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

DEAN RUST

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is 6 December 2006. This is an interview with Dean Rust. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, and I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. I take it you go by Dean is that correct?

RUST: That is correct.

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

RUST: I was born in 1943 in Ohio, near Toledo. Actually I guess it was in Toledo, Ohio.

Q: OK, I want to talk a bit about your family, the Rust side of the family. Do you know where they came from and about when?

RUST: Yeah, Germany in about 1870, 1880, something like that. My grandparents were the first generation born in this country, born in the late 1880's.

Q: What were they doing in Germany?

RUST: I don't know too much about the German segment of the Rust family. I know the ones that came over were farmers. My Grandfather was a farmer and his dad was a farmer and my dad was a farmer.

Q: Well did they have a farm in…

RUST: Northwestern Ohio actually about 15 miles from Toledo. My grandfather never moved more than about three miles away from where he was born and where he ultimately farmed, during his entire 81 years.

Q: What sort of farming did they do?

RUST: Mainly grain farming, corn and beans and hay, and some dairy, some beef, some hogs, chickens. Small farms, not huge farms like you find out in Iowa and Kansas. These were to 150 to 200 acre farms.

Q: And your father was also a farmer?

RUST: Yes, he was born in 1918. He wanted to farm, but we didn't have a lot of land in the family, and grandpa was still farming at the time, so he ended up with just a small farm and worked full time for a small farm implement dealer that sold International Harvester equipment. He worked 45 years for a small dealership about 15 miles form Toledo in northwestern Ohio, mainly selling parts for farm equipment. Somebody would break a part of a combine and they would come into the shop and my dad would provide a new part for them.

Q: I remember reading an account of the support system for farmers which is really remarkable. You know if you have a harvester, you have got to use it the next day, and the ability to have the parts ready and installed and all was one of the miracles of our farming system.

RUST: Yes. When the weather is right, you have to be in the field getting your crops off, and if you have a breakdown, you can't afford to be broken down very long. You have to get your part right away. So anyway dad was not able to farm full time. He didn't have enough land to support a family. There were three of us kids. He never really encouraged my brother and I one way or another as far as farming. He made clear that if we wanted to go off to college and do something other than farm that was OK with him.

Q: How about on your mother's side of the family?

RUST: I don't know as much about them or when they came over from Europe. I just knew that my mother was also born and raised in Northwestern Ohio. She met my dad when they went to school together. They were high school sweethearts. They were married in their early 20's.

Q: Did either your mother or father go to college?

RUST: No.

Q: You had what two brothers?

RUST: One brother, one sister.

Q: Were you the younger or the older.

RUST: I was the oldest.

Q: Let's talk about, did you live in a town while growing up?

RUST: I was born in Toledo, which is where my parents lived when they were young. But once my dad got about 25 or 30 he inherited a small farm from his great uncle that was near where his dad farmed also. So they moved out to a small town about twelve miles outside of Toledo in a rural area of Northwestern Ohio, and that is where he farmed. We moved there in 1949 I guess when I was about five or six years old. He lived there the rest of his life.

Q: So you basically grew up on a farm.

RUST: Yes, until I was four or five we were in I would say a suburb of Toledo, but then he helped my grandfather farm all the time. But when I was about four or five we moved out to the farm and that is where I grew up.

Q: My father lived in Toledo at the time I was born, worked at Hicks and Peterson Lumber Company. Let's talk about growing up on the farm. How was that as a small kid?

RUST: Well I would say my brother and I never took to farm chores very well. I liked the out of doors. We had a big yard and we played sports all the time in the yard. The neighborhood kids would come over. Since we had the biggest yard, we always played football and softball there. But when my dad wanted us to help with chores it was hard. We were more involved in school activities and mainly sports. He had a hard time. As we got a little older, I should say as we were teenagers, we tried to help him out a little bit more, but he was always a little disappointed I think, that we didn't want to help more than we did. Sometimes he had to hire kids from the town to come out and help because he couldn't get his own kids to help him enough.

Q: Were you much of a reader?

RUST: No I don't recall reading much at all.

Q: More sports.

RUST: Sports and math and science. When I was younger I gravitated towards mathematics and the physical sciences, and that is what I was good in. Even in my undergraduate college years I was not much into English and literature and writing was never my thing through my education.

Q: What was your elementary school like?

RUST: Well it was a building built I think in the mid 19th century. It was an old schoolhouse. There were 30 or 40 kids in a class and all six grades were in one schoolhouse. I would say there weren't more than 80 or 90 kids per grade. It has changed a lot now, but in the 50's when I went to elementary school there was just one three level schoolhouse with probably no more than three or four hundred kids total and maybe 10, 12, 13 classrooms. They all played on the same playground. It was an idyllic childhood in many ways. We didn't have a lot of money, but my parents saw to everything we needed. I did whatever I wanted to do.

Q: Did you have a town to go to or was it separate?

RUST: I lived about a mile from Genoa, Ohio with about 1,500 people. It was in the limestone quarry region of northwestern Ohio, and one of the old quarries had filled up with water and was used as a swimming hole. The town turned that into a municipal park, so we spent quite a bit of time at the municipal park swimming or hanging out at the local hamburger place. They also had some ball fields nearby, so I played a lot of ball games in Genoa. Then we would also go into Toledo which was about 12 miles away to cruise around as you can imagine.

Q: Yeah, I know. What about with your family, where did they fall politically or did they?

RUST: Pretty apolitical. I learned as I got older my father was pretty moderate politically. He would vote for whoever he wanted to vote for. No party affiliation whatsoever. If anything he probably leaned toward the Democratic blue collar working man philosophy. Dad was a part-time farmer so he was an independent businessman in that sense, but he was also a blue collar worker. He didn't belong to a union. But he worked for a place for 40 years, never had any retirement other than social security. He tended to side with the little guy, the working man. But there was very little political discussion in the house.

Q: What about religion? Where did your family fall on the religious side?

RUST: Well my father was a Lutheran. Mother was Church of the Brethren, which was a very pacifist oriented Protestant sect and is to this day. Until I went to school, my parents attended both the Lutheran and Brethren Churches. That wasn't working any longer. So they settled on the United Church of Christ. The Evangelical and Reformed Church merged with the Congregational Christians back in the mid 1950s and formed the United Church of Christ. Both families, my dad's and mother's, were quite religious in the sense that God was in the household all the time, and they went to church all the time. But nobody wore it on their sleeve. They were pretty private about it.

Q: As a kid, did the news of the world or the state come in from TV, radio, the newspaper much?

RUST: Yeah TV mainly. One of my first memories of watching television is watching the political conventions in the 50's. I didn't watch much television other than the serials, cowboys and Howdy Doody and all that kind of stuff. But in terms of political stuff on television, I remember my parents and my grandmother particularly were very absorbed in the political conventions in the 50's. But other than that, we got a daily newspaper, but I don't…

Q: The Toledo Blade?

RUST: Yeah. I can't tell you that they subscribed to the Blade when I was growing up, but I certainly know that was the local big town paper, the Toledo Blade.

Q: You went to local high school?

RUST: Yes.

Q: What was the name of the High School?

RUST: Genoa. It was a town of about 1,500 people and there was one high school. We lived outside the town about a mile. The high school was about half a mile down the road from where I went to grade school. The first six years were in one building, and grades seven through twelve were in another building.

Q: How did you find high school?

RUST: Pretty easy compared to most of my college. By that time I had learned to study enough to get B’s in the courses I didn’t like, and A's in courses I did like. Again, the A's came in math and science courses, and the B's in literature and English and history.

Q: Well did you feel you were pointed towards university or not?

RUST: Yeah because I was always near the top of the class. I was usually within the top ten of about 70 or 80 kids. I graduated fourth or fifth in a class of 86. My parents never pushed it one way or another, but neither my brother nor I had any inclination to work on the farm; nor were we interested in a trade. Many of our school mates had parents who worked in Toledo in the automobile support industry, like Libbey Owens Ford, and they gravitated in the direction of their parents. So they learned a trade after high school and didn’t really think about college. My dad was a farmer, but we weren’t inclined towards farming, and so we went for additional education. Since I did well in science and pre-engineering type classes in high school, that is the direction I went initially in college. There never was any doubt we would go to college. It was always sort of a given.

Q: What were the dating and social patterns in high school?

RUST: The basic social patterns at least among the boys were pretty much determined by athletics. I also played a musical instrument, so I had a big social group in the band.

Q: What instrument?

RUST: I played the euphonium, the baritone horn from fourth grade on, and I also sang in choral groups. That also defined my social group beyond boys. Most of the girls I knew were in those musical groups. I dated a little bit but not very much. Some guys were much more comfortable with dating and they went out a lot. I had a much better time hanging around with my male friends. So most of my time on weekends was spent in my little jalopy with my three or four friends just cruising around.

Q: Where did you go to college, I take it Ohio?

RUST: Yeah, my parents never had a lot of money. I worked a little bit, summers when I was in high school, but I had very little money saved. So I went to one of the state supported universities in Ohio, Bowling Green. It was close and I didn’t want to go too far from home. It turns out my mother contracted cancer while I was 19, so I was glad that I was close to home. She died when I was 20. Bowling Green was only 30 miles from Genoa but I did live on campus. I went home every two weeks.

Q: You were at Bowling Green from when to when?

RUST: ’61 to ’65.

Q: ’61 to ’65. What was Bowling Green University like in those days?

RUST: It was about four or five thousand students. It wasn’t big, but it wasn’t real small either. The campus was fairly condensed. It drew mostly from Ohio. I can remember a lot of Cleveland area kids being there. More so from urban areas than from rural areas. Dayton was another area that supplied kids to Bowling Green. I majored in mathematics, and ended up being quite content. There were about ten or twelve of us in my class who decided to major in mathematics. So I hung around a lot with those people. I did a little bit of dating but not much. I was a very studious person. If I stayed there on weekends I studied a lot.

Q: OK you are a math major, an engineering major or physics major. That is a pretty good predictor of where you are off to. As a math major what does this mean in your mind or in your professor’s mind. What does a math student do?

RUST: Well the reason I ended up in math rather than engineering was that I found quickly that pre-engineering courses were too hard for me.

Q: You put the wickley blocks together.

RUST: Yeah, and my brother is just the opposite. He ended up being the engineer. I took a little physics but not much. I focused on pure math, the research math. That was the most interesting to me. I wanted to go to graduate school in mathematics and to a bigger university that had many opportunities. I didn’t really know where my mathematics was going to take me. I was in the college of arts and sciences at Bowling Green, and I ended up with a minor in German. My ancestors on my father’s side were German, and my grandparents spoke German a lot, and my dad spoke almost all German until he was in the sixth grade. He went to a parochial German speaking school until he was about 12 or 13. So German was a big part of my ancestry, and I thought it would be fun. There was no rhyme or reason to my combination of mathematics and German; that is just where I ended up.

Q: Well while you were at Bowling Green, did foreign affairs intrude on you?

RUST: Not much. I have very few recollections of foreign affairs until I was 21. I remember vividly my parents having a discussion around the time of the Korean War. This was in the 50’s, and it dealt with the possibility of nuclear war with the Soviet Union. I remember the Cuban missile crisis and the Berlin crisis of '60-'61.

Q: ‘61 I think.

RUST: One of my friends was a few years older than I, and he got called up during the Berlin crisis.

Q: Yeah, they called up the reserves.

RUST: I was at Bowling Green during the Cuban Missile Crisis, everybody my age probably remembers where they were. So I followed that a lot. But otherwise it wasn't until I got into graduate school that I started to become interested in foreign affairs. I did attend a couple civil rights marches at Bowling Green. I believe it was in '63 and '65 somewhere in that time period.

Q: I take it Bowling Green would have been somewhat removed. There probably wasn't much of a minority or was there?

RUST: No, not that I can recall. There probably still isn't. The social sciences were not a big part of what I wanted to do, but I can recall being shocked at the treatment of civil rights demonstrators in the South, and that might have propelled me to join a march once or twice. But it wasn't until graduate school, the late 60s and Vietnam interposed itself, that I started to follow politics and foreign affairs.

Q: Where did you go to graduate school?

RUST: Ohio State.

Q: You were there from when to when?

RUST: '65 to '69.

Q: So this was a good amount of time. What were you doing?

RUST: I spent about a year in graduate school in mathematics and discovered that wasn't what I wanted to do. I started following political issues more, including at the national level. It might have been Vietnam that generally awakened me politically. But I don't recall gravitating toward foreign affairs, just government and politics generally. I talked to some people in the graduate political science department and they advised me to take a few undergraduate courses in political science, and come back and see them. They eventually admitted me. Originally, they planned to use my mathematics background as a way to help them expand their work in the behavioralist area of political science, because quantitative was becoming bigger then. They thought somebody with a mathematics background could help them. So I transferred in '67, '68 and I got a masters degree in the spring of '69. But I did very little study in foreign affairs. I did a lot of work on the state government level. I spent quite a bit of time in the state capitol going to committee hearings on various issues. I eventually wrote a masters thesis on the national farmers organization, a political interest group among farmers. My grandfather, at that time in his 70s had joined this rather radical farmers organization. I thought that was quite interesting, and so I did a masters thesis on the organization. It was fun.

Q: Well how did Ohio politics strike you?

RUST: My primary recollection was simply being impressed with the kind of detailed work that legislators did. I never imagined that. I spent a lot of time at State Senate hearings. They brought a lot of experts in. You learned a lot sitting in one of these hearings. I became more of a policy wonk as a result of that. My interest was not with the electoral process, but more about how policy is developed and how people weigh the various factors in making political decisions about how best to apply money to education programs, health programs, transportation, whatever it happens to be. I also became very interested in the presidency because I had several very good instructors in this area and read several books. LBJ was president during that time period and a lot of academics loved LBJ because he knew how to govern. He learned how to put coalitions together when he was in the Senate, and he was a strong president. There was a lot of opposition to the war on the campus, but there was still a lot of admiration of LBJ. Other course work focused on Congress, state legislatures, and the role of the public and interest groups in policy-making. Very little on the courts. I think I had one or two courses in international relations.

Q: You seemed to be at the cusp of an interesting and I think sort of pernicious development, and that is the quantification of political science. It seems to have gone beyond belief to this day where there are models and all that don't have any personal standing.

RUST: My mathematics training helped with some of the political science work. No matter how many papers you had to write, at some point they wanted you to do quantitative studies. They had reams of data that you could utilize for this work. So I did a few papers to test hypotheses using quantitative measures, but I never was very interested in it. I became much more interested in simply analyzing a problem and coming up with a possible solution for policy makers. After my masters there was the option of staying to get a PhD, but that wasn't what attracted me at that point. I wanted to go work and become a policy analyst. I wasn't interested in electoral politics. The idea of attaching myself to a political candidate to change the world was not my cup of tea.

Q: So what happened? I mean you graduated, you got your masters and I guess masters plus.

RUST: I completed a lot of coursework. I could have applied for the Ph.D. program and been accepted immediately. I had a visiting professor my last semester who had a lot of contacts in Washington. So when he learned that I was interested in working for government, he pointed me in the direction of the national government, the federal government. We talked a lot. He said, "I think your interests are going to be primarily at the national level, not in state government." He knew several people in Washington, wrote letters of introduction for me and in June of '69 I spent a couple of weeks in Washington interviewing and got three or four job offers. One was in the department then known as HEW, Health, Education and Welfare, one in the Labor Department, and one with the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. That is the job I took, even though my interests at that time had not been in foreign affairs. The thing that peaked my interest was Hubert Humphrey's campaign book in '68, which described his role in helping to form the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. It struck me that reducing and limiting arms rather than building them up was a novel way to advance U.S. security. It sounded very interesting, much more so than the Labor or HEW jobs. The actual job involved doing research in support of the policy makers. I worked in a communications and research shop. We read through classified and unclassified documents related to arms control, coded and indexed them, and provided information retrieval for the policy makers. It was a new shop at the time. My boss, a career civil servant, was looking for young people coming into the government at an entry level who had a little bit of political background and who were smart enough to absorb this material.

Q: What were you told as you were in Washington looking at this about ACDA? Were you told -- go for a big one? Was anybody giving you advice about where to go and what were the opportunities, or were you pretty much on your own?

RUST: Well I relied almost exclusively on this visiting professor's contacts. His name was Dr. Lewis Dexter. He knew someone in the public affairs office of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. This person forwarded my application to the personnel office. It so happens the timing was just right. I was pretty green. I wasn't aiming high. This is a farm boy from northwestern Ohio who is not even sure that he wants to live 500 miles away from home. I wanted to get my feet wet, do my work, keep my nose to the grindstone and we will see what happens. I started at $6,000 a year.

Q: Well when did you start with ACDA?

RUST: March 1970. I was offered the job and accepted it about July or August of '69. But it was a job requiring a top secret clearance, so it took several months to get the clearance.

Q: What did you do with the draft?

RUST: I had been called up for a physical twice and flunked it both times. The first time, in 1966 I believe, I had my physical about a month after I injured my knee in a basketball game. It was still swollen up. So they said, "Well we will call you again in a few months." It was a year and a half later. By that time I had consulted with several surgeons, and I had letters. I had no idea what the letters would do for me, but they led to the basic level physical deferment. Once the swelling went down, it was ok for regular activities. The doctors said if I ever wanted to go all out in a sport of any type, I ought to get it repaired. I was a student. I didn't see the need for surgery. So I never got it repaired. To this day it still gives me some problems, but it was enough to get a deferment. I had several friends who went off, but I was very fortunate.

Q: So you went into ACDA in 1970.

RUST: Yes, 1970.

Q: What were you doing?

RUST: I mentioned this research office. I was the first hired and then a guy from Tennessee joined me. He was the same age and also had a Political Science background along with Air Force service. Lyndon Johnson had begun the SALT talks or Strategic Arms Limitation Talks with the Soviets in the fall of ’69 and then the second round was April of 1970. I started at ACDA in March of 1970. The Office Director wanted to set up a data retrieval system for these talks. We read all the relevant documentation, indexed it by subject, and it was then stored on IBM "punch" cards. The boss wanted a service for the policy-makers to deal with questions such as, “I remember the Soviets saying on this ICBM, intercontinental ballistic missile, they were prepared to consider limitations on certain types of warheads, but I can’t remember exactly when that was.” We would query our indexing system and write up a little report for the policy official. That was the theory behind it. I stayed there four years, and ultimately we did SALT from ’70 to ’74. And ’72 was the first SALT agreements signed in the Nixon administration. The indexing system expanded to cover other arms control issues including conventional arms and nuclear non proliferation, that is preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries as opposed to SALT which attempted to bring down the US and Soviet nuclear stockpiles. I think we had a pretty decent system when we were done. The office ultimately grew to four staff before I left.

Q: Would you explain because people today and in the future probably aren’t going to understand what an IBM card is. Explain what the IBM cards do.

RUST: We started out originally with electronic data retrieval. We would fill out an indexing sheet. You would give the indexing sheet to the card puncher. He had a machine that would punch little holes in these cards which then could be run through an electronic, not a computer system, an electronic data retrieval machine. Basically data would be stored on these cards. He could pick out a data field on the card sorter, the cards would be run through the sorter, it would spit out all the cards that had been indexed for nuclear warheads for example. The cards would identify the document and page number where one could find the references to nuclear warheads. Before I left that job in ’74 we were computerizing it. We were taking the IBM cards and feeding them into a computer, so the data was now being stored on computer tapes. If we had a query, we would write programs and punch them on cards, take them to the big computer room on the first floor of the State Department, and they would feed those cards into the computer and the result was a printout with the appropriate references.

Q: There was no such thing as a screen in which you would look at this. It would be a printout.

RUST: And the printout then would tell you, based on the parameters of your request, to go to document number 1740, page five, and document number 1822, page six, and you would have to go into the files and pull out hard copies of the documents. That was the way it worked up until the time I left.

Q: Well you were there for how long?

RUST: In that office for four years, 1970 to 1974.

Q: Did you get any feel for the process or were you off doing your own thing?

RUST: I'd say we became well-informed of the main themes of the negotiations, as detailed written records were kept which we read and indexed. We read a lot of reporting. That doesn’t tell you everything, but we read all the reporting, the so called Memcons they used to call them, memoranda of conversations, that were pouched to Washington. There were also shorter reporting cables. A lot of telegrams were sent in. The SALT talks were in Geneva and Vienna at that time, usually 6-12 weeks in length. They alternated between those two spots. If a negotiating round was coming up in the summer of ’73, the executive branch would be working through its policy papers in preparation for that round, and we would see some of those policy papers. So we learned a lot about strategic arms limitations and relevant policy options. But we had very little insight into the give and take of the Washington policy process.

Q: Again was there any particularly communication between you or your agency with the people out in the field? I mean did you get any feel for it?

RUST: We knew the issues, but didn't really get a feel for the nuances of the negotiations. My boss spent a lot of time briefing the policy makers on the availability of the data retrieval system. After awhile we had three or four people that started to rely on us fairly regularly. That occurred more between negotiating sessions than during them. After these sessions, the delegation would spend three or four months in Washington. So we were able to interact with some of the policy makers at that time. It helped get us some work, because central document offices are not normally the place you go to get substantive research done. We got exposure. My boss' goal from the outset was to put together some bright people who could read this stuff, understand it, and do some basic research. Not policy options, but basic research. Of course, this exposure also helped all four of us in that office ultimately to get policy jobs in ACDA. The office ultimately went away as technology expanded and the CIA, I believe, set up a larger index and retrieval storage system that service the arms control community.

Q: While you were in this job, did you get any feel for the American style of negotiating and the Soviet style of negotiating, or maybe it didn’t come through.

RUST: I was not in the negotiations, so I didn’t have any direct experience with the Soviets in that regard. I know that some people came back from the negotiations enormously frustrated due to the Soviets' tendency occasionally to reopen something that the U.S. thought had already been agreed. Paul Nitze was one of the SALT negotiators. It was very interesting to see how the U.S. went about trying to solve some of these issues.

Nitze and his Soviet counterpart would engage in hypothetical discussions. Both would then seek guidance from Washington and Moscow as to whether their "straw man" solution would fly. High level U.S. and Soviet intervention in the negotiations was required frequently in order to solve the toughest issues.

I began to understand some of the underlying U.S. bureaucratics, even if you didn't know what was happening day-by-day. U.S. nuclear forces were the Pentagon's toys, and they were very sensitive to negotiations that limited their toys . Let’s face it, the Pentagon doesn’t go about advancing U.S. security through building down. I mean they build up. It is not a natural act for somebody who works for the Department of Defense to see arms negotiations as a way of advancing U.S. security itself. It was simply a matter of whether or not in the last analysis the Pentagon was going to let you play with their toys that way.

After the 1972 SALT Treaty, there was some dissatisfaction on the part of Scoop Jackson who was a hard line Democrat from Washington State. That caused Nixon to dump Gerry Smith who had been in charge of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency during President Nixon’s first term, and who had negotiated the 1972 SALT agreements. Fred Iklé replace Smith in 1973. He came out of Rand and was a very well spoken strategic analyst. Around this time Watergate started to ferment. Following ratification of the SALT Treaties, there wasn't an immediate jump back into negotiations. But the U.S.-Soviet nuclear balance was a big deal all the time because the fear of large scale strategic war remained. A lot of public debates were taking place over what size missile forces both sides should have in order to reduce the risk of a first strike. Strategic and crisis stability were the watchwords of the nuclear arms control cognoscenti. It was a very heady time for strategic analysts. I learned a lot during those first four years at ACDA.

Q: Well did you find yourself reading books by the father of the thermo…

RUST: Oppenheimer? Yeah.

Q: But this is a period of time when intellectuals were, I mean these think tank people were saying OK, if there is an exchange, we will lose 20 million but they will lose 50 million, and that means we come out ahead and so we have more toys. There was a lot of that.

RUST: Yes, I read much about these matters, but mostly internal governmental papers. Jim Schlesinger served as Secretary of Defense in the 1970s, some time after Mel Laird. Schlesinger was a strategic thinker and his ideas prompted consideration of scenarios in which we would fight and "win" a nuclear war. Discussing winning a nuclear war seems bizarre, but the Pentagon's approach to this matter ruled the day. What we really wanted then (and now) is to deter nuclear war; the best way to do that, the thinking goes, is to convince your adversary that he cannot come out on top in any conceivable set of circumstances -- even a first strike by your enemy. The question of putting more than one warhead on the top of a missile raised all kinds of additional questions. This was called MRV or MIRV, depending on whether the multiple reentry vehicles could be independently-targeted. It gave the U.S. more bang for each missile, but would we really be better off if the Soviets followed our example? ACDA was in favor of a ban on putting multiple warheads on top of intercontinental ballistic missiles. However, in the last analysis, the defense Department won, and it was also decided, partly on verification. Because people said, "OK it is fine if you have a ban and only allow one warhead per missile, but what happens if the Soviets cheat? Can you tell? Can you verify that missile that they say only has one warhead, only has one war head, or does it have ten?" I believe we actually proposed a MIRV ban to the Soviets, but the Soviets resisted the degree of verification necessary.

Q: Did you feel part of the greater State Department, or just part of a small team?

RUST: We were in the Main State building, but ACDA was independent by law and thus we didn't feel like we were part of State. Social life was good though. Several people in their 20's in ACDA got to know each other fairly well, there were probably 12-15 of us. We would go to parties at various apartments, maybe once a month. And several of us went together and rented a beach house a couple summers. I wasn't in a policy job; I had a research job and was pretty much a 40 hour a week guy at that point in time. These were really interesting issues, and I loved learning about them, but the job didn't demand 50-60 hour weeks. I had a pretty good social life for a single guy. I stayed up on current political events, but didn't pursue my interest in nuclear arms control outside of ACDA.

Q: So then in '74 what happened?

RUST: The Office of the Director, Fred Iklé at that time, had a vacancy in a staff assistant's job. A staff assistant job is an entry-level job in State Department front offices where they put junior foreign service officers and people like that.

Q: You learn the trade and carry brief cases.

RUST: That's right. Carry brief cases and shuffle papers. They needed somebody quickly because the person in that position suddenly got transferred with no warning. I had gotten to know one of the senior assistants to Iklé in the front office. He asked me if I would be interested in taking the job at least on an acting basis. I said, "Sure." I had been four years in this other job, so I became the acting staff assistant in the office of the director in sometime early '74.

Q: You did that for how long?

RUST: About 2 ½ years, until late '76.

Q: All right, let's talk a bit about Fred Iklé. How did he operate, and how did you see him?

RUST: Well, Fred was known as an intellectual, not necessarily somebody who was all that comfortable in the policy milieu of Washington. A brilliant guy who had been with Rand and had written about strategic nuclear issues. And of course the most important thing going on in arms control was negotiations with the Soviet Union. One of the reasons he became a favorite with me is because after the Indian nuclear test of May 1974, Fred was clearly the leader within the executive branch on nuclear non proliferation issues. While still engaged on U.S. Soviet stuff, Fred saw the spread of nuclear weapons to other countries as suddenly a very dominant issue. Kissinger, who was then the Secretary of State, yawned when the Indians conducted the nuclear test in 1974. But Fred saw this as a direct threat in terms of weapons spreading to other countries beyond the five then declared nuclear weapons states. So he took it on as a crusade. He was tough and wasn't afraid of Kissinger, and ACDA made a big difference in those years (1973-76) on U.S. nuclear nonproliferation policy. Iklé was particularly strong on questioning the role of plutonium in civil applications, fearing that its widespread use even in the U.S. would help foster its use overseas. A stockpile of plutonium, even if nominally for civil use, can also provide the basis for a nuclear weapons program. He feared that extensive use of plutonium for peaceful applications would seriously increase the risk of nuclear proliferation and supported efforts to weigh the pros and cons, along with strengthened controls to ensure the security and safety of plutonium where it was used.

In State, the Politico-Military (PM) Bureau handled nonproliferation. I believe George Vest was the head of PM. Vest and Iklé collaborated quite a little bit. ACDA had much more of the functional expertise that you needed in order to do this nuclear proliferation business. PM and ACDA teamed up pretty well, once Fred got the State Department's attention. As Iklé’s Staff Assistant from 74-76, I was able to see a lot of the policy studies and memoranda that the ACDA Director dealt with. Because of Iklé’s interest in nuclear arms non proliferation, I learned a lot and started to interact with the ACDA policy people in this area.

Q: What was the state of nuclear non proliferation in ’74 when you were there. I mean what did this mean and were there any underpinnings to this?

RUST: Well, between 1945 when the United States developed nuclear weapons and through 1970, that is 25 years, five countries had become nuclear weapons states. The Soviets followed the U.S. then the British, the French and then the Chinese in ’64. The nuclear non proliferation treaty was negotiated in the mid 60’s. It came into force in 1970; that treaty drew a line in the sand. It was based on the assumption that proliferation would contribute to instability and increase the risk of nuclear war. It said "let's stop proliferation where we are." Under the treaty, states that didn’t have weapons pledged not to get them, and to accept international inspections. Countries that had nuclear weapons (the Five) pledged not to transfer the possession of nuclear weapons to others and not to assist others in the acquisition of nuclear weapons; they also agreed to try to negotiate an end to the nuclear arms race and to reduce their own nuclear arsenals. So that is where we were when the Indians conducted a nuclear test in 1974. This test was kind of a rude awakening because people thought that by that time, i.e. after the NPT had entered into force. most countries had accepted the notion that it was not a good idea for proliferation not to go beyond the five.

Q: Was India a signatory to the NPT?

RUST: No. And the fact is that in 1970, when the treaty entered into force, not everybody embraced it initially. Fifty or sixty states joined. Many countries like the Indians said, “Hey, this is a discriminatory treaty... it allows some states to keep their weapons, but it requires others who join it to forswear their acquisition. We are not going to be party to that." Of course, the truth is many countries did join the treaty despite its discriminatory nature, while others wanted to keep the nuclear option open. The Chinese, a neighbor of India, had nuclear weapons. And of course India always followed a somewhat independent path in its foreign policy.

Q: How did we view the Chinese at that time?

RUST: The Chinese were a non-player during the negotiations. The U.S. of course had not recognized "mainland" China at this point and it wasn't even in the UN. The Chinese criticized the treaty as a condominium between the U.S. and the Soviets. The U.S. and Soviets were seen by the Chinese as two countries who were trying to deny other countries the right to get their own nuclear weapons. "The U.S. and Soviets want to rule the world." Chinese propaganda suggested that nuclear proliferation would be a positive development as it would break U.S.-Soviet hegemony. In reality, I suspect the Chinese were more cautious about proliferation after getting their own bomb in 1964. But you would never know that from their stated positions. In the long run, China joined the NPT (1991) and changed its position considerably, although it's generally accepted that Pakistan's nuclear weapons program was aided by China during the 1980's.

Q: How did you deal, let’s stick to this early period, Israel?

RUST: Well, a lot of countries didn’t join the treaty at this early stage. The Israelis were not particularly unusual in that regard. There were a lot of states in the Middle East, Arab states included, that were not in the treaty.

Q: When did we realize the Israelis had a nuclear bomb?

RUST: The Israelis had acquired the Dimona reactor from the French in the 1950's, I believe. It was not under international safeguards and by some time in the 1970's it was pretty clear that it had operated long enough to produce sufficient plutonium for nuclear weapons. I don't recall the dates, but there was a leak out of the U.S. intelligence community in the late 1970's that Israel likely possessed X number of weapons, and of course the famous case of the Israeli nuclear technician Mordecai Vanunu who spilled his guts for the London Sunday Times in the 1980s. I don't know when the U.S. knew for sure. I didn't have the clearances to know that information and I couldn't reveal it even if I did. My own guess is it was sometime in the 70s they probably had some, but of course they have never admitted to having nuclear weapons and have said only that they won't be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East.

Q: Well I was just wondering. We have been preaching and yet we have taken one *significant country and put it to one side, which is not only awkward, but hypocritical.*

RUST: Well again, in the 60s and 70s we didn't put them aside. The double standard criticism of setting the Israelis to one side is more pertinent to the 80s, 90s and today. But the bottom line is that since around 1980 we have essentially just "gone through the motions" in encouraging NPT adherence for not only Israel, but also for India and Pakistan. They have always been the three hardest cases; they said from the beginning that they weren't going to give up the right to acquire their own weapons, and thus they weren't going to join the treaty. In principle, we continue to maintain U.S. support for universal NPT adherence, i.e. all states joining the Treaty -- while recognizing there is little near-term prospect of action by Israel, India and Pakistan. They are the only three that have never joined the treaty. Today, there are 188 parties to the NPT. North Korea had joined it but has withdrawn. As far as hypocrisy is concerned, U.S. nonproliferation diplomacy has labored under that charge from the beginning since we are encouraging others to forego something we believe remains essential to our own security. There's also a little truth to the charge in regards to Israel, but it's a fact of life under the regime generally for the U.S. Thankfully, there are many non-nuclear weapon state NPT parties who agree generally with the U.S. on the importance of the NPT and whose diplomacy is not hypocritical on these matters.

Q: While you were doing this staff assistant work, I take it you found it from your perspective a harmonious relationship between George Vest at PM and Fred Iklé at ACDA.

RUST: Yeah, pretty much. While ACDA was an independent agency, it was small and not Cabinet level. ACDA Directors could be influential only if they worked collegially with senior levels at State and NSC. They would exercise their independence only when the stakes appeared to be worth it. So there were times when Fred took different positions than George on some key issues, but by and large, particularly at the assistant secretary and assistant director levels, good working relationships were the norm.

Iklé did take a pretty strong stand on the importance of preventing the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technology. The 1974 Indian test awakened people to this technology issue; enrichment and reprocessing are parts of the civil nuclear fuel cycle, but are also critical to producing fissile material for weapons. So there is that old dichotomy of nuclear energy. It can have peaceful applications but it can also have horrific military applications. Some of these far-reaching policies that Iklé was pushing occasionally ran into some problems with our European allies and with Japan. But PM hung in there with ACDA and Congress was also pushing for strong action. So the "clientitis" that generally pervades the regional bureaus of State was generally overcome. In general, the mid-1970s saw the beginning of the broadening of the nuclear nonproliferation regime beyond the NPT and IAEA. The latter was formed in 1957, but its responsibilities significantly expanded once the NPT entered into force as all non-nuclear parties were required by the NPT to negotiation safeguards agreements with the IAEA.

A couple other things happened during Iklé's tenure that were quite significant from a nonproliferation perspective. In July or August 1974, we negotiated agreements with Israel and Egypt to provide them nuclear power reactors. This happened just before Nixon resigned. These agreements contained strong nonproliferation controls, some of which are still discussed today, for example in the case of Russia's sale of a power reactor to Iran. That said, the sales never came to fruition, because the continued aftermath of the May 1974 Indian test caused U.S. policy to tighten beyond those conditions that were to apply to the sales to Egypt and Israel. The other major development was the creation of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, known at that time as the London Club. Initially, there were 7 states; today there are 45 and it continues serving as an effective nonproliferation tool. The first 18 months of meetings were held in general secrecy, due to concern about criticism from developing countries about a suppliers cartel. The purpose of the group was to establish common rules so that recipients couldn't play one supplier off another, which had the effect of commercial considerations trumping nonproliferation when it comes to selling nuclear material and equipment.

Q: Did your office in ACDA look for aggressive sellers of nuclear producing equipment? I am thinking particularly of France and Germany and all. Were we looking out for the salesmen in the 1970's?

RUST: Yes. We would get reports that would indicate, for example, that a firm in Germany was talking to the Brazilians about selling them sensitive nuclear technology. Whenever that happened we would go to the German government and point out the risks of selling these guys reprocessing and enrichment technology. At that time Brazil was not in the NPT, nor was Argentina. We were tracking about 10-12 countries; we called them the "dirty dozen" at one time.

Q: We were quite concerned I think in later years about the nuclear policies of Brazil and Argentina. Nobody could figure out what the hell they wanted. It seemed as though they were in competition about who could acquire the biggest nuclear toys.

RUST: Well that is right. We always realized that technology control and denial of themselves were not going to solve this thing. But what you were buying was time. If you flip forward 10-15 years from the mid 70s to 1990, you find that the political leaders in both governments had realized that competition among the two of them in the military applications of nuclear energy would not be good for the hemisphere, was not good for their security. So both states ultimately accepted comprehensive international safeguards and joined, first the Latin American Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty, and then the NPT. So today they are highly respected members of the non proliferation community. We bought ourselves some time, because we were able to discourage a lot of transfers and sensitive technologies back in the 70s and early 80s -- at least in the case of Latin America.

Q: Even at that time we had commercial firms that could profit by stepping over the edge or getting very close to the edge.

RUST: Yes, absolutely. Remember this is in the aftermath of the energy crisis of ’73, the oil crisis. People were looking more to nuclear reactors for generation of electricity. These sales were worth hundreds of millions of dollars and there was fierce commercial competition among countries that could manufacture reactors for export. For example, the West Germans might say, “Hey, if you buy our reactor, we will sweeten up the deal with a pilot enrichment or reprocessing plant.” That's when the suppliers got together, at U.S. initiative, to agree on common rules such a halt in the export of facilities for enrichment and reprocessing. That way, Brazil was not able to use the appeal of a $500 million power reactor sale to gain these extra technologies. You see power reactors are not directly applicable to proliferation. It is the special technologies that can produce fissile material for weapons, e.g. reprocessing of spent fuel to acquire plutonium and enrichment of uranium to high levels of the isotope U-235. We need to keep those technologies out of the hands of states whose nonproliferation bona fides are suspect. Recall that in the 1970's France hadn’t even joined the NPT. So nobody knew if they were on board this non proliferation game or not. The French were among the original 7 members of the nuclear suppliers group, which began to meet in 1975. As of the mid 70s then there was pretty much agreement that nobody would be selling enrichment or reprocessing facilities or technology to anybody as part of a commercial deal.

Q: You mentioned the IAEA earlier. These are the inspectors. They got the Nobel Prize in 2005, but where did they stand in the 1970's?

RUST: Well, let me go back a little. The origins of the IAEA date to the 1950s. Dwight Eisenhower proposed in 1953 his atoms for peace program. The essence of this program was to encourage limited commerce among nations for peaceful nuclear applications, but only under international inspections. That was the International Atomic Energy Agency. The IAEA statute was agreed upon in ’57. It was given a dual responsibility - to promote the so-called peaceful nuclear atom as well as to verify its peaceful use. It slowly developed a safeguard system. By the time the NPT came along in 1970, the treaty negotiators decided to require all the non nuclear states that joined the NPT to negotiate a safeguards agreement with the IAEA to help verify the NPT undertaking not to acquire nuclear weapons. So by the mid 70s, the IAEA was negotiating safeguards agreements with every NPT party. The safeguard system was still in the rudimentary stage, but it was beginning to grow at that time. The United States was putting a lot of money into helping develop the technology that would provide a reasonable assurance that countries were using nuclear facilities only for peaceful purposes, and not trying to divert these facilities for military operations.

Q: Were U.S. firms on board? Was there a problem of rogue operations or not?

RUST: No, in U.S. firms I would say not. They did resent the fact that U.S. national legislation often made it more difficult for them to sell than it would for French or German firms, so they did want a level playing field. That was part of the purpose of the nuclear suppliers group, i.e. to make sure all nations selling power reactors were doing so under the same conditions. U.S. firms knew that it was in their interest to have strong nonproliferation controls, because you don’t want a peaceful sale to end up helping somebody with a nuclear bomb. That outcome would severely erode public confidence in nuclear commerce. So by and large over the years nuclear industry in the United States has been fairly supportive of strong export controls. They want to be able to compete and sell, but they understand that anything that has nuclear energy involved in it has the potential for misuse. So you have to have strong controls.

Q: How about Congress. You mentioned Scoop Jackson. I think Richard Perle was his man at one point. Did they have a different agenda than ACDA?

RUST: Not on proliferation. Scoop's interest was on strategic arms control. Those interested in proliferation in the Congress were John Glenn in the Senate, and Alan Cranston but less so. In the House you had a guy named Jonathan Bingaman from New York and a couple others. These Members got very involved after the India test of ’74. There was concern that some U.S. supply to India had been used to produce the plutonium for its ’74 peaceful nuclear explosion. So yes, Congress became involved in a big way in tightening U.S. nuclear export controls. The laws passed in the 1970's not only upgraded U.S. controls on nuclear exports, but they also called for certain punitive measures (e.g. cutoff of economic and security assistance) against other countries that engaged in proliferation acts such as a nuclear explosion or acquisition of enrichment or reprocessing equipment. Congress was an ally of ACDA; at that time it believed strongly in the importance of an independent Agency to promote arms control and nonproliferation. Like ACDA, the Congress was always pushing the rest of the Executive branch to take strong stands on these issues.

Q: There are always competing interests within the Executive branch.

RUST: Commercial pressures. You name it. And a little sub-Cabinet agency like ACDA could easily be overwhelmed much of the time. The Executive branch would rally in the immediate aftermath of a dramatic proliferation event like the 74 Indian test, but interest would wane over time. But if a Member of Congress persists, the Administration has to pay attention. So ACDA and certain Members of Congress often found themselves working in support of the same agenda. And ACDA staff would help reformulate Congressional initiatives into something that the Administration could actually support. Congress was very active in the ’75, ’76, ’77, ’78 time frame.

Q: What about the Pentagon at this point? Did they have sort of spies in your office or observers or not?

RUST: At this stage of the evolution of U.S. nuclear non proliferation policy, they weren’t that big a player.

Q: Did you get any feel for James Schlesinger as Secretary of Defense, and Fred Iklé, I see as sort of intellectuals. I was wondering if you had any feel for the chemistry. How did they interplay with each other?

RUST: I can't speak to their personal interaction. As to policy interaction between ACDA and DOD, it was almost exclusively in the strategic nuclear area. i.e. following up on the 1972 Nixon-era SALT and ABM treaties. DOD got involved in nuclear nonproliferation then only around the time of an NPT Review Conference, the first of which occurred in 1975, five years after the NPT entered into force. At Review Conferences you have to discuss implementation of the NPT, i.e. what each party is doing to fulfill their obligations under the Treaty. For the U.S. and the other nuclear weapon powers who were party at that time -- the UK and USSR -- that meant primarily describing their actions to limit and bring down their nuclear arsenals. So Defense became very much interested in laying out our record of compliance as well as defending ourselves against critics. So the diplomacy and policy development surrounding a Review Conference saw the Pentagon -- both OSD and the Joint Chiefs -- directly engaged. On other issues , e.g. Pakistan and India, ACDA and State occasionally butted heads, and in that context ACDA would try to court DOD, believing that DOD would be a natural ally when it came to taking tough positions on nuclear nonproliferation issues. If anyone should be concerned about others getting the bomb, it should be those responsible for the defense of the United States. But I don't think we were very successful over the years. They certainly started to play a bigger role when the rogue states began to emerge as proliferation threats, which wasn't until the late 1980's/early 1990'. But until this Administration, DOD was always helpful at the time of Review Conferences. This Administration came in with a bias against Treaties generally; and chafed at those provisions of the NPT that required the existing nuclear weapons to progress toward nuclear disarmament. Thus, they weren't all that cooperative in connection with the 2005 NPT Review Conference in showing flexibility and a sympathetic ear toward those who believed the nuclear weapon states should be doing more. Of course, the Administration's opposition to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and its withdrawal from the ABM Treaty were significant departures from traditional arms control and, right or wrong, made U.S. NPT diplomacy leading to the 2005 Conference very difficult.

Q: Had the Soviets pretty well joined the choir by this time? Had they realized that the nuclear weapon states were the big boys and we must not let these little guys screw things up?

RUST: Yeah, we often remarked during the cold war that, regardless of differences on other matters, the U.S. and the Soviets tended to agree on nonproliferation. It was not in either of their interest for other countries to get the bomb. We cooperated on nonproliferation even in those very tense times including the Soviet shootdown of the KAL commercial airliner. Reagan had Soviet leaders dying on him; their was a lot of instability in the relationship until Gorbachev. There is still a lot of cooperation and common ground, but as the nonproliferation regime evolved and the USSR collapsed you began see more tactical differences in how to deal with cases like Iran for example. It's almost always been the case frankly that the U.S., Canada, Australia take the hard line, the Europeans are in the middle, and the Soviets and now Russia and China take the weakest approach. Japan would go along with the evolving consensus and it wasn't until the North Korean nuclear and missile threat escalated that Japan could be counted on to become more active. Of course, the current U.S. Administration has added a wrinkle by reversing 30 year old policies and seemingly to "accept" the nuclear programs or India, Israel, and Pakistan while focusing almost exclusively on rogue proliferation. The jury is still out on this shift, but I note that the Administration is not getting much of a push-back on this shift from other countries.

RUST: In the bureaucratics of the 1970's we found ourselves fighting often with the predecessors of today's Department of Energy. The Atomic Energy Commission dated to the 1950's I think. Well around 1973-74, the Congress decided the AEC should be split into a regulatory body -- the Nuclear Regulatory Commission -- and a promotional body -- first called the Energy Research and Development Administration which became the Department of Energy under President Carter. NRC regulated U.S. nuclear exports and ERDA later DOE promoted international cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy. So ACDA was often at odds with the nuclear energy promotion people, who were concerned that too strict export controls would lead to the loss of nuclear business to other countries and in the long run deal the U.S. out of any influence on international nuclear policies. State found itself in the middle of a lot of these disputes. The Department of Commerce would also get involved in so-called dual-use nuclear stuff that it licensed. I do recall, however, that cooperation was good when it came to trying to shut down illegal procurement from countries like Pakistan.

Q: I can see an average U.S. Citizen saying at the time: These arms control and nonproliferation types are just a bunch of liberal goody two shoes who are tying to get everyone to live in peace. When actually you are playing the nasty sons of bitches, or not?

RUST: Certainly when it came to nuclear proliferation ACDA played the nasty. That is the President of the United States said that the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries undermines the security of the United States. It didn't matter to ACDA that taking a tough line might upset bilateral relations with a country or would cost the loss of commercial opportunities. That was our job. That's why ACDA was created in 1961 by President Kennedy, with strong support from the Congress. The State Department was conflicted; Energy and Commerce were pushing U.S. exports out the door. Of course, any effort to deny other countries their sovereign right to acquire what they believe is necessary for their defense is not an easy task. But nuclear weapons have a unique capacity to destroy and undermine U.S. security. If ACDA makes the case and senior policy-makers decided in favor of State or Energy -- so be it. But it was our statutory responsibility to make the nonproliferation argument.

Q: Having been a creature of the State Department I can see exactly why. There are so damn many reason why you can't do something because you have got other priorities. You needed somebody with a focus.

RUST: Certainly, State has functional responsibilities, but more than anything else it is an organization that is designed to promote U.S. interests through use of bilateral country channels. There was a proliferation and arms control responsibility in State/PM, but it was one of many responsibilities for the PM Assistant Secretary. For years, OES had nuclear nonproliferation along with promoting nuclear energy cooperation. They did a great job given this conflicted functional responsibility, but the bottom line is they had to take an approach that met the approval of others in State such as the country desk. ACDA was independent and had the resources - physicists, engineers, chemists -- who knew the technical aspects of the business. Military officers and foreign service officers were detailed to the agency. International relations specialists swelled its civil service ranks. U.S. Administrations have viewed nuclear weapons as dangerous for a long time. President Eisenhower in the 1950's supported a comprehensive nuclear test ban. That concern evolved into support for a separate agency. Even Dean Rusk. the Secretary of State in 1961, was perfectly comfortable with the creation of a separate agency and giving Bill Foster who was its first director independent authority to negotiate with the Soviets on nuclear issues.

Q: Did anyone in the government talk much at this time about what the hell we are doing with all these nuclear weapons . Critics were already using phrases like having enough nuclear weapons to make the rubble bounce three times.

RUST: I'm not a specialist in this area, but nuclear weapons became integrated into U.S. defense policy from the beginning. Initially, their role was simple deterrence, i.e. you needed enough to threaten an attacker with retaliation. But then we increased our capacity to deliver more weapons and eventually the nuclear strategists began to look at a more elaborate version of deterrence and it evolved toward war-fighting. Scenarios were spun out involving a Soviet first strike at our missiles, not at our cities. Would we have enough to retaliate in this circumstance and still deter further Soviet attacks? So once you start doing those calculations, it's not hard to come up with the need for more. Also, the concept of deterrence began to include whether we could "hold at risk" certain critical industrial, military and leadership assets of the enemy. In other words, the target base began to expand, which of course requires more warheads. So under these circumstances, a little arms control agency was not capable of challenging DOD's judgments about how many warheads were needed to deter. And over the years, ACDA's seat at that particular table disappeared. There was a time when the Congress wanted ACDA to make arms control judgments about new weapon systems. For a time, ACDA did Arms Control Impact Statements on nuclear weapon systems of a certain size. But these statements ended up supporting whatever DOD wanted to do in any event. Often, there were U.S.-USSR negotiations ongoing and there was always the possibility that a subsequent arms control agreement would cause these programs to be cancelled. ACDA really didn't have the power to go up against a Secretary of Defense or the uniformed military on these matters.

Q: This is tape two, side one with Dean Rust.

RUST: I believe in the early 1970s ACDA pushed an option for SALT that would have prohibited the deployment for the U.S. and USSR of multiple independently-targeted reentry vehicles (MIRVs). However, that option was not pursued, probably because the Soviets would not accept the degree of intrusive verification necessary to provide adequate confidence in compliance. Once each missile had multiple warheads, you began to see more nuclear war-gaming. For example, U.S. planners would assume that the

Soviets would launch a certain percentage of their ICBM force, which would lead to the destruction of XX % of U.S. missiles. Could the U.S. still deliver a retaliatory response to the Soviets that would exact enough damage to their country that would result in their not launching an initial strike to begin wit?. These games also included multiple strikes at various targets -- industrial, leadership military or populations. We started to think about the need for a strategic nuclear posture that would allow us to emerge from a nuclear war with a relative advantage, e.g. 60% of our industry left, and only 10% of their industry left, and thus we would "win."

Q: You in ACDA had to be concerned with these developments. What was the impetus for this type of thinking?

RUST: Fred Iklé was very articulate talking about the immorality of nuclear and that there had to be a better way for the US and Soviets to reduce the risk of nuclear than to hold hostage millions of our population in both countries. But the Soviet watchers were persuaded that the USSR was prepared to use nuclear weapons first, and thus we needed to think how we were going to deter them. The 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan only served to reinforce American perception of the USSR as an imperialistic power. It wasn't until Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev started talking about the futility of a nuclear war and that it should never be fought that the US and Soviets began to seriously ponder limits to the nuclear arms race.

Q: Well I think this is probably a good place to stop now. We will pick this up the next time I suppose maybe at the start of the Carter administration.

RUST: Yes.

Q: OK, today is December 12, 2006. Dean, in the Carter administration you moved to a different job.

RUST: Yeah at the end of ’76, as the Ford administration was winding things up, I was offered an opportunity to work in a policy bureau for the first time. It was the bureau that did nuclear non proliferation issues, the NPT, the International Atomic Energy Agency, nuclear export controls, and developed targeted strategies against countries seeking the bomb. Since the Indian test of 1974, ACDA had ramped up its staff in this area; Congress was also highly motivated. The issue even came up in the campaign of ’76.

Q: In what respect?

RUST: Well Carter, being a nuclear engineer, fancied himself as having some direct knowledge of these matters. He made a couple speeches on nonproliferation during the campaign and Ford felt compelled to respond. And then in October, just a short time before the election, Ford released a major policy statement on nuclear weapons non proliferation. In many ways some of the same elements of his policy were the kinds of things that Carter had been signaling during the campaign. After Carter won, I moved to the non proliferation policy bureau. The first four months or so of that administration were extraordinarily active in terms of trying to launch a more aggressive U.S. approach to nuclear non proliferation, including questioning the future approaches that advanced nuclear countries should use in using peaceful nuclear energy. This is the first time this had really happened. Going back to the 50's, there had been a presumption about the various stages of using nuclear energy for peaceful applications including the generation of electricity. The plan was to use low enriched uranium in powers, a process that would produce plutonium in the spent fuel, and the plutonium would then be chemically separated and "recycled" as reactor fuel. But the Carter Administration said that before the international community goes down that road, the nonproliferation implications have to be studied. The concern was and is that a widespread use of plutonium as a civil fuel would provide a ready source of material for nuclear weapons. You see low enriched uranium cannot be used in nuclear weapons, but plutonium can be. .

Q: I would like to point out that in timing, this is '77, this is before Chernobyl and before Three Mile Island, right?

RUST: Right.

Q: All of a sudden the whole safety issue really came to the fore.

RUST: Right. The oil crisis of '73 had also contributed to a renewed interest in nuclear power to generate electricity. The reason I am going into this in a little bit more detail is you have to understand the history of the way a lot of people in the peaceful nuclear industry had contemplated peaceful nuclear power. We were not only going to mine a lot of uranium and put enriched uranium in fuel as fuel for reactors, but then the reactors were going to produce plutonium which in turn would be recycled again. Carter thought the whole industrialized west that was planning to use plutonium for peaceful purposes needed to stop and reassess their assumptions about whether or not this was worth the risk.

Q: Was this Carter or people within his Administration? Was this a minority position?

*RUS*T: Well ACDA began raising these kinds of issues during the Ford administration. It was definitely a minority view when it first came up. But frankly by mid 1976 the Ford Administration was also having second thoughts about the so-called plutonium economy -- if for no other reason than the economics weren't adding up. It was cheaper to continue mining uranium than to move to the use of separated plutonium. In 1977, Carter pulled the plug on any federal support for commercial reprocessing or commercial plutonium power applications in the United States. In other words he wasn't telling the private industry that you couldn't do it, but he wasn't providing any federal support for it. Then we set about encouraging other countries, Japan and Western European in particular, to think twice about whether to commercialize the use of plutonium in civil power applications. Some were already reprocessing and had planned to use plutonium. So this was an extraordinarily divisive time because other countries rightly noted that energy policies were sovereign maters; that whether or not to use plutonium was strictly a technical and economic decision and that the U.S. should butt out. Besides, Japan and our allies in Europe are not proliferation risks in any event. Is the U.S. really worried that Germany, a party to the NPT and member of NATO sheltered by the U.S. nuclear umbrella, is going to use any future stockpiles of plutonium for nuclear weapons? Of course, the main concern was not Germany per se, but that German, Japanese, and French nuclear industry moving to the plutonium economy would increase the risk that others -- less trustworthy -- would do the same.

Q: When you say plutonium can be reused, I mean recycled, did that mean that it would keep proliferating more and more plutonium?

RUST: Yes. Even the use of recycled and separated plutonium in a standard power reactor also includes uranium; and the irradiation process will lead to the production of more plutonium in that uranium, even though some of recycled plutonium will be burned up in the reactor. But we weren't really looking that far down the road. The initial commercialization of plutonium in reactors was focused on having a balance between some of your reactors still using uranium and some of them using plutonium. But again, a lot of this momentum toward plutonium was a legacy of decades of thinking in the nuclear industry; and didn't necessary reflect cost factors as they stood in the 1970's or today for that matter. There's still a debate over the use of plutonium as a civil reactor fuel that focus on cost factors and proliferation. This debate even touches on the plutonium coming out of nuclear weapons; some want to burn it in reactors and others want to glassify it and store it underground. Either option has pros and cons. But nuclear industry was very hostile to the Carter Administration for raising questions about civil reprocessing and plutonium use, as were several friendly governments whose energy plans included plutonium use. The idea that advanced nuclear states should sacrifice the potential benefits of the use of plutonium in civil applications because it would set a bad precedent for other nations who might use plutonium for weapons was debated constantly. I would say that over the years the argument has tilted against plutonium; these days there is concern that terrorists will get their hands on plutonium and that threat is a global one -- no state is immune.

Q: What were you doing? What was your role?

RUST: Well, I was helping to develop the legislation that the administration proposed. I analyzed counterproposals that the Hill came up with. After the landmark 1978 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act (NNPA) was passed, I worked primarily on negotiations with recipients of U.S. nuclear exports. The new law required that all new agreements with other governments contain stronger U.S. controls to help guard against diversion and that all existing agreements be updated with the same controls. State led the negotiations with DOE and ACDA also involved. We were required to go back and renegotiate our existing bilateral arrangements with Australia, Canada, European states, Japan, Sweden; and even with states with smaller nuclear programs such as Venezuela, Colombia, and Norway. I was the ACDA representative on all of those teams. After the conclusion of negotiations, ACDA had the statutory responsibility to prepare a nuclear proliferation assessment statement for each of these agreements. It was submitted to the president and to the Congress. The first such agreement after the NNPA was with Australia. I wrote the assessment statement for the Australian agreement and the next 15 or 20 statements that followed over the next 5-7 years. I became very conversant with the standards that apply to U.S. nuclear exports both in terms of bilateral arrangements that we negotiated with our recipient states, as well as the domestic licensing requirements that were implemented by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. During this time period, I was also involved in nuclear supplier group activities, which I mentioned in the first interview. This multilateral group got started under Ford and U.S. support was continued into the Carter Administration. I did not serve on the delegation to these meetings, but I was the primary action person within the non proliferation bureau developing ACDA's views on the various proposals that were on the table. This group of nuclear suppliers started with 7 countries; went to 15 during the late 1970's and numbers 45 states today. Finally, I also helped out on NPT work such as demarches to non-parties urging them to join the Treaty. The NPT began with about 45 parties in 1970; it maxed out at 189 in 2002, but then North Korea withdrew in 2003 and today the number stands at 188. Only India, Israel and Pakistan have never joined the Treaty.

Q: As you were renegotiating these agreements, were there any particular countries or any particular issues that caused concern or conflict?

RUST: Well the primary concern of most states was the degree of intrusion that the United States insisted on. Bilateral guarantees of peaceful use only and the application of IAEA safeguards were not a problem. But our law required us to seek additional controls over the reactors and fuel we exported. Once the fuel was used in the reactor, the recipient could not alter or reprocess that fuel without seeking U.S. permission. Certain types of nuclear material required U.S. permission before it could be stored. A country needed our consent if it wished to pull out of a reactor some U.S. supplied fuel rods for experimental purposes, or wished to transfer their fuel to another country So most of the difficulties we encountered had to do with U.S. consent rights of this type.

The other big issue during the Carter Administration in this area dealt with the way in which we exercised our consent rights, particularly for countries like Japan, Switzerland, and Spain. All three of these countries were taking reactor fuel form their power reactors and sending it somewhere for reprocessing. They planned to use the separated plutonium as fuel in their civil reactors. Well because it was U.S. fuel, they couldn't do that without our consent. And we were reluctant to give that consent because Administration policy had raised questions about both the economics and nonproliferation consequences of widespread reprocessing. Most of these requests for reprocessing were ultimately approved, but only after long delays and the attachment of many conditions -- a process that led to strains in our relations with these countries. Coterminous with these operational activities, the U.S. sponsored a multilateral international nuclear fuel cycle evaluation designed to look at the future of the nuclear fuel cycle and its relationship to proliferation. It was launched in the fall of 1977 and went on for a little over two years. ACDA hired a bunch of nuclear technical specialists; 45-50 nations participated. The bottom line of the evaluation was fairly balanced and gave everybody what they wanted. But it did greatly increase international awareness of the risks associated with the use of plutonium as civil fuel; some of its studies and work remain among the best international work ever done in this field. The Carter Administration never really resolved its differences with Japan and others on these questions. Regardless of how supportive a state was of the goal of nonproliferation, it wasn't about to sacrifice its energy security over some vague notion that its use of plutonium would some day make it more likely that Libya, for example, would get the bomb. That said, economic factors have greatly delayed any widespread use of plutonium as fuel or of breeder reactors, which in the 1970's were viewed as the next generation of large energy producing reactors and which would have produced even larger quantities of plutonium.

Q: What other nonproliferation issues were prominent during the Carter years?

RUST: We began to see some early clandestine efforts by Pakistan to acquire enrichment technology, which we judged at the time would be used to produce high enriched uranium for nuclear weapons. You recall that India conducted a nuclear test in 1974, and it seemed that Pakistan had immediately undertaken to acquire its own nuclear explosives. It turns out that a Pakistani, who worked for a Dutch-German-British consortium that was building a centrifuge enrichment plant in Europe, had stolen some design information. This information in turn led to secret Pakistani efforts to procure components for its own enrichment plant. The U.S, UK and others immediately set about trying to shut down this procurement network, or at least to make it more difficult to run. This resulted in an major expansion of U.S. nuclear export controls into the centrifuge enrichment area, including so-called dual use items. For example, a machine tool might produce a normal industrial item, but you could also use some machine tools to produce specialized components for an enrichment plant. The late 1970's saw a major expansion of export controls in the nuclear area, an effort that continues to this day.

In addition to efforts to deny nuclear technology to Pakistan, we leaned on them diplomatically to shelve the enrichment program. Security and economic assistance was cutoff as a result of sanctions passed by the Congress.

In 1979, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan; we needed Pakistan as a partner in supplying the Mujahideen who were fighting the Soviets. The result was a weakening of U.S. pressure on Pakistan for its nuclear proliferation activities. We had conflicting objectives, which of course was not the first nor the last time U.S. nonproliferation objectives would be compromised by other major U.S. national interests. When Reagan came to the Presidency in 1981, the Administration sought and obtained waiver authority from the Congress to resume economic and military assistance to Pakistan despite little to no restraint in Pakistan's proliferation activity.

Q: How about the French. The French are sort of renowned for putting commercial interests ahead of everything else. That is the American perception. How did the French play into this during the time we are talking about?

RUST: France was not an NPT party at this time; and there was concern that France would not view proliferation as gravely as did the U.S. One of the reasons for the formation of the Nuclear Suppliers Group in the mid-1970's was to engage France in a multilateral effort to prevent the proliferation of enrichment and reprocessing technology. At one point, the French had contractual arrangements with both Pakistan and South Korea to provide reprocessing plants. These were open deals and IAEA safeguards would have applied. However, the U.S. viewed these transfers as destabilizing as they would lead to the stockpiling of plutonium; and the abrogation of safeguards would leave Pakistan and South Korea with plutonium readily useable for nuclear weapons. South Korean security concerns had heightened after the U.S. defeat in Vietnam, which partly explained ROK interest in a weapons option. After much intensive diplomacy, the French backed out of both deals -- as I recall using some face-saving type of excuse. I guess the French got the point; they realized that the proliferation of reprocessing (and enrichment) technology, even if ostensibly for peaceful purposes, would significantly increase proliferation risks -- particularly in regions of instability. Again, it was the Indian 1974 nuclear test that brought this message home to most suppliers of nuclear technology. It was around this time that West Germany also reneged on a commitment to Brazil to provide enrichment and reprocessing technology, for the same reasons. The FRG was another original member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Q: When was Chernobyl and Three Mile Island?

RUST: Three Mile was ’79. That was during the Carter Administration.

Q: That was the first.

RUST: Yes. Chernobyl was not until ’86.

Q: What affect did Three Mile Island have on nuclear issues?

RUST: The 1973 oil crisis had led to a resurgence of interest in nuclear energy for electricity, but the bottom line is that nuclear power costs a lot of money and its waste disposal issues had not been resolved at that time. The expected increase in demand for new reactor orders never panned out. And of course, Three Mile Island only reinforced the doubts. That said, nuclear proliferation risks and demands for nuclear energy for peaceful purposes do not go hand-in-hand in any event. Having a peaceful nuclear program can shorten the time necessary to acquire nuclear weapons if a decision is made to go that route. But most proliferation risks result from the clandestine acquisition of nuclear facilities dedicated to a weapons option, not through diversion from a peaceful program.

I just recalled another issue during the Carter Administration. In August ’77, the Soviets told us their surveillance satellites had found what looked like a nuclear weapons test site in the Kalahari Desert in South Africa. That caused a good two months of intensive activity including by my office. My boss actually accompanied very senior level people on diplomatic missions, which eventually led the South Africans to commit not to conduct a nuclear test. As it turned out, while they had been preparing a test site, they weren't yet ready to test because of a shortage of fissile material. I don't remember the actual deal that was worked out, but we dodged a bullet there. Our nuclear dialogue with

South Africa was very intense from that time forward. While South Africa did claim ultimately to have manufactured several nuclear explosives, none were ever tested to our knowledge. And finally in the early 1990's South Africa gave up its nuclear deterrent.

Q: Were we looking to the Israelis as being a silent partner in this thing? Is that the perception?

RUST: Yes, that was the speculation. That raises the so-called flash in the South Atlantic, which occurred in 1979.

Q: Could you explain what that was.

RUST: Yes. One of our surveillance satellites detected a flash of light in the atmosphere. The signal produced was consistent with a small atmospheric nuclear explosion. It was somewhere in the South Atlantic, off South Africa. The South Africans denied any such action. President Carter brought in a special independent scientific panel that ultimately concluded it probably was not a nuclear explosion. But speculation was rampant back then and probably still is today that it was a nuclear explosion in which the Israelis and the South Africans colluded. I recall there being some published reports of contacts between atomic energy officials in South Africa and in Israel. But I'm not aware that there has ever been any conclusive evidence that it was a nuclear explosion.

At that time, there were five or six different types of intelligence tools that could conceivably detect a nuclear explosion. But as I recall, none of these gadgets beyond the satellite registered anything positive regarding a nuclear explosion. That fact along with a possible alternative explanation for the satellite reading brought the scientific panel to its conclusion.

While we're in 1979, I should also mention another major event, which was the publication by the Progressive Magazine of certain classified material about nuclear weapons. All I can remember is that some physicist, I think his name was Howard Morland, had somehow gotten his hands on information and had deduced a certain aspect of the technology of how a nuclear weapon works that had not previously been declassified. I think he just kind of came upon this himself. The government became aware of the possible publication and actually got one of the federal district courts agreed to issue a restraining order. But then some other media outlet published it and the government's case was moot. I can remember that an enormous amount of time was spent on the issue over several months or weeks. I think it was an H bomb secret that Morland was revealing. Enough people in the Department of Energy and the Arms Control Agency thought it was a big enough secret that we ought to try to prevent it from being published. But there was a lot of time spent, I know in ’79 to keep that from being published.

Q: Back in the late 1970s, there were still a lot of countries that had not joined the NPT. Were these countries essentially not joining because they had aspirations or because they were trying to exert their independence?

RUST: That is a good question. Certainly, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel all wanted to keep their options open. By this time, only India had actually demonstrated its acquisition of nuclear explosives. Spain, Portugal and Chile were also not in the NPT, but they weren't really suspected of wanting nuclear weapons -- although one never knew about Franco's regime in Spain. But there were also several states that had joined the NPT by that time that were also suspect such as Taiwan and South Korea. Iraq, Libya and Iran were also NPT parties and their motivations were suspect, but concrete indications of their intentions did not come until a few years later. Taiwan, South Korea, India, Pakistan, Israel, Argentina, Brazil and South Africa were the focus of most of the diplomacy.

It was during this time period that U.S. nuclear export legislation stiffened and fuel supply ceased to countries that had heretofore imported reactor fuel from the U.S. -- such as Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Israel. This led to major disputes only with Brazil, South Africa and India, which had long-term supply contracts for power reactors that were generating electricity. All three eventually found alternate suppliers and of course Brazil and South Africa joined the NPT in the 1990's, and thus again became eligible for U.S. fuel supply. This is one reason the recent U.S. decision to exempt India from these stringent requirements is so controversial. India is not being held to the same standard and not only has nuclear weapons but, if the Administration gets its way, will also acquire U.S. nuclear fuel. This decision breaks faith with others like Argentina, Brazil and South Africa who gave up nuclear weapons in part so they could import nuclear fuel.

Q: Did the so called neutron bomb that enter into your calculations?

RUST: Only indirectly. This had more to do with the U.S. nuclear umbrella for our NATO allies. Certainly, any decision on developing and deploying a new nuclear weapon can affect the larger political climate in which you are trying to promote nonproliferation objectives. But the bottom line is that suspected proliferators then and now base their calculations on factors such as security and prestige, not on what particular type of nuclear weapon the U.S. or Russia is pursuing.

Q: When the Carter Administration came in, and during this period, did you in ACDA feel was there a change in personality type and a change in attitude or was this pretty much a continuum?

RUST: Well we all thought initially that with Paul Warnke as the ACDA Director we would have sufficient clout. Warnke and Secretary of State Cy Vance were friends and Warnke was a very smart and experienced bureaucratic player in Washington going back to the Johnson Administration. It didn't quite work out that way. Warnke's nomination was contested based in part on continued questions about the 1972 SALT agreements and on Warnke's well known advocacy for such nuclear arms control approaches. He was approved but not overwhelmingly; he only stayed a couple years. The approach to strategic nuclear arms control ended up pretty much as a continuum; they tried something pretty dramatic out of the box but the Soviets couldn't handle it. The SALT II Treaty was signed in 1979, but was never ratified. As discussed earlier, however, there was an even harder line taken on nonproliferation in regard to the use of plutonium in civil applications and in major changes to U.S. nuclear export policy.

There's one particular incident I remember very well, because it concerned a memorandum from Warnke and Vance to the President that I authored at the direction of senior ACDA leadership. It concerned possible nuclear disarmament related initiatives for a 1978 UN Special Session on Disarmament. State and ACDA leaders did not want to tip off other elements of the bureaucracy, so Vance and Warnke went directly to the President with the ideas. Of course, it leaked and soon DOD (Harold Brown) and DOE (Jim Schlesinger) came in with their opposing views. But the NSC did initiate a study and we spent several months doing some pretty good staff work on a hurry up basis. Two ideas were presented to the President. One was canned but the other was approved. The result was that in 1978 for the first time the United States issued at the highest levels an assurance that we would not use nuclear weapons under certain conditions against NPT non-nuclear states. This was a way of trying to strengthen the NPT. The assurance was drawn up in a way that did not undermine our nuclear umbrella commitment to our NATO and Asian allies. It was something that many non nuclear states NPT parties, particularly nonaligned states, had sought for a long time. They argued that if they give up the right to acquire nuclear weapons under the NPT, it is only fair that the nuclear weapon states under the NPT (U.S., UK, USSR, China, France) pledge not to use nuclear weapons against these non-nuclear states. This policy review began a nearly 30 year association between myself and the question of security assurances for non-nuclear states. I authored and pushed through the bureaucracy another security assurance initiative for NPT parties in 1995. I might note for the record that the second proposal that was not approved in 1978 did make it onto the Clinton Administration agenda in 1993, and is also supported by the current Administration. That is the negotiation of a multilateral treaty that would ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, known in the lexicon as a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT).

Q: All right, well then the Carter administration was over in what '81?

RUST: Right.

Q: Reagan comes in, the right wing and the Republican party _____

RUST: Yeah it was a different world. I can remember those of us with long faces the day after the election, because Reagan had campaigned against SALT II, that is the treaty with the U.S. and Soviets on strategic offensive weapons. He campaigned against it saying it was not in the interest of the United States. And in a couple of casual comments during the campaign when asked about what should we be doing to prevent Pakistan from getting nuclear weapons he said, "Well it is none of our business. You know if these countries want nuclear weapons well then that is their own decision." Well once he got to be president he realized it probably was not a good idea to stand by as other countries sought nuclear weapons. In the end, Reagan did continue the historic U.S. approach of trying to prevent proliferation, but they did change some aspects of what Carter had pursued. For example, we became selective in our efforts to stop reprocessing and the use of plutonium. We said, “Look, if our allies want to decide on the basis of their own energy security that they want to produce plutonium for civil applications, we are not going to stand in their way. However, if Pakistan or if some state in the middle east, Iran or Iraq says well I need reprocessing for my energy security, we ain’t going to believe them for a minute. And we will do our best to deny those states that kind of technology." So it was a discriminatory policy of trying to keep the technology from spreading to those places where we know it would be destabilizing.

One of the big events early in the Administration was the Israeli attack on Iraq's Osirak reactor in June of 1981. The Israelis suspected that this reactor that the French had supplied to Iraq was going to be used as a basis for producing plutonium for weapons. Huge event. The U.S. supported a security council resolution that condemned the Israelis for this action. But I would say for the first time it stimulated a lot of international concern about proliferation in the middle east. Everybody had always been worried about the Israeli nuclear weapons program, or at least about the Israelis publicly declaring their program or about them conducting a nuclear test. But now it appeared technology was spreading such that Iran and Iraq and maybe even Libya had begun to seek technology for their own nuclear weapons program. So countries like the U.S. and others in possession of more advanced civil nuclear technologies began to talk about a special export control regime that would apply towards just the Middle East. No formal arrangement was every reached, but I think it tended to sensitize a lot of nuclear supplier states to the region. Some questioned whether ANY nuclear cooperation in the Middle East was appropriate.

Q: How about in ACDA as far as personnel goes?

RUST: Well, Gene Rostow came in, a Democrat, a hard line Democrat, to be the director of the Arms Control Agency. Gene had served during the Kennedy Johnson administration for Dean Rusk, and was known to have great interest in middle east issues. However, he meddled a little bit more than Al Haig and George Schultz wanted in State Department middle east issues, and was gone by late 82 or early 83. Ken Adelman then came in after being subject to a rather bruising confirmation process. He turned out to be quite tough on proliferation, and was a key player during the Reagan years on strategic nuclear issues including at Reykjavik during the famous Gorbachev Reagan summit. The 1980s saw a succession of Soviet leaders who died - Brezhnev, Andropov and then Chernenko. Finally, Gorbachev took over and the rest is history, as they say. Reagan and Gorbachev got along pretty well, and that tended to rekindle the U.S. Soviet strategic nuclear agenda. Adelman was very much involved in that as ACDA Director. Ultimately of course, the capstone of the Reagan Administration in U.S.-Soviet nuclear arms control was the 1987 Treaty that eliminated Intermediate-Range Nuclear Missiles from Europe. U.S. and Soviet deployment of SS-20's and Pershings, respectively, had became a dominant strategic and political issue of the 1980's, and led to significant strains within NATO. Surprisingly, both sides were able to agree on a Treaty to ban these deployments -- a Treaty that continues to resonate positively 20 years later. In the strategic area, Reagan never was able to replace the "flawed" 1979 SALT II that Carter had concluded, although the two sides did agree to generally observe the limits in the treaty. Soviet violations of the 1972 ABM Treaty also occupied a major portion of the strategic agenda during the 1980's. The violation was clear, but its strategic significance and the appropriate response was debated constantly within the U.S.

Adelman also was very much involved in promoting the NPT. He led the U.S. delegation to the 1985 NPT review conference, and he gave good speeches on the importance of a strong policy to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. The NPT was 15 years old by this time and was still gaining new parties. Yet, it was also undergoing strain as the U.S. Soviet agenda had made little to no progress in limiting and reducing the long-range nuclear missiles that constituted a threat to global nuclear annihilation, at least as viewed by some NPT parties.

Q: What were you doing during the Reagan years?

RUST: Well I was still working on the bilateral agreements for civil nuclear cooperation, the nuclear suppliers group and nuclear export controls generally, including implementation of U.S. laws and regulations affecting nuclear exports. I worked on the 1985 NPT review conference, i.e. not on the delegation but I stayed in Washington as a "backstopper". I worked on diplomacy to encourage additional parties to the NPT. I remember in ’81 when the Egyptians joined. That was a big deal. I think it was the only time I have ever been in the Secretary of State’s inner office; the Egyptian Ambassador brought in the instrument of ratification and handed it to Al Haig,

I should mention that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon had an impact in ’82. The reverberation on Middle East politics of that invasion extended well beyond the regular political fora. In the fall of that year, the Israeli delegation to the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy had its credentials denied and the U.S. delegation walked out of the meeting and suspended our participation in the IAEA. This was a huge deal, as we were the primary contributor to the IAEA and frankly its safeguards system had come be viewed as an important element of U.S. national security. The IAEA, while not perfect, had eyes and ears to go places and visit nuclear installations that the U.S. could not. We ultimately "returned" after about six months and after securing pledges from enough states that they would support U.S. efforts to oppose denying Israel its right to participate in the workings of the IAEA.

Another big issue during the 1980's was the emergence of China as a rogue nuclear supplier. They weren’t part of the NPT; they weren’t part of the Nuclear suppliers group, they didn’t really pay any attention to international guideline. They said, “You want fuel? We will sell it to you.” No conditions at all. So we began a dialog with the Chinese on nuclear matters, and they gradually changed their policies. They joined the IAEA in 1984. We negotiated a bilateral civil nuclear cooperation agreement, which did not enter into force for more than a decade -- due to continue doubts about Chinese proliferation activities -- but which signaled the beginning of a diplomatic effort that continues today to bring China into the nonproliferation mainstream.

Q: Did you get involved with these?

RUST: Yes, I was involved in some of the negotiation with the Chinese, but I did a lot more of this in the 90s than I did in the 80s.

Q: What was the Chinese attitude to begin with? They were fairly new in the game weren't they?

RUST: Yes. As I said, they still were outside the NPT and tended to look at any U.S. policies as more directed towards guarding the U.S.-Soviet privileged position in the nuclear non proliferation regime. But over time they began to understand that if they were going to export and contribute to the civil nuclear programs of other countries, it was in China's interest to adopt the same kinds of rules that everybody else was using. So even if China wasn't all that concerned about proliferation, it still didn't want its nuclear supply to be used for bombs and it wanted to be considered a responsible actor in this field. So China did finally insist that recipients of its nuclear fuel accept IAEA safeguards on the fuel, use the fuel only for peaceful purposes, and agree to other conditions. Chinese joined the IAEA in 1984, an action that contributed to their education about safeguards and the non proliferation regime as a whole. As I look back over the years I see the evolution of China from a rogue elephant that seemed to not care at all about proliferation, indeed even a country that rhetorically encouraged proliferation as a means to break the U.S. Soviet condominium, to a country that gradually embraced more and more of the standard rules of the regime.

Another thing that happened in the 80s was the negotiation of a South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. French nuclear testing in the South Pacific had led Australia and other countries in that region of the world to put French territory off limits for nuclear testing. So about 10 or 12 states got together and negotiated a South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, and while this is a treaty only among regional states, it also covers territories in the region that may be owned by states outside the region, including the French territories on which testing was taking place. The French opposed the Treaty for obvious reasons. There were U.S. territories also included in the scope of the Treaty, but we tested in Nevada. However, due to French opposition, we backed them up and made clear we would not support a treaty that would constrain their ability to test. The Chinese and Russians embraced the Treaty, but the French, British and U.S. stayed away. I wasn't much involved much in this issue, although nuclear weapon free zones became an important part of my portfolio at a later date. This South Pacific Treaty was the second such regional nuclear weapon free zone treaty; the first dated from 1967 and covered Latin America. The U.S. had supported this Latin American Zone, even though it included some U.S. territories like Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. We were not conducting nuclear tests on these islands, nor did we foresee the need to deploy nuclear weapons on them.

Q: Did you run up against the nuclear testing mafia during the course of your career, that is people wanting to test because if they didn't test they wouldn't have a job. That is *putting it pretty bluntly but that is an impression one gets.*

RUST: I didn't have that experience directly. Those working nuclear nonproliferation were about trying to persuade other countries not to get nuclear weapons; we weren't involved in consideration of limits on U.S. nuclear testing. Other portions of ACDA did that; although we did weigh in on the consequences for nonproliferation. It's true that the National Laboratories, where nuclear weapons were developed and tested, did not generally favor a nuclear test ban idea. They thought we needed to test to have an updated and reliable system. Of course this became a much bigger issue after the Cold War when global interest in a test ban increased significantly. Negotiations began during the Carter Administration, but they didn't get very far.

I should mention at the end of the Reagan administration I went to the National War College for a year, 1987-88.

Q: How did you find that?

RUST: It was a great experience. The National War College is at Fort McNair in Washington DC, and it is the premier college for senior level officers from all the services. At the time, a typical class was about 40 Army, 40 Marine and Navy, 40 Air Force and then they usually had about 40 civilians, usually from the State Department and the Arms Control Agency and FBI and places like that. You get an opportunity to step back from your day to day operational responsibilities. You think essentially like a national security advisor, take in the big picture. They tried to get you to look at the world from a larger standpoint, to define our national security objectives, and to identify the tools that allow the United States to be influential in the world. Match the tools to the objectives and consider when the use of armed force best serves U.S. interests.

Q: Did they use you as a resource for nuclear matters?

RUST: A little bit, but not much. They had at least one civilian faculty member who was more knowledgeable and experienced than I was in nuclear arms control. So they usually had a couple of courses related to it, and he taught them. I could remember a couple of different times being asked, “What is this arms control stuff really? This doesn’t make any sense to us. We are trained to sort of build these weapons and use them in such a way as to advance U.S. security, and you guys are trying to get rid of our weapons. We don’t understand how that makes us safer.” Many of them didn’t get it. I must say, the Air Force guys seemed to get it a lot sooner than the Army guys did.

Q: Well the air force is probably closer to the issue.

RUST: I don’t know the reason, but navy guys didn’t get it either. And they are also close to the issue with the sub guys. We had a boomer captain in my group.

Q: A boomer being a nuclear launch submarine.

RUST: A nuclear submarine that launches ballistic missiles. They call them boomers as opposed to attack subs that are nuclear submarines outfitted with torpedoes. But your point about the Air Force is well taken. There are three legs of our strategic nuclear weapons triad. The land based missiles and the bombers are under the province of the air force. The navy of course has the submarine launched missiles. The only nuke weapons the Army had were for land combat; the only time those weapons were featured in negotiated arms control measures was with the 1987 Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty.

Looking back at the Reagan Administration as a whole, Pakistan was a dominant issue within the nuclear nonproliferation community. It was trying to build a clandestine enrichment plant and we were trying to impede procurement and to convince the Paks that acquiring the bomb was not in their interest. The majority opinion in Congress was also against the Pak bomb, although Pak cooperation against the Soviets was everyone's top priority. Congress was convinced we could stop the bomb program in Pakistan and still funnel security assistance to make it difficult for the Soviets to be successful in Afghanistan. Whereas in the executive branch, it was my impression that most of the leadership had caved in by that time to the likelihood of the Pak bomb, except for the Arms Control Agency. Cynically, it appeared we were giving Congress the impression that we were working hard to stop the program, but most had lost hope. Besides we needed Pak support in efforts to keep the Mujahideen supplied in Afghanistan who were fighting against the Soviets. Now that is a pretty harsh criticism, but I think it is accurate.

Q: Also policies conflict form time to time. I mean you have to make your choice. Otherwise you go nowhere.

RUST: That’s right. But there was a suspicion among ACDA staff that missions to Pakistan by presidential envoys and such to urge nuclear restraint were done in such a way that the Paks knew we weren’t serious. Most of the pressure came from the Hill. John Glenn, Alan Cranston I think were both still in the Senate at the time. These guys were very strong on non proliferation. So they were threatening to support measures that would constrain our relationship with Pakistan and required an annual Presidential certification that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear explosive. This determination was often quite controversial, with ACDA usually the "skunk at the picnic." So there was a constant effort to keep Cranston and Glenn satisfied that we were engaging in vigorous diplomacy to keep Pakistan from getting the bomb.

Q: Within the agency was this a battle of frustration?

RUST: Yes, certainly among the career staff. We burned out a lot of Pakistan action officers over the years. I did not work the Pakistan program directly. My involvement was on the legislative front. If Cranston and Glenn proposed something I was the one who had to analyze it in terms of its impact on our Pakistani objectives. I worked with legal staff on these matters. By this time there was a welter of complex and arcane legislation that had been enacted including some related regulations. Somebody had to stay on top of all this stuff. The person who did Pakistan for us would come to me and say, “Well Glenn has another proposal. Will you please tell me its impact on our security assistance program and other bilateral or multilateral aid programs?' Working the Pakistani issue required enormous amounts of ACDA staff time in reviewing intelligence, and acting on those portions that were "actionable"; Pak procurement efforts in Europe as well as in the United States never seemed to stop, if one source was plugged, they always seemed to find another one. Pak procurement in Turkey of key centrifuge enrichment components was a headache for more than decade.

Q: Was there the feeling in ACDA that you could keep trying to stop the Paks but eventually they were going to do it.

RUST: There was always a certain degree of fatalism about that possibility and a realization that the best we could do is slow them down. But then that is not a bad thing. Those of us who work non proliferation often realize that the best we can really hope for is to contain the issue enough and hope for a political change that would cause a new government to change course. Now Pakistan, India, and Israel were always the most difficult cases. Even when we had 10 other difficult cases starting in the 1970s, it was clear that these three would be the toughest. Keeping the nuclear weapons option open was a long-standing position generally supported throughout the polity. That was not the case in other countries. In Argentina and Brazil and South Africa for example, their political leadership all evolved in a direction that ultimately caused those governments for whatever reason to decide that nuclear weapons were not part of their future, should not be part of their future. They concluded that security was better guaranteed in the long run by staying away from nuclear weapons. So whatever policies were put into place in the 60s, 70s, and 80 to slow down or restrain Argentina, Brazil and South Africa paid off eventually, because in the late 80s and early 90s all of them ultimately joined the regime.
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Q: I am looking at the clock and this is probably a good place to stop. We will pick up the great changes, the Soviet Union disappearing and other things, and pick up Bush I. How is that.

RUST: Fine, that's OK, great.

Q: Today is 19 December 2006. Dean, you said you had some things you wanted to mention before we moved to basically Bush I.

RUST: Yeah. There were a couple of things during the Reagan administration during the 80s, one general observation and one specific incident. I found myself by '82 or so, taking on a bigger role within ACDA, primarily by becoming the deputy director in ACDA in the office that did nuclear non proliferation. There had been quite a turnover since 74-75 and several new people -- if for no other reason than seniority I rose to the deputy director level. I was doing more oversight of both personnel and substantive matters. I had a bigger role in recommendations to political appointees in ACDA on a variety of issues. I also started to develop pretty strong relationships with many career officers in the State Department, primarily the career civil service officers who were working non proliferation. There was coterie of probably five or six of us career people who by that time had worked in the business at least eight to ten years in State and ACDA. We forged a pretty strong relationship. A lot of the work that was done or managed at a career level for the political appointees was done by that group. That was very satisfying.

Q: Looking back, did that group have a theme? Did this pudding have a theme as Churchill used to say? I mean were you of a like mind or just knew each other?

RUST: We were certainly of a like mind in terms of what our goals were. We all felt a very strong sense of mission about trying to come up with the best possible diplomatic approaches to preventing the spread of weapons. Being in ACDA, it was expected I would take a little stronger position. ACDA was always out there a little bit ahead of State on a lot of these things. Even though the State people I worked with were in the functional bureaus, they were subject to bureaucratic pressures from the regional bureaus. That was not the case in ACDA, and in essence was one of the main principles behind ACDA's creation. We always pushed pretty hard from the "purist" nonproliferation standpoint. But we all respected each other, and most of the time were able to find common ground.

Q: I can't remember. Did we talk about Reykjavik and the aftermath to that because that was quite an event. All of a sudden you found that President Reagan, the arch conservative, really detested nuclear weapons. I mean there was a visceral detestation. I give him full credit for this. He was not enamored by them. Did you pick this up at all?

RUST: It didn't come over quite that strongly, but yes Reagan's desire to get beyond the threat of nuclear war as an accepted fact of life between the US and USSR was clear. Again, I was not involved directly in US-USSR nuclear arms control. But this policy area had a spillover effect on nuclear nonproliferation. Any time there was momentum behind US-Soviet efforts to limit or reduce nuclear weapons we would experience a boost to our diplomacy aimed at preventing nuclear weapons from spreading to other states. Lets' face it - we had weapons for our security but were trying to persuade other countries that they shouldn't get weapons for their security. It was a difficult "sell" unless you were simultaneously trying to reduce your own nuclear weapon stockpiles. So the message of Reykjavik was positive for nuclear nonproliferation, even if Reagan and Gorbachev fell short of the ultimate goal to get rid of all of their nukes. Of course it is well known that Reykjavik helped to set the stage the intermediate nuclear forces treaty that was concluded in '87 between Gorbachev and Reagan in Washington. Also Reagan's aversion to nuclear weapons imparted a lot of support for his missile defense interest too, because he thought that someday nuclear weapons could become obsolete if both sides had an impenetrable defense.

I need to mention a personnel matter from this period that had a major impact on my career. In '85 one of my best friends in the office was charged with harboring code word material in improper storage. There was no evidence of compromise, but for convenience she had been taking the material to her regular office in State and out of the special vault area designed to protect such highly classified material. This was discovered, and she was removed from her position and put on administrative leave, and ultimately the security officer recommended that she be fired. She appealed the decision. On the day of her appeal hearing in 1987, Bob Woodward wrote a front page story about it in the Washington Post. It was just an extraordinarily messy time. I was one of her friends and, while disgusted at her sloppiness and failure to adhere to rules for protecting codeword material, I certainly didn’t think that she was deserving of losing her career over this infraction. While the material had been removed from the vault, it was still being stored and used in a classified area. One of my supervisors told me later that during this time there was a noticeable downturn in my performance. I wasn't as productive because I was actually helping her quite a bit at the time. I ran around the Department of State and got 65 affidavits on her behalf during the appeal period to help persuade the decision makers that it was a serious lapse of judgment on her part, but that she doesn’t deserve to be fired for it.

Q: What happened?

RUST: Well, the decision to fire her was overturned on appeal, but she was given a job in the library, in the arms control and disarmament library. She kept her top secret clearance, but she would never again get an intelligence clearance. She still was employed but in a job far different from what she was doing before. She worked for a couple of years and then she went south, got a law degree and is now a lawyer in Atlanta. But it certainly demonstrated to me the difficulty of fighting the system. I recall a couple people advising her early on to resign and not to try to fight "city hall." The government has enormous resources to fight you on this stuff. It doesn’t matter whether the punitive measures are fair or unfair. Unfortunately she had made some enemies in the intelligence community and in certain policy circles. She just made a stupid mistake. When you make stupid mistakes and you have enemies, they are going to come after you. That is exactly what happened. Anyway I wanted to mention that incident, because I spent a good deal of time on the job -- with my boss's knowledge -- in trying to rally support for her from her colleagues in the building.

Q: What are we talking about when we are talking about making enemies?

RUST: Well, she worked the Pakistan portfolio. When you work the Pakistan nuclear portfolio in the arms control agency, the evidence pretty much points almost consistently towards Pakistani efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. A lot of people didn’t want to believe it. She was persistent, to a fault, in pressing the case and in firm U.S. policy steps to curtail the program. Of course, pressing Pakistan on its nuclear program tended to put that policy objective above others -- which not everyone agreed with. She also didn’t know how to maintain good personal working relationships without taking a strong policy view. She was seldom willing to compromise. Some in the intel community became weary of what they perceived as her abrasive personality. I know of another Pakistani analyst who did much the same work that she did into the late 80s and early 90s and ended up crossways with, in this case the defense department. He ultimately lost his job, nor for security reasons, but for suspicions that he had gone to the Congress with a point of view that he couldn't sell inside DOD. The problem is this stuff happens all the time in Washington, but it's only the "small fish" that get fried upon discovery. Officials cut security and bureaucratic corners all the time in handling classified information and in pursuing policy objectives. With rogue states like Iran and North Korea, it's not that much of a problem. There usually aren't conflicting objectives, but with India and Pakistan and Israel too for that matter, we have always had important objectives that conflict with nonproliferation. In such cases, the nonproliferation types always get a big push back whenever they press their interests. They make enemies, who are only to happy to see you suffer from a misstep.

Q: We are talking about a bunch of people who were confined to the same sandbox. They had been doing it for say ten or more years. I am used to the foreign service thing where every two years somebody else comes in. But many in the civil service deal with a primary substantive area over their career and gain a great deal of professional expertise, and you are dealing with others in other agencies with much of the same experience. It is a little bit like universities, where you get into rather esoteric debates. In this case they are not esoteric, they are real debates. You don't have a lot people coming in and out. You're there and that is your issue and that is your fight.

RUST: Well that is one of the main reasons for creating the agency and behind the functional bureaus in the State Department. Sure, the Pakistani desk could deal with all aspects of our relationship with Pakistan whether it is arms control or human rights or narcotics or terrorism or proliferation. They could do that, but even the state Department has decided to create functional bureaus for these global issues that cut across all regions. That said, there were even differences between ACDA and the State functional bureaus that worked arms control and nonproliferation. One of these bureaus, PM, was accustomed to working within State, and consistently had to tailor its views to get clearance from the regional bureaus. Whereas ACDA, as an independent agency, did not face those same kinds of restraints. Of course, that independence cuts both ways; it can create more space for pursuit of arms control and nonproliferation policies, but it also creates more policy friction with the State Department, which is always the 800 pound diplomacy gorilla and able to run over or around ACDA at a whim. This happened more on nonproliferation than on arms control, the latter became an institutional prerogative of ACDA going back to the 1970 with SALT and the ABM Treaty. ACDA simply out resourced State in arms control substance and as long as those in State responsible for U.S.-Soviet relations were happy, there weren't any problems. However, nonproliferation issues cover the globe and had more of a potential for stepping on a number of bilateral relationships. Whenever ACDA became too aggressive on nonproliferation, we had little chance of prevailing unless it was a major issue and the ACDA Director had a good relationship with the Secretary of State.

Q: I am just trying to point out that there is a difference between the perspectives of a regular rotating FSO and a civil service functional specialist. Ok , you are trying prevent non proliferation. For example, trying to keep the Brazilians and Argentines from nuclear competition. Were you able or did you have any ability to reach out to particularly academics and to the media in these countries and say this is a pile of *nonsense. Don't do this. In other words to create a body of public opinion to show this costs money and it is dangerous, and it doesn't go anywhere.*

RUST: USIA was trying to do that. In their public diplomacy function overseas they would sponsor fora in which opinion makers in Argentina and Brazil would discuss these issues informally with U.S. officials or with U.S. academics, journalists, or people from think tanks. Of course, our Embassies in Argentina and Brazil would have private discussions with officials in those countries, trying to persuade them of the importance of nonproliferation goals. That said, I don't think it was a top goal in USIA; after all, the Cold War was still on. Moreover, there was little interaction between ACDA and the public diplomacy people in USIA, which was as much our fault as theirs. Every five years we would hear from them, i.e. whenever the NPT Review Conference was held. USIA would come in and try to help us out and provide money and some suggestions for vehicles we could use to influence other countries about the NPT. But I don't recall a continuous program that focused on the underlying security question of whether nukes were good or bad, and trying to persuade the non-governmental elites that their country would be better of without nuclear weapons.

Q: This is tape three, side one with Dean Rust.

RUST: We were talking about public diplomacy and the role it might have in helping to influence other governments that they should not seek nuclear weapons. There was some of that done, but not as much as I think there could or should have been.

Q: There does seem to be a disconnect. I never really thought about it, but you have got to create the political will to do this. Some places, I am not sure in Pakistan you could persuade the leaders to disavow nuclear weapons, but certainly in some other places it may have been possible.

RUST: It's useful to look at this whole effort from an historical standpoint. Nuclear weapons appeared on the scene at the end of WWII, and by the mid 1960s twenty years later, you have five states with nuclear weapons. Up to that point, world statesmen had been focusing on trying to develop some kind of international instrument where nobody would have nuclear weapons, i.e. no new nuclear weapon states and those that had them would agree to get rid of them. It didn't work. So they decided to try a different approach -- draw a line in the sand in the 60s. Five nuclear weapon states and no more; and the existing nuclear states agreed only to a general commitment to work toward elimination -- nothing specific. That led to the 1970 NPT, only 50 or 60 countries initially joined. No one knew if this would work. Would the NPT create a norm that everybody supports. A lot of countries said "look in theory this is fine, but I am not going to join until I see whether this thing