary man up there, really fine man, David Salomon. He had been there an awfully long time. Worked his way up as chief of the division. That division handled all files and records, permanent files and records. Also coding, the codes. Dave Salomon, his office was up there on that side... Mrs. Roosevelt was a good horseback rider and she was having horses brought to the west lawn of the White House several times a week and different people would go with her. She would mount up there and go off down to Potomac Park and then come back. Well, it became a habit...she was very friendly, and she discovered somehow, or somebody told her, there up on that fourth floor every time you're down here getting ready to go or coming back there were these cooped up people up there peering out the windows at you and waving. So every time she did that... making those horseback forays...she was very nice. Looking down...you'd see her on that horse, she was in riding clothes, she looked good in riding clothes, tall lady. She'd wave up there, you know...at the windows...all these code clerks and file clerks, and me included, would be looking down and waving at her, it was very nice. It's just so different now, to think about that happening.

Q: While you were in the State Department were you beginning to get a feel for the world, places to go?

PIERCE: Absolutely. That work I was doing. Meeting people coming in every day, checking for their mail, some of them getting upset because the mail wasn't there, or going some place different. Also, the places they came from. You get to know geography like you'd never learn in the schools. But even so, I didn't have any hankering for quite a while there of any service...Foreign Service because I equated it actually, with hard times because [of my father's experience and low salaries]. But, time went on a bit, I got a couple of promotions within that Division of Foreign Service Administration, I got out of that mail job, into the little budgeting office there. They had one for every office. For instance, the one you run, would have to be allotted a certain amount of money. They changed that system. You have to know what you could spend. In that office they kept track, or were trying to keep track, of how we were doing on keeping within the budget. They had a man up on the second floor, Wilbur Carr, famous, and he had this ferocious lady working for him. I never even spoke a word with Wilbur Carr. I saw him many times. But he had this lady working for him. Of course, I was real young and she was middle aged, so I always thought of her as old, but she really wasn't old. But she was really tough. Named Miss De La Schmidt. Do you ever hear of her?

Q: No, I hadn't.

PIERCE: Well, she was the power behind the scenes. Wilbur Carr, for all accounts a wonderful man, he'd keep them within limits of funding. He had the job of going on up the Hill and pleading the budget. The budget was considered to be cut to the bone before he ever went up there. So he always got what he asked for, but he never asked for very

much, apparently. Miss De La Schmidt had so much power, you could easily tell, she would strut around the State Department to these division heads and lay down the law to them on any subject. All we knew was that whenever Miss De La Schmidt showed up on the horizon we all sort of got out of the way while she went in and laid down the law to the boss. That's the way it worked.

Q: As time went on were you beginning to feel anything about going overseas?

PIERCE: Yes. Here's what happened. It may sound strange, but at the time I was pretty athletic and I was a good tennis player and they started having tennis tournaments in the State Department, must have been 1933. I won it three times. I'm not bragging...but this is 1936...

Q: He's showing me a silver cup which states: Department of State Recreation Association 1936 Men's Singles Won by Edward R. Pierce.

PIERCE: I was going to George Washington at night, but the hours were pretty good. There was rarely any overtime. So you'd get out of work in that building and all you had to do was walk three or four blocks up G Street and you were at George Washington University. They had special rates for government employees, night school. So I signed up, and I went to night school at GW and also I used to play on the tennis team. So I got a lot of heavy practice. When this tournament...I'm going to tell you this story because you'd kind of have to like it, it's true. Up in the Eastern European Division there was a man named Robert Kelley.

Q: He was a very famous man as far as his knowledge of the Far East, and he kept exquisite files on everything.

PIERCE: Yes, he was a big shot. It turned out, strangely enough, he had gone to Princeton either... with John Forrest Simmons, did you ever hear of that name?

Q: No.

PIERCE: John Forrest Simmons, really a great guy, was a career Foreign Service officer who moved up very rapidly. He was Protocol Officer in these '30s, we're talking about... the liaison between Cordell Hull and Roosevelt's White House...on protocol matters. He spent most of his time over at the White House. Anyway, he had been captain of the Princeton tennis team. Very fine player. Big, tall man. But here's the actual truth, I was told this later by several people who both meant well, although Jack Simmons never told me the story. Robert Kelley, when this tennis tournament thing was over, first time in about 1933, I guess, was so sure that Jack Simmons was going to win the State Department tennis championship, that he put the cup up. But it says right on it, "DONATED BY ROBERT KELLEY" for this tournament, and the name that is supposed to be engraved underneath when it was all over was "JOHN FORREST SIMMONS." Well, it didn't turn out that way because I beat Simmons in the tennis game. I want to tell you, not bragging, but at my age I can speak frankly?

Q: Certainly!

PIERCE: I made me sort of a hero among the clerks.

Q: I can understand that.

PIERCE: I was told that 50 times at least. We had the final match down on the monument grounds. In those days they had tennis courts down there. I beat Simmons. We had played three hard sets, but I won. I was a little bit younger, I guess I was about 22. He must have been 10 years older at least, more than that, maybe. He was supposed to be such a champion, you know. About 300 people, so I'm told, came down there. I didn't count them. But it made a big difference, it really did. It made me sort of a hero among the clerks. It didn't make me very popular among the big shots. But in any case, the chief clerk at the State Department, a man named Percy Allen, had been there many years screening out clerical people. Because he had nothing to do with the Foreign Service. But Percy Allen's son, Henry, told me years later, "When you beat Jack Simmons in that tennis tournament my dad got drunk that night." I think I understand it now, it meant a lot.

Anyway, very shortly after the tennis tournament, maybe a couple of months, I'm going about my usual routine duties, and I get a call to come down to the chief clerk's office. A man there... Mr. Allen told me that I had been selected to go with the delegation who were organizing to go to the International Telecommunications Conference in Cairo, Egypt. This was absolutely...you talk about a plum, there were people that had been working in that department 40 years, who had never had such a trip. Here's a trip where you get all your transportation, it's first class, by boat, by the way, and you get paid per diem, in addition to your salary. Everything's paid for. It was four months long. So here I am, naturally, I grabbed it. So my duties were, by that time, I had gone to Strayer College, I was an excellent typist.

Q: Strayer College is still going very well. It's still expanding. It's what we would call a commercial college. Several cuts above the normal.

PIERCE: Well, in those days it was more or less confined to shorthand, which incidentally was that old Gregg shorthand, typing, and basic accounting. But now they teach everything. Anyway, I went on that trip and it was terrific. What an assignment. We went out to Cairo in October, I guess. We stayed out there four months. Winter in Egypt, you know? We stayed in the Heliopolis Hotel that's out in Cairo. Everything paid for. It was really not a hard, for me at least, and the others in the typing and stenographic group, about six people. There was one other guy who was much older but was really expert, but he was also a translator, French, and the rest were women. Then the technical people. Senator White from Maine was considered the head of the delegation. We went together on the delegation four months, and he was a really nice, small man, white-haired man, so polite. I don't think he did one day's work. Anyway, when I came back, I decided this was the life. I didn't realize that was Foreign Service at its best. So to make this long story short, when we came back I went down the hall to Foreign Service Personnel and asked

for a clerical job in the Foreign Service.

Q: This would be about 1937-38?

PIERCE: Exactly. It was '37 or late in '37. Wait a minute, I arrived in Moscow in November of '38, so it must have been the spring of '38. Spring of '38. That's what happened after I applied for that job. I may be paranoid, but the assignment to Moscow surprised me, but I knew, lord knows I knew the people down in Foreign Personnel like members of my own family. Had known them six years or more. They had told me, after I applied, they were trying to talk me out of it, "Why don't you just stay here in the Department. You're doing well, considering..." I said, "No, I'm trying the Foreign Service." They told me that the system was, that if they offered you a job, you better take it, because there won't be another one, if you try to be picky. So they came up in a month or so after I applied, called me down the hall, "Got a vacancy for you," and then say "Moscow." I knew enough from people coming and going. In fact, I know people who had gone on in the original group in there in '34. Some of them had come back and they didn't have anything [nice to] say. It was considered, I believe, at that time, the worst post in the Foreign Service. For a variety of reasons. There were other posts, like down in mosquito country, in South America, that were worse physically, maybe, but everything considered, Moscow was the bottom of the pit. They paid 25% extra pay.

Q: I assume by this time you weren't married?

PIERCE: No, I didn't get married until several years later. They wouldn't have sent me to Moscow if I had been married. They were sending only the wives of senior personnel. Like Bohlen, and others. They weren't sending any clerks' wives. But anyway, I went. That had a bearing on everything else that happened to me.

Q: You were in Moscow from November 1938 until May 1940. How did you get there?

PIERCE: That's a good question. Transatlantic air was really sketchy, and besides, when I left for Moscow, Dave Salomon called me up from the code room, big code room upstairs, he didn't have to explain too much, said since we've known you since you were born, practically, I want you to take the Brown code to Moscow. It has to go by hand all the way. We can't use regular methods, and you're the next one going. They normally would use a career Foreign Service officer, but if not, if they knew somebody well enough they would... Anyway, I took the Brown code and went up to New York and got on the S.S. Washington, and following instructions, of course, it goes into the safe. Purser's safe, for the boat trip, but you have to check on it periodically on the trip over to have it absolutely... This story about chains to your wrist... it's not true. The British do that, but of course the British only carried the absolute top secret... (End of tape)

Q: Now you say you landed in Hamburg? That was Nazi Germany.

PIERCE: Right. You could see it right away. I didn't see it in Hamburg, because...got the bag, box, books and everything, very heavy. I got the box out of the safe and went down,

took a train to Berlin. The Department had notified places along the way that I'd be coming along. Berlin was the next stop. Got up to Berlin and I was immediately stationed in part of the embassy. Somebody took us straight to the embassy. I get the receipts all the way, of course. The box was in the code safe in Berlin, embassy, and then I was free that night. Taking the train the next day for Warsaw. I fellow I'd known... coming in and out of the Department, these people...you'd meet people you know... I'd been in a position in the Department to meet people coming in from the Foreign Service. One of these young guys, a real good guy named Rogers took me out to some beer hall in Berlin, that night... and the brown shirts were all over the place. Hitler had been in charge for, what, five years?

Q: Five years, yes.

PIERCE: They were swaggering around, getting drunk, cursing. Nobody bothered them, you know, and that stuff. I saw that in November of '38. It was only less than a year before the war broke out. Anyway, next day get the box again, up to Warsaw, had to go through the same thing, have to park it in the embassy. I couldn't go on a through train because I had to get off. I saw Dave Barr in Warsaw that I was coming. I didn't have anything for Warsaw. Anyway, stayed overnight there. Nothing really remarkable about that, except it's an interesting place. Next day on the train again and up to the border, a place called Negoreloe. It's, I guess, still the border between Poland and Russia. In those days, you couldn't miss it, because that's where the gauge of the track changed.

Q: The Soviets have wider gauges than the Western Europeans.

PIERCE: I think that was to prevent invasions. It doesn't work too well. ...Change trains at Negoreloe and then on into Moscow. Pretty gruesome trip because if I hadn't had that code bag with me, I might have relaxed a bit. I sure didn't want to be involved in losing the codes. So we get up to Moscow and I reported in to the embassy and began my duties there. Boy, that's a story.

Q: You arrived in Moscow in November of 1938. Were you given any briefing when you got to Moscow about security precautions and all that? Was there concern about compromising American personnel or things that could get you into trouble, or things like that?

PIERCE: Actually, no. I knew a lot. See, between the time I was told I was going to Moscow, and I actually left, I knew several people back in the State Department who had served in Moscow. See, the embassy opened in '34, actually '33, but we didn't have anybody in there. They had to staff it. So they sent at least two or three code people from up in David Salomon's outfit. A couple had come back, one of them had quit or been fired, or something. To be frank with you, there appeared to be an awful lot of homosexuality.

Q: It's interesting, and this is what is known today as politically incorrect, but it does seem that within the code business, and the communications business, many of the people who were involved in this were sort of loners.

PIERCE: They were the ones who were good at it.

Q: It wasn't necessarily just plain homosexuality. They were sort of loners. In a way, they were different than you might say the more gregarious other people, which made them more susceptible, I think.

PIERCE: It's a filthy story, I'm telling you. It's never been told. I know some things I'm not even going to tell you. But the reason is, I'm not sure to this day...the actual people are dead. The clock's taken care of most of them. But who's left behind? They're covering up. Now you can cut some of this out, if you want.

Q: No, we'll leave it here.

PIERCE: There's no question...I wasn't going to do this, but I'm going to show you a picture. You can draw your own conclusions. You see, when you talk about stuff like this, you begin to talk about people who are considered to be icons. When you attack an icon, any fool knows, you're liable to get hurt because most people would say, "Imagine that jerk talking about so-and-so." Truth of the matter is, the absolute facts, the truth has been covered up for 50 years. Fifty years. It's still being covered up. Because all this talk about documents coming out into the open, you know, is carefully managed. There's a lot of them that are not going to know.

Q: What are we talking about, we're talking about the '38 to '40 period. What is this we're talking about?

PIERCE: Well, we're talking about flatly, treason. I mean, you ask me if there were really instructions given to me on security, vulnerability from women, and stuff like that. All that's been going on, you know, for 2,000 years.

Q: But when you go to a place where you know the NKVD [Narodni Kommissariat Vnutrennykh Del - People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs - Soviet secret police] was trapping people...I would think somebody would say, "Watch out for this."

PIERCE: It's a very strange thing, and you ask a very good question. I guess it was assumed that everybody knew it. Certainly I knew it. But maybe I was more educated in the State Department world. But the same applies to any country. You hear it all the time. I mean, Jack Kennedy was supposed to have been involved with some German woman, stuff like that. Let me show you this...

Q: You're saying that William Bullitt supposedly selected his staff. He was the first ambassador there, and he had...because I didn't have the tape on...they were...

PIERCE: ...a weird bunch. A couple of them straight off the Left Bank in Paris. I'm telling you! Well, it's a wonder I wasn't stepped on and squashed long ago.

Q: When you went out there what was your position?

PIERCE: I was a clerk.

Q: All right, there were other clerks who were probably putting you into the picture, weren't they? When you got there, they would say, "You know, watch out for so and so."

PIERCE: Yes, right. Maybe it was my fault. I think I sort of felt I knew more than most of them, anyway. I'd been around longer, and from an early age, and so on and so forth. I'll tell you, even if you were there, staring at it day after day, it really doesn't... Certain things happened later on.

Q: What was the atmosphere at the embassy?

PIERCE: Very strange. It was wintertime when I first got there. Gloomy. The sun comes up at ten in the morning, sets at four in the afternoon. Everybody drank a lot. Anybody who was inclined to drink that was the worst place to send them. There was no organized social life for anybody but the top echelon at the embassy. Everybody else was left on their own. I'm telling you it was really strange. Well, I'm not going to say too much, but there were people there who had been there since the embassy opened. You understand? This is more than four years. Moscow was a hardship post. You're not supposed to spend more than 18 months there. How did these people remain all this time? It wasn't because they were forced to. It's because they wanted to, and somebody wanted them to be there.

Q: You pointed out up above....yes.

PIERCE: Absolutely. There they were. Nobody over a period of time...it was like going into the Army and getting kicked around in boot camp...you don't have a chance. They've got ways of making you miserable, keeping you busy. I'm telling you. I'm probably, I'm not proud of it at all...I'm probably the only clerk that ever went there that had the background to be observant and the tenacity to hang on and be observant and the good friends... since I was 18 years old back in the States...to keep me on the payroll in spite of some efforts to do anything at all...disgrace me and what not. These people were vicious.

Q: Let's talk about this. We're talking basically right now...what type of things were happening, socially...?

PIERCE: The social life was left up to the individual. If you were interested, let's say, in ballet, or music, or something, you could keep really busy there in Moscow. If you were interested in athletics, you could go to ski and ice skate, and do this and do that. But there was no meeting place for, say, a young man like me, American, 27 years old to go and meet nice girls. So you didn't meet any nice girls. You met some bad ones. You had to presume that they were reporting immediately to the secret police, because if they didn't they'd be out in Siberia.

Q: Did you have the feeling...I talked to somebody who was there somewhat later and

said there was a hierarchy of I think they're called "sparrows." That if you were at the very top you sort of ended up with a ballet dancer and then you moved down by rank. But you were pretty much aware that these were young ladies who either were assigned to you or if you became acquainted with them they very soon had to make their deals with the NKVD.

PIERCE: Without any question. You had to presume that. But everybody knew that.

Q: Did it make any difference? I would think there would be the normal male/female liaisons.

PIERCE: Absolutely. In these homosexual cases, God knows what they were doing. I had a girlfriend. Not right after I got there. I met her at the Metropole Hotel in a bar or something. I believe she worked for one of the government agencies right around the Kremlin there somewhere. From all appearances, she'd be like some girl you'd meet over at Annandale or Falls Church. But you had to know...it just made sense that...She never asked any questions. But she didn't have to because I would go out with her, and there would be a couple of other guys and their girlfriends, there's bound to be some talk back and forth. You know, they had a number of cases involving these Marines.

Q: We're talking about in the '80s.

PIERCE: Yes.

Q: At that time they had 12 Marines?

PIERCE: Yes. The Marines seemed to think that ordinary rules didn't apply to them. Of course, they didn't. I'll tell you why. Right up to the top everybody was hiding something. A guy like Bohlen, I have a lot of respect for Bohlen, I think Bohlen was one of the very few clean-living men in that embassy, in the sense that he was married. But there's such a strange story about how he got married, how about that.

Q: I'm not familiar with that.

PIERCE: You wouldn't believe it.

But, anyway, it was a very strange setup, and designed to discourage anybody, rapidly. I came in for special attention from the administrative officer, a man named Angus Ward, who was later on glorified for his activities out in Manchuria.

Q: He was incarcerated for more than a year, as consul general in Manchuria, and later ambassador to Afghanistan. He was an odd duck.

PIERCE: He was never incarcerated. Blockaded for a bit. From what I understand now, and I'm not bragging. It was a set up. He was a Soviet agent and they used that stratagem to get him out of nowhere into somewhere and it worked. He's one of the ones they

shuffled out of Moscow. They sent him to Vladivostok and they had to invent an office for him because there was none there. They sent him out of Moscow to save his butt.

Q: What was he doing in Moscow?

PIERCE: He was an agent, I'm sure. His record was this: His name was Angus Ivan Ward. His mother was Russian, came from Canada. Came to the States, served a brief time in the U.S. Army, got hurt somehow on a motorcycle. He became an American citizen, went with the food relief people over there in 1919, got fluent in Russian, wound up marrying a Finnish woman. Then he eased his way into the Foreign Service because of his language, and there he was. He was one of the ones that Bullitt took in from Paris who was still there in 1938 working away. I'm going to find this picture. If I've talked this much, I might as well show it to you. You're kind of going to have to use your judgment. I don't care. Because I know I'm on sound ground.

Q: What makes you think that there were a group of Soviet agents, Americans, in the embassy?

PIERCE: It was discovered. You never heard of it, did you? It's a 50-year miracle. It's the darndest story. If it breaks loose, it might be the biggest story in a long, long, time. But I heard it so long ago that I'm probably the only one still around that really has a good enough memory.

Q: How did this come to your attention?

PIERCE: Would you turn that thing off?

Q: We'll quit at this point. We're talking about your time in Moscow and what I would like to do is cover the A-N-T-H-E-I-L, Antheil, Henry...to talk about that case in some detail. What you know about that. Then I would also like to talk about some of the other elements within the embassy. You say you felt there was a certain amount of hostility and there were cliques and all that, let's talk more about that. Then what your impression was of some of the people there, I guess Kennan, Bullitt, Bohlen. Was Llewellyn Thompson there, too?

PIERCE: He'd gone.

Q: Then more about life there and what you were getting from other people regarding the events in the Soviet Union at that particular time. Particularly as the war started.

Let me make my announcement here. Today is the sixth of April 1998. Let's start. You were talking about this case, the Antheil case.

PIERCE: This whole thing has so many ramifications. I have gotten immersed in it, more or less, over the years. There's one ramification represented by that board there, with all

those pictures.

Q: We're having pictures showing...

PIERCE: That's wartime.

Q: So we're sticking to Moscow.

PIERCE: This is the best thing I have. I wish I had more. We had a fire in this house here about 25 years ago and lost a lot of stuff. This is, as you can see...

Q: You're showing me a picture of the U.S. embassy in Moscow.

PIERCE: The courtyard.

Q: October 1938.

PIERCE: Rather gloomy-looking picture. It was a gloomy place at that time. I'm not in this picture. I arrived there a month later.

Q: That would be November.

PIERCE: November 1938. At this time the embassy had been open, actually working, since 1934. The United States, Roosevelt, recognized Russia in 1933, and immediately appointed William Bullitt as our first ambassador to Russia. Gave him carte blanche in selecting his personnel which was, of course, tremendously important, etc. Bullitt charged right in, [from] all accounts. I met him a couple of times, but at his rank and at mine, it was just, of course, shaking hands at some cocktail party, or something. Very enthusiastic man, a brilliant man, but also very flawed. A fact which was successfully covered up. Like so many things get covered up. This picture, when I got there in November 1938, just beginning the winter of '38-'39...this man was ambassador.

Q: You're pointing in the picture to Joseph Davies.

PIERCE: This lady sitting here in the front row where all the ladies are...How many of them are there...one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight women, and I would say approximately 30 men. Unfortunately, about one third of them were homosexuals. No question about it. She was highly publicized at that time as the richest woman in the world.

Q: Mrs. Davies.

PIERCE: Marjorie Post Davies. Everybody's eating Post Toasties so they know about that. Here's Joe Davies, the ambassador, who really got famous for his book called *Mission to Moscow*. The word is, and I believe it, that he wrote about 10 words in the whole book. He didn't even trouble to learn a few words of Russian. He hated the place because she hated it. From all accounts she had all that wealth and they owned the

biggest yacht in the world, which they kept moored up at St. Petersburg...

Q: "Leningrad" in those days...

PIERCE: ...and also down on the Black Sea at Odessa. They traveled down there. They spent little time in Moscow. This is the group that was there when I got there. I did not pick Moscow as a place to go to. Because I had been in the State Department, as I think I had told you before, for a long time and I know lots of people who had been in Moscow, clerks, that is, who served in that period between 1934 and when Bullitt arrived with his entourage, and the time when I got there, and everybody says, "Terrible place to go to," but I think I explained it to you...

Q: You did go into how you got assigned there.

PIERCE: So Davies was there but this man was actually running the embassy: Alexander Kirk. A career diplomat. Very smooth type of man, who'd you expect to be high up in the diplomatic service, and also very wealthy. His family, according to all the gossip among the clerks... God knows the gossip there was the time for that, because there wasn't much else to do... He was worth \$15-\$20 million. He was the sole heir to the Sweetheart Soap Company, a big soap company out in Colorado. Anyway, here's Kirk, Davies, Kirk... this is Lloyd Henderson. Now there's no reason for me to be reticent about these things. There's a room down in the State Department named for him. I feel that he was a traitor and a spy and a lot of other bad things, homosexual besides. There are a lot of fake marriages in here. Henderson's wife is in here somewhere. Here's Bohlen's wife. Here's Mrs. Davies. Ward's wife.

Q: Angus Ward.

PIERCE: Yes, there is. He's a bully. Everything else, despicable, but there he was. Now he and Henderson got into the Foreign Service by the side door. Which was the food relief program. Angus Ward was born in Canada. His mother was Russian. His name was Angus Ivan Ward. He crossed the frontier into the United States in World War I. Enlisted in the Army, did well, he'd probably make a good soldier, he had some vicious qualities that would make him good at that. He moved up in the Army, became a lieutenant, and became naturalized. He was a naturalized American citizen. No children, it was a fake marriage all over, as many of these marriages are.

I'm telling you the honest truth. These people had no children. Except for the Bohlens, there isn't a couple, and the ambassador and his wife, I think they had a couple of children...nobody had a child. It was a set-up. Regular technique. Ward was married to a Finnish woman. This man here, Chipman, Norris Chipman, was married to a Greek woman. Henderson was married to a Latvian woman but not at this time. That fake marriage occurred later. Kirk never made a pretense to be anything but a homosexual. This is Colonel Thamesville. Called the "Red Colonel" by some. A man named Grumman, etc. Now if I'm bouncing around, and you think I'm too harsh on these things, I'm just telling you what I think.

Q: But that's what we're doing in this oral history. How did this atmosphere affect the work of the embassy?

PIERCE: From my level, which was a clerk...and Ward immediately made me his private clerk, sat right outside his office...but the purpose of that was simply to have a good chance to criticize everything I did. Actually, I was the second best typist in that whole embassy. This man here, named Presley, who was a communist I now know, had lived in Paris on the Left Bank for a long time and was married at one time to Catherine Ann Porter, the author, who wrote *Ship of Fools* and that sort of thing. Presley was an extremely able office worker. But I determined later, just to my own satisfaction, that [he] was second best. But Ward, I couldn't do anything right for Ward, because his intent was to break my spirit and send me home with my tail between my legs.

Q: Why do you think he did that?

PIERCE: Well, do you really want to hear it?

Q: Sure.

PIERCE: It's the most childish thing in a way that you could possibly think of. There I was working in the State Department from age 18, trying to move up from the position of messenger... See that building there, of course...

Q: You have a picture of the old Department of State.

PIERCE: Well, I knew every room in that building from the basement up. I began in the mail room. Where else do you start when you're 18 years old? I worked every floor in that building out of the mail room. We had it split into three floors to service. The fourth floor, we took turns on that, that was where all the files were, you know. We used to go across the street the west wing of the White House all the time. There was no formality in those days. There was hardly any security at all. Amazing when you think back, but don't forget, this was a different Washington. Anyway, I knew every room in that building, every body, practically, there were only 600 people. From Cordell Hull on down. Of course, Kellogg was Secretary when I first went in there. Well, in any case, here I was, a messenger. I worked up a bit. I got to be a clerk, Class One, so on and so forth. I think I explained this to you before. Somebody got the bright idea about 1931 or '32, '33, of forming a Department of State Recreation Association.

Q: I think you went into that.

PIERCE: I went into that...the tennis. You asked me why Ward was picking on me. They ran the tennis, and I won it three times in a row. I'm not bragging, but I was a very good tennis player and besides I was young. A man named Robert Kelly...I went through this before, was great friends with John Forrest Simmons, who really, I thought... the best high-ranking Foreign Service officer I ever met who was a decent guy. The rest of them were snobs, or this or that or the other thing, in my opinion. Kelly donated the cup

exactly...somewhat like that...even bigger..it's up at my daughter's place. Kelly donated the cup assuming that Jack Simmons was going to win it because he'd been the captain of the Princeton tennis team. The champion of the Ivy League, singles. But I beat him, I won the cup. Apparently that made me a great many friends among the clerks, but it certainly made me enemies of a certain group of...particularly Kelly. I found out many years later, from Mildred Dykie, who was the keeper of all secrets in the Foreign Service Personnel Division...one of these nice little old ladies who knows everything, never talks... She felt compelled to tell me years later after I won that tennis tournament the chief clerk, Percy Allen, rewarded me by sending me out to Egypt on a conference...

Q: You mentioned all that.

PIERCE: Yes, I mentioned all that. I earned the hatred of Kelly, there's no question about it. It sounds very petty, and it is very petty, but under certain circumstances it could be a pain in the neck, too. Kelly wrote a personal letter. Here's what happened. I came back from Egypt. I thought the Foreign Service was just the greatest thing in the world, and it had been out in Egypt. I applied for a job right down the hall in the Foreign Personnel Division, and the first thing I know I had gotten a notice to come down there, they told me I was going to Moscow. I was hoping to go to Paris, Madrid, Rio, you know.

Q: Can I stop...[tape interrupted]

PIERCE: ...working right under Ward's nose and it's very difficult, and I'd do this perfect work, and he'd mark it up and I'd have to do it over. I figured out what he was up to and I made up my mind he wasn't going to run me out of there and I stuck around. Where do you want me to go from here? This is the half of the embassy...

Q: We talked about the case...

PIERCE: Antheil? You're talking about dynamite now because that case has never been exposed, and it may be gone too, because the facts are all there. Here's Antheil right here. As usual, shining the shoes of anybody in authority. There's the ambassador.

Q: He's right next to the ambassador, between Kirk and the ambassador.

PIERCE: There's Henderson. This small fellow is Henry Antheil. There's the ambassador. This also is a rotten egg, a mechanic named Hontowski, who was furnished by the Navy. You had to have somebody around there who could fix things. He was an electrician, do this and all that. There's a story about him, too. This is Colonel Thamesville, who became fairly famous. That's Antheil, okay. Now here is a man you may know the name, and you may not. Tyler Kent.

Q: I've heard the name, but Tyler Kent...

PIERCE: Well, Tyler Kent was a spy. Antheil was a spy. I'm pretty sure Morris Shipman, Ward, of course, a couple others in here. Now here is Charles Bohlen, and here is his

wife.

Q: You were mentioning about Antheil and what he was up to.

PIERCE: Here's the thing on Antheil. This is all heavy stuff, but I've got all the papers that I need and I've written up enough of it. Enough people know about it now, it's no big secret. First I'll show you the result of a year and a half...I know some people at State still...trying to find out what the Department...see the Department's covered this up 50 years or more. That's what you get out of the State Department when you ask about Henry Antheil.

Q: You presented me with a form showing he was born 1912 in Trenton New Jersey, his address is there, education, high school in New Jersey two years, languages, German, and started at \$780. He applied in 1934, for clerkship. He was sent there in 1934 and transferred to Helsinki in 1939. He died in an airplane explosion June 14, 1940.

PIERCE: That's a great record. That tells you a lot, doesn't it, unless you already knew a lot. They're not going to tell anything. Antheil, first place, he lied on his papers to the State Department. He never went to Rutgers. He was a high school graduate and that's all. He had no skills of any kind. He was twenty-one years old in 1933. Bullitt was given absolute carte blanche by Roosevelt to pick his own people to go to Moscow and that's understandable because it was very important. He picked a group...I don't know how many clerks around him, maybe 12 or 15, the language people like Ward, and Henderson, so on and so forth. Couple of military people like Thamesville and these guys over here. He reached out, Bullitt, from Philadelphia, reached out and grabbed this young man. With no office skills, nothing to recommend him. To go to this vital place just opening up. Furthermore, after they got over there within six months, he designated Henry Antheil, by that time 22 years old, as head code clerk of the United States embassy in Moscow. Now just on the surface it's ridiculous. But nobody noticed it enough or had the nerve to throw it to anybody's attention. Who would you throw it to when the ambassador himself picked this young guy out of Trenton, New Jersey, pushed him over there and made him head code clerk. Antheil's brother it turns out, was George Antheil, at that time a quite famous musician. Heard of him, maybe?

Q: I've heard of the name.

PIERCE: He was famous. He was a member of the Left Bank crowd in the early 1920s in Paris along with Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ezra Pound, so on and so forth. He was also a communist, which was very common in that group. Even Hemingway, you know, had leanings that way. Henry Antheil got the job because of his brother, George, who was a personal friend, perhaps even a homosexual friend, of Bullitt. Both of them were bisexual. Certainly Bullitt was. Anyway, Antheil gets the job. 1934. Here we are in '38 four years later, very, very difficult hardship post. Everybody agreed to that. Nobody wanted to stay in Moscow, particularly the clerks. They had no life. These people...

Q: You're looking at the women. You're pointing to the women. The wives.

PIERCE: Because I'm speaking about social matters now. These people and the career officers had access to the foreign diplomatic colony. They had, you couldn't call it a normal life, at that city at that time, under Stalin, the purge going on, and people getting shot every day around the corner at the Lyublyanka Prison. But at least they had a life, they even had a dacha, a country estate outside of Moscow with a tennis court, a swimming pool, riding horses, this that and the other thing. No clerks were invited out to that place with a couple of notable exceptions. This guy was invited out there to fix the plumbing or anything...

Q: We're pointing to the mechanic...

PIERCE: That's Hontowski. Antheil was a sort of a mascot of the women's group. He was quite young still, when I got there. He'd been there four years, can you imagine? It was a strange life. Antheil had access to all crannies of it, and he made full use of it. Kent had a good background, well educated. Had gone to Princeton for a while, then he went to the Sorbonne, and he was a linguist, so on and so forth. But he was not in the dacha crowd. The reason I'm stressing this is that dacha features in all the history of this entourage up to this point. Chip Bohlen was an excellent tennis player, I played him several times, always managed to win. He and his wife and a man named Charlie Thayer were the backbone of the dacha crowd. They were all wealthy as far as I could tell, certainly from my standpoint. Thayer, there's a fifty-thousand word story right there. Married his sister off to Bohlen. Did you ever read a book called *Eyewitness to History* by Charles Bohlen?

Q: Yes.

PIERCE: I'm sure you have good memory. Excuse me if I go wandering off down these paths. Listen, Bohlen in his book *Eyewitness to History*...I'm telling you, this is one of the things that set me off on what I'm doing. That book is 50% lies. Certainly the Russian part of it is. Bohlen credits a lot of his success, and he had tremendous success, culminated, of course, by being chosen to sit beside Roosevelt at Yalta and all that, to the contacts they maintained out at the dacha, horseback riding, this that and the other thing. There was a man on the staff of the German embassy who I got to know slightly because I was permitted to set foot on the sacred dacha grounds because of my tennis. I was invited out there to play.

If you recall from *Eyewitness to History*, Bohlen credited a lot of his reporting success out of Moscow at that time to his friendship with Johnny von Herbauer, the German Secretary. He was out there a lot. He was certainly out there...I was only out there four or five times and all the whole time I was there...and it was always to play tennis with Bohlen or somebody else who needed to have a pretty decent player on the court, you know. For instance, Jack Kennedy...we'll talk about that later. Bohlen, cultivated this dangerous, that is, for von Herbauer, that's the way Bohlen portrays it in his book, that Herbauer was actually soft towards the United States and was feeding him all this red hot secret information straight from the Kremlin, straight from Molotov, straight from Stalin. Straight from von Schulenberg, the German ambassador. All of those, von Herbauer

would accompany von Schulenberg to the Kremlin and around. Then he'd be out in the dacha, they'd take a ride in the woods. He'd spill all this tremendously important information. You can imagine at that time I'm talking about, which was '39 by this time. Bohlen would then go back to the embassy, get a hold of Steinhardt, the ambassador, and spend the rest of the night... They worked all night, many times. Of course, Stalin did that, too. So everybody in Moscow did it. I was one of the two secretaries who were good enough to do this kind of work. This guy was the other one. Anyway, we'd type the stuff up, super secret, eyes only, for Hull, Wells, and then very carefully take it, guess where?

Q: To the code room.

PIERCE: To the code room. To who? To this little traitor here. Henry Antheil. Who would then...he coded all the "eyes only" stuff himself, and decoded it. Which as we found out later, at least I've determined, gave him complete control of incoming and outgoing that he wanted. He could actually write cables and sign them "Steinhardt." He could see it on the incoming cable, like he did with the ones that ordered him to be transferred to London, not long after I got there. That's what happened to Bohlen's vaunted cables. I would guess within 12 hours, certainly, actual copies...of course, the codes were gone, compromised up to the ears, and had been for years under Antheil. He would walk across...I've got a picture here somewhere...

Q: Well, it doesn't make any difference because we're doing this on tape.

PIERCE: But I wanted to illustrate to you what would happen. Antheil was a snobby little guy because he had this inside track apparently, with all the top brass. He didn't hesitate to throw his little weight around. He was reputed...he didn't seem to have any Russian women friends like many did, or this that and the other thing. I can't swear up and down. Certainly if he was homosexual, he wasn't an aggressive type, and there were a number who were. Antheil would put his little fur hat on and take an evening stroll across Red Square, you could see from my front windows of the embassy, past Lenin's tomb, then you'd lose sight of him. That's an actual fact. You know where he was going? The British embassy.

I never met the guy. In fact, nobody ever met him, but Antheil had planted the...which had become fact in everybody's mind...that he had a boyfriend over in the British embassy across the river. That's how you got there. How long that was going on? He might not have had such a friend. You see, I never got onto this stuff until after I was out of there. It never occurred to me, but he did brush up friendship with me. Although I know now, he knew perfectly well what was going on, that I was under the gun, and the idea was to get me the hell out of there. There was something about me that worried them. And well, it might have been, if I had learned this stuff earlier, you'd have heard about it earlier.

Anyway, Antheil, would take Bohlen's "eyes only"....of course Steinhardt was a very intelligent man, but he knew nothing about embassy work, and he knew less about Russia. Bohlen was the brains of all of this. Second, I would say, would be Grumman,

who I think was a straight guy. Bohlen, Grumman...Chipman was a spy, I'm sure of that. Ward, didn't get into the political work. He was administrative officer. So on and so forth. There were a couple...Henderson of course would get into these cables. But the brains was Bohlen. Here's the point. These cables, jammed with this world-shaking information that we were working all night encoding, not encoding, but typing up and whatnot, and revising, then turned them over to Antheil. Those cables had been compromised for at least three or four years. The coding meant nothing.

I'm going to jump ahead. To June 14, 1940. Antheil finally had to leave Moscow, because it just became too apparent, apparently, him hanging on there, you know. Which had to be arranged topside, you know that. He was supposed to go to London, England as head code decoder. He altered the incoming cables and also the outgoing, he was indispensable. He had been doing that for years. This guy got sent to London. The linguist, who really didn't know anything about codes. Tyler Kent. Antheil, it must have been a terrific deal uprooting him out of Moscow to Helsinki, Finland which is as about as close as you can get and still be in the Soviet Union. Do you know the Antheil story at all?

Q: I think you told me, but I think it was off mike. Would you just finish this?

PIERCE: Antheil in September of 1939, right after the war broke out, that is, the Germans attacked Poland, got sent over to Helsinki. He'd been there many, many times before on trips. Christ, he'd been in Moscow five years. He got sent to this little legation in Helsinki as code clerk. Here he'd been head code clerk in Moscow for five years. On June 14, 1940, he wangled somehow, a trip across the Baltic to Tallinn, Estonia. That was done all the time every two weeks, I think, they took turns carrying a bag. You know, it's done all over. They used to do it down in Miami over to Havana or whatnot. The plane that he was on, on a return trip to Tallinn, was shot down by two Red Army fighters. Antheil, there were seven or eight people on the plane, was killed in the attack. So was everybody else. Some Soviet sub... There were Estonian fisherman who witnessed this thing, it was in broad daylight. These fisherman rushed to the scene and started to rescue whoever was there. There was no one, of course, but there was debris. A Soviet sub with a great big red star on it surfaced and chased them away and proceeded to collect whatever was there. No bodies, I don't think. June 14, 1940. The news, of course, got to Helsinki right away. Plane didn't come in and was shot down in broad daylight, everybody was killed. Somebody, and that's something I haven't been able to find out, but I'm sure it exists... Somebody or several people searched, as you would if you had been in charge at Helsinki, or me, his quarters to pack up stuff to send home to his family. Maybe you know all this.

Q: No, I don't.

PIERCE: They discovered, and it's incredible, but true, incontrovertible evidence that Antheil had been a goddam Soviet spy for five years, or four-and-a-half, anyway. Okay, what happens? They covered it up. They, of course, knew in Helsinki what had happened. You couldn't have telephoned in those days, I believe, from Helsinki. But you could still

cable. They would have been informed immediately in Washington, the State Department, White House, whatever. Embassy Moscow, certainly. Probably Berlin, Warsaw, etc. They would have notified the big European embassies. By this time Bullitt, who was in on the whole thing, I'm sure, was the ambassador in Paris and considered himself ambassador to Europe for FDR. We all know about that. As of that date, June 14, Bohlen, Steinhardt, the crowd in Moscow, and all these other embassies, top men, State Department and the White House, and FBI, of course, I'm sure, knew that the codes had been invalid for years. Nevertheless, they pulled together in a real tight little ball and successfully covered up the news of this happening. Now, my point is this: It was good reason to do so from their standpoint. There were about a dozen men who became U.S. ambassadors, high ranking. Bohlen, almost made it to Secretary of State. But Bohlen knew from June 14 on, 1940, that all those highly vaunted cables that he based on talks with von Herbauer were false. That they hadn't been secret at all. Nevertheless, he wrote his book. About a dozen guys got to be ambassador. This mystery is perpetuated. Do you know that as we sit here, the Estonians still don't know?

Q: All this is news to me.

PIERCE: Well, it's heavy stuff.

Q: Of course it is.

PIERCE: I don't know what's going to happen to it. It irks me tremendously. I spent three years in the Army, almost got killed a couple times, got a bronze star, shed some blood, I just don't like this crap.

Q: You showed me that...

PIERCE: You think I've got a few documents? Look at this.

Q: You mentioned that Tyler Kent was arrested.

PIERCE: Well, that's part of the cover-up.

Q: He spent six years in a British prison.

PIERCE: Incommunicado. They let him go at the end of the war. He may even have been given money to keep quiet. 'Cause Tyler Kent know all about Antheil. Here's the real point. Kent was arrested in London on May 20, 1940, open and shut. Open and shut because he had hundreds of... They put him in the code room, see? He was a very intelligent guy. I knew Kent for the brief time he served in Moscow, after I had got there.

He was privy to the exchange of very secret messages between Churchill and Roosevelt. Hitler was poised over in Europe after Dunkirk, ready to invade England. Nobody knows quite why he did it. Unless we had come into the war. Strangely enough, many people are still very suspicious about Pearl Harbor, the timing of it. Hitler would have overrun

England, there's no question about it. The liaison between Churchill and Roosevelt was priceless. I'm not saying anything in criticism of that. Hitler would have overrun England and the world would be different today.

But here's the point of the story. 1940 was an election year. Roosevelt was elected in '32, '36, and he was running for the third term in 1940. Never been done before. The isolationists, of whom there were millions, were raving away, and gaining ground, really, all the time, because people didn't like the idea of what they saw coming. Father Coughlin, you ever hear of him?

Q: Oh, yes, in Detroit.

PIERCE: He was banging away, and various other people. Roosevelt wasn't even certain of getting nominated for a third term. A lot of people didn't like the idea of a third term.

Q: Oh, yes.

PIERCE: Here's Kent, May 20, 1940, arrested, guilty as he could be. He had hundreds of cables in his apartment including the super-secret stuff between Churchill and Roosevelt. His aim was to get it into the hands of the isolationists in the States. With the idea, and he was correct, if he could get that info there, that Churchill and Roosevelt were under the table maneuvering, Roosevelt probably wouldn't even get nominated much less elected. So what do they do? They put him away for five years on the Isle of Wight digging potatoes or whatever he did. Then when the war is over, late '45, they let him loose. Kent. He married a rich widow. Family that established Hyattsville, I think. Named Martha Hyatt, millionaire woman, much older than he. He just lived out his life, he's dead now, but he remained quiet. Okay, that's Kent. Okay, that's May 20, 1940. Covered up in a secret trial. Here's an American citizen. They put him away, secret. Three weeks later, on June 14, 1940, what happens?

Q: Antheil was killed.

PIERCE: Murdered. The Russian secret police killed him because he had become very dangerous. That's easy to figure out. May 20, June 14. Here we are, still in June, they haven't even held the conventions yet, political. That had to be kept secret. Those two things coming together would have done this: They would have knocked Roosevelt out of his third term. Wendell Willkie would have been elected. There would have been a turn in our policy, for good or for bad, who knows. That's what happened. Right there in that building, right there.

Q: You're pointing to the pictures of the Old Executive...it was the old War, Navy, and State building.

PIERCE: Yes, they were all in there. On the fourth floor of that building on the side toward the White House is the room that was used for many years by David Salomon, the head of files, codes. I knew him well. He patted me on the back about the tennis, too.

There's a fireplace in that room. It's an old-fashioned building. One of the perks that Dave Salomon had was that gloomy days he could have a fire in his office. Anyway, sometime between June 14...you've seen the article that occurred in the *New York Times*, haven't you? Antheil's death?

Q: No, I'd like to look at it. On this, I'm not sure. This is very interesting and I have no idea...

PIERCE: It's probably outside your beat usually, right?

Q: No. Your oral history will become part of our collection and this will be there. I'd like to go to something else. You were there in September of '39 when the war started. How did that play? There was the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement. How did that play at the embassy?

PIERCE: September '39, summertime of course, and it was more pleasant than usual in Moscow. It was very tense, of course, because all this big stuff was going on. Steinhardt was the ambassador. Grumman had the rank of consular, I think, or maybe a man named Walter Thurston had showed up to be the consular. But the real political work was being done by Steinhardt and Bohlen. Strangely enough, there was a lot of social activity in the diplomatic corps, not that I got in on that, or any of the clerks. But there was a lot of back and forth feverish entertaining and what not. See, nobody had chosen sides yet. After I won that tournament there...I showed you that cup, didn't I?

Q: Yes, you did.

PIERCE: I'd go up to the German embassy and played a little tennis. The Italian embassy, particularly, because Madam Rosso, the Italian ambassador's wife, was a rich American woman and favored American friends, you know, and invite you over. So actually, it was more open, in a sense, than from the time I first got there. Or maybe it was just because I had become more familiar with life there. Anyway, the high-level stuff, of which I was a very close witness because I was doing...by this time I was doing code work.

Antheil was transferred...and there's something there that I am troubled to think about too much...somebody topside among the bad guys...must have figured out that Antheil had become a liability. Because although it was certainly the Soviets that finally killed him over the Baltic, there, the Soviets couldn't reach in and transfer him to Helsinki. That was done by, I think, Lloyd Henderson, who was by that time back in Washington, DC pulling the strings. He might have been the brains of the whole thing. Antheil got transferred at the height of all this activity to Helsinki. I think about the middle of September. The war had started. You could still go up to Riga and then over to Helsinki.

Within the embassy itself it was around-the-clock code work because so many things were happening. In August, too, a big British delegation arrived in Moscow. We know now they were there to sign a defensive agreement which fell through. Because at one point there in September, I remember going up to the Metropole Hotel, which was only

three or four blocks, with a couple of the guys. Which we often did, you know, lot of tension, we had a couple of drinks and relaxed. Von Ribbentrop and his entourage had arrived. While many of them, I'm sure, were staying over at the German embassy, there was also quite a squad of them wandering around the Metropole Hotel. In those Nazi outfits, you know? It was at that point that von Ribbentrop pulled off the coup of the century, diplomatically speaking, and they signed the treaty which started World War II. So, I don't know whether I answered your question or not.

Q: What happened at our embassy when this Molotov-Ribbentrop treaty was signed, or the announcement was made? Did that change things at the embassy?

PIERCE: Nothing that you could...it was already tense and very active. Odd working hours, this that and the other thing. What it did was cut off any travel between Moscow and Berlin and Moscow-Warsaw which had been a customary route. Most of us had come in that way, I had. Other than that, everybody just notched it up a bit. Nobody blew their top or anything.

Q: You said by this time you had moved over to the code room.

PIERCE: I moved up to the ambassador's office on the third floor. I was the second best office worker in that embassy. Eugene Presley, the guy I showed you...how did he get to be number one in Moscow with his background? I'm telling you...the place...the rottenness was back in the States.

Q: What was the problem with Presley?

PIERCE: Presley was two things. He was a homosexual and he was a communist. His background was Left Bank Paris. He was a very intelligent guy. He'd been married to Katherine Ann Porter. Divorced. It's in the records. He was a Left Bank pinko, communist, and he'd gotten his job through some unknown guy, probably Lloyd Henderson or Bullitt, or Ada Burley, maybe. Stuff like that.

Q: I was going to say...but your job, you had moved to the ambassador's office?

PIERCE: Everybody who could read and write and had the aptitude at all was pressed into service in the code room from time to time. Including Tyler Kent. Which is what accounted for the fact that Antheil was able to shove him into that London assignment. Where he wound up in a prison farm. I was working like everybody else, 14 hours a day, maybe. A lot of my work was at night and also Presley because the big brains, Bohlen and Steinhardt and occasionally Grumman would be out at Spaso House cooking up the cables. We'd get taken out there and brought back, etc.

Q: Spaso House being the ambassador's residence.

PIERCE: From the first day they went into Moscow, that's his residence. It was just a frantic situation every day instead of once in awhile. Strange working hours.

Q: You left there in June 1940?

PIERCE: I left there on May Day 1940. May the first. I came out through Kiev. Bucharest, Budapest, Trieste, Milano, and down to Genoa. I was supposed... See, I was leaving. I wasn't going on leave. If I had any factor for suspicion of people other than what I know for a fact...anybody that ever left Moscow on leave and came back...there was something wrong with them. Unless they were a career officer, whose promotion...

Q: This was a big job. You obviously gained the spotlight by being there, so I can see any officer wanting to be there.

PIERCE: Get ahead, yes. (Inaudible) became ambassadors. If Bohlen and the rest of them had faced the music and realized, or not realized, they knew that these vaunted cables over these years, particularly in the case of Bohlen were spurious, had been betrayed years before, history would be different. Certainly their personal careers would never have... At least ten of them, after they got into this thing, which I am going to call...you know, the Mafia had what they called "omerta," "silence." This career bunch of Foreign Service officers involved with the Russian situation rolled together in a tight ball. I'm sure their wives knew the secret. They knew that Chip Bohlen was their leader and they had no idea he was going to be able to jump right into the seat, next to Roosevelt and become as big as he did.

If he had let it be known what had happened with Herbauer and the cables and Antheil and Kent, those guys would have wound up as high-ranking language officers, or something. They would never have had those big careers. They all had something in common. What's even worse besides the career officers, there were a number of out and out traitors from the lower ranks who were let go free, never prosecuted, never tampered with until many years later. The most outstanding one of that kind was a man named Carmel Offie. You heard of him?

Q: Yes. Later, he was Bullitt's secretary in Paris.

PIERCE: Let's be frank. He was Bullitt's bedmate all over the world. He was as homosexual as you can get. I don't think he ever held a woman's hand if he could help it. Very intelligent, very energetic, and a spy from the word "go." I think they fixed that guy up, trained him in America. He was a poor boy from up in Pennsylvania. Father was a coal miner. Nothing wrong with that if you're an honest coal miner. But this guy owned William Bullitt. He lasted way past the wartime. He lasted until about 1954 when the Senator had to go on the floor of the Senate and speak about him. Then they got rid of him. But even then he had such protection that they pretended to harass him. He became a millionaire and so on and so forth. Carmel Offie's the worst of the lot, but there were others. I'm going to tell you something else, which I'd appreciate you'd keep to yourself.

Q: Well, I'd better not, because it will be on tape. When I do this, it has to be on tape.

PIERCE: Okay, I'm not going to mention this other name, then. Shocking, but I'll just say this. You know a lot, I'm sure, about English history. These names don't mean anything to you. Burgess, McLean, and Philby.

Q: These were all part of the Cambridge group during the '30s who joined the Communist Party and became spies for the Soviet Union.

PIERCE: Then defected to Moscow. They all...Philby's still alive, I think.

Q: No, I think he died very recently.

PIERCE: They're all dead now. But consider this. Here's these three aristocratic, wealthy well-educated fellows. Big successes. They were trained, it's now known, by the Soviets. They recruited them while they were underclassmen at Cambridge. They were trained to go into, the British Foreign Office and Foreign Service. They were all more or less brilliant guys, very personable, this, that, and the other thing. Burgess was homosexual, McLean was bisexual, nobody really knows what Philby is. I keep repeating that because it's very important. It's goes all the way through all of this stuff. It's never been emphasized, although it's generally known...but these guys were told "when you get out of here and get into the Foreign Office we want you to be the most outspoken anti-Soviet people around. That's the perfect cover for doing what you're going to do for us."

Now, I don't know whether you believe that or not, but I do. Now, here's the other thing. In the scale of things the United States was ten times more powerful than Britain in those days. Do you think that they're going to take all the trouble to penetrate the Cambridge-Oxford crowd, they're going to leave the Ivy League alone here in the States? Can you tell me one single Ivy Leaguer who ever was identified as a spy, a traitor?

Q: Yes, Alger Hiss was from Princeton, I think Princeton.

PIERCE: Yes, Alger Hiss was a special case. Even he was not accused exactly of doing what these guys did. I'm just saying that there should have been ten times the effort to penetrate the Ivy League and it was penetrated by people whose names I'm not going to mention because I can't prove it yet. But it's all there, and some very strange upward movement was attained by people who never even took the exam. You understand? Where did that protection come from?

Q: Yes. Well, who knows.

PIERCE: When I started out on this story...the reason I started out was I got into this Ezra Pound thing. Then as I accumulated stuff on that it dawned on me where the little dotted lines led, here and there. It begins to dawn on you that they pulled off the damnedest stuff by just swaggering around assuming privilege, and everybody was willing to give it to them. Everything goes to a certain point and then all of a sudden, there's nothing. Well, it's there, and strangely enough...people make mistakes, it's documented.

Q: I want to return...you got out in May. You went through Italy. Italy was not yet in the war, it got in the war of June 1940.

PIERCE: Italy [declared] war while I was still there. I traveled with another fellow, Vice Consul Ed McKee, his picture is around here somewhere. We left Moscow, he was being transferred, too. McKee had been there about three years, he was a vice consul, non-career vice consul and he was more of a career man than just clerks. But even so, he was glad to get out. We got aboard the train, went down through Kiev, all the way, Bucharest, Budapest, across to Milan, then down to Genoa. When we got to Genoa we had our tickets in our hand that we'd purchased through Intourist in Moscow. We were going to get reimbursed, that's the way it was going then. I think it was the *Rex* or the *Count of Savoy*, one of the big Italian ships, was going to sail very shortly. We would have been back in the States, and I would have gone back to the Department and gotten assigned to something else, which I did, eventually.

However, here was all this tremendous hoard of American expatriates who had been living the easy life on the Riviera for years, some of them. They suddenly panicked, because the Maginot Line had been broken, and this, that and the other thing. They were converging on every consulate and on the embassy in Rome, Naples, up and down the line. The Department authorized the American consulate general in Genoa, I think it was Hugh Ramsey at that time, to grab any help he could get, State personnel transiting Genoa, and use them as long as they needed to cope with this tremendous crowd. That's what happened. McKee and I got grabbed and assigned to Genoa and we stayed there until July 1st, or so, 1940. Then we went down to Naples and got aboard the last Export Line ship that was sailing.

Q: American Export.

PIERCE: American Export, yes. *Mexicorda*, I think it was, and went home. I was in Genoa from about May 15 to say, July 1. Looking back, that's a period when Kent was arrested in London and disappeared for five years. When Antheil was killed in the Baltic, and covered up. I knew nothing of it, McKee, of course, knew nothing of it. Guess who showed up in Genoa? Ambassador Steinhardt. What he was doing...I don't know what other purpose he may have had. He had a daughter, she lives over in Chevy Chase today. Dulcie Steinhardt, she was about 14-15 years old. He brought her down from Moscow personally to put her aboard one of the ships for America. McKee and I...now he looked us up in the consulate, heard we were there. Steinhardt was a pretty decent guy. He invited us out to drinks with him.

I recall now that he mentioned Henry Antheil, but he mentioned him in this way. He said, "You guys hear about Henry Antheil?" Of course, we had been doing traveling and everything. He says, "You know, he got transferred to Helsinki." We knew that because he was going in September. He said, "Poor guy got killed in an air crash up in Estonia." So that was that. Do you know something? I think I'm right about this. I never thought of Henry Antheil, heard his name, for 50 years or more. Why should I? I had many things to do. Serving in the Army, getting married, having a big family and so on and so forth.

That's why this Estonian thing really shocked me. It indicates that to this very day...and I've been in touch with the Baltic Desk at State and they don't know exactly what I'm after and what I know and I don't give a damn. Those people...I asked them about this, and you saw it, that paper?

Q: You're talking about 1996 when President Clinton...

PIERCE: No, Hillary Clinton...

Q: ...went to Estonia.

PIERCE: Went to the Baltic States.

Q: Went to the Baltic States. Mention was made of Henry Antheil being the first American to be killed in Estonia.

PIERCE: He's a hero, according to them.

Q: A hero, yes.

PIERCE: It was a public speech, right in front of Hillary Clinton...square in Tallinn...by President Lennart Meri of Estonia which characterizes Henry Antheil as a hero. The Baltic Desk and the Estonian embassy don't give an inch on this because they know there's something fishy. But that's their business.

Anyway, I left you in Genoa, didn't I, 1940? So along about the first of July McKee and I got word from the State Department we could come on home, or rather, the consul general told us we could go. So we took a train down to Naples. The big ships had quit coming into Genoa. We took an American Export Line, *Mexicorda*, back to the States. I go back to the States in July 1940. I look back now and I realize, boy what a tense time that must have been regarding Antheil and Kent for somebody way up high. Certainly Roosevelt knew about it by then and what disaster it would be to have it hit the public. Antheil had already been written up in the *New York Times* of June 16, 1940 as a hero. I got back and took some leave, came out here to Falls Church where I've always lived. Right across the street, we had a big house over there, public park now, called West End Park. I stayed home, played a little tennis, drink some beer. In the meantime...[end of tape.

Q: So what happened then?

PIERCE: I went back into the Department. Stayed around home here for a week or so. I didn't want to stay in the Foreign Service, I'd had my bellyful, from what I'd seen. I just walked down the hall a few yards to Room 115, where I'd worked since I was 18 years old, except for moving on to other jobs. I told Miss Dix, who ran the head office, a dear friend of mine, knew my family, been out here in Falls Church and all, that I want to get assigned back into the Department. I didn't have any doubt that I would be. Why

shouldn't I be? They needed somebody, as it happened...a man named Ansel Taylor from Utah who was in the office for a long time, too, he had to go home for family matters, and I filled in for him during the summer of 1940. That is, the rest of the summer.

Along about December of that year arrangements were being made for me to get a pretty good job down in the Passport Office, an administrative job. I got called up to second floor, where all the big shots are. There was a man there in a special little office, it turned out to be Charles Taussig from New York. Dollar-a-year brain trust man. Owned the American Molasses Company, Sucrets Corporation, a close friend of Roosevelt. Through his molasses business Taussig had become an expert on the Carribean. It turned out that he had been tapped by Roosevelt to go into the Caribbean, bring back a comprehensive report because what they had in mind, was, what's now in the history books, the swap of 50 over-age U.S. destroyers to England for base rights in the Caribbean. [Note: President Roosevelt announced the destroyers for bases deal to Congress on September 3, 1940]

I got that assignment. I cherished that, because I'll tell you one thing, that was a super-secret assignment. You had to be absolutely cleared from A to Z. We went on a destroyer, the *Kearsage*. There were only six people involved. Everybody but me was at least the rank of a two-star general. Charlie Taussig was a close friend of Roosevelt and Mrs. Roosevelt. So anyway, we'd make the tour all through the Caribbean. Then Mr. Taussig and I holed up in the Bahamas, at Nassau, using that consulate general there as our office, that is he. I typed it...took it to show him and typed it...the Taussig Report, which is in the files of the State Department today.

I know now, the whole trip was very secret and very well done but it was just a camouflage, because Roosevelt was going to give those destroyers anyway. But the thing it meant to me was, it launched me off on a different tangent and for quite a while there I really had a good spot there, which could have gone anyway at all. When Pearl Harbor came I had two brothers immediately in the service, and one of them was wounded, and I decided to go into the Army. Which is what I did. I never got back on track in anything like policy-making stuff, although I had pretty good jobs, they were all administrative. So on and so forth. It definitely changed my future. That's okay. I met my wife, had a big family, lots of good luck. And I am still angry as hell.

Q: That comes through. I don't blame you on this.

PIERCE: I'm going to see to it that this gets straightened out. If Bohlen's book was here now, I loaned it to one of my sons, I could show you chapters, whole chapters that are absolutely false, and that pompous son-of-a-bitch got to be what he was, and his relatives need a good looking at. I'm not going to talk about that.

Q: I think, as you say, our interview has been focused on the Moscow thing. Today there are only two people alive who can talk about this Moscow thing.

PIERCE: I'm the only one who can talk about it from my viewpoint. The other one is George Kennan, who is up in Princeton, and I'm told his memory is not what it used to

be. Besides, Kennan is another one of these supercilious sons-of-bitches, who glided along, never making a misstep for career purposes. He knows a lot of what I'm talking about here. Certain things Kennan would jump out of a window, which has been done, by the way, by several people in this horizon. If he knew that I'm still around, and that I have an excellent memory and I'm angry. Kennan and Bohlen between them just skim the cream off this entire thing. Knew all the time, from 1940 on, that it was false. This guy Offie, had Bullitt in his grip like that. Ugly thing, ugly, ugly. That guy should have been in jail or should have been shot. If we'd had him in the Army we would have shot him. A traitor, so on and so forth.

I'm just going to hint at something here. See this man?

Q: Yes. You're pointing to J. Edgar Hoover.

PIERCE: If you think for one minute that Ted Pierce, from West Falls Church, Virginia, can start in the federal service as a messenger and observe this and observe that, and served here and served there, and come up with some heavy stuff, what do you think this son-of-a-bitch knew? He knew everything all the way. You can't tell me any different story. This man ran the United States out of his office downtown, by virtue of blackmail, he had blackmail. I don't want to harp on this, you can cut it out of the report if you want, but I have been horrified as much as I knew from a very early age. I worked on a ship out of Baltimore when I was 16, the Oriole Line, went to Europe twice, freight ship. (Inaudible) up, some of those sailors, like young boys. Well, the boatswain on that ship was a hell-of-a good small man. He and I cleaned out the chain locker and got to be good friends. He gave me a rather blunt but big knife, and he told me to carry it at all times, and if anybody bothered me to stab the son-of-a-bitch and he would take care of him later.

So I knew about things. But the extent of homosexuality, and the influence it had in American history and government has been just... There's a book called *Old Boys* by Seymour Hersch, or one of the Hersch brothers, it's a tremendous book, it's right there. Extremely researched. It's got a lot of the names I may have mentioned in the course of this thing. What Hersch does is dance around the head of the pin, you know. He comes to many semi-conclusions and then he gets very polite and drops the subject. I don't know, maybe they're afraid. This is supposed to be such a great book. In case you haven't read it, you should.

Q: Burton Hersch...The American Elite and the Origins of the CIA.

PIERCE: Part of Bohlen's book is in there, paraphrased, and just as false as it could be. Anyway, you can see what I'm driving at. There's been a book written about Hoover and his homosexuality, nobody's ever taken the trouble to deny it, apparently. But that's not the point. He sat on a period there, when terrible things were being done to United States policy and half the people involved were homosexuals. I was shocked when I realized the condition that embassy in Moscow was in. Half, almost...I, well, I'm not going to do it...unless you want me to...I can show you on that picture.

Q: Well, you've already talked about this.

PIERCE: The thing about the homosexual angle... If you're in a foreign intelligence service and I'm in it, you're Russian and I'm Spanish, it doesn't matter. The first target you're going to go for is homosexuals.

Q: Yes.

PIERCE: Or somebody who's committed some crime. Here we had these people. Not only that, once they get into position. It's like nepotism in a commercial outfit. They promote their own people. They bring in people, they try to seduce and corrupt whoever's there. It's the most insidious thing you can imagine. Most people just turn their head. Just like they turn their head on Clinton and his abysmal character. I'm telling you. What really peeves me off, is so few people get angry. They don't. They're either afraid or they're career happy, or I don't know.

End of interview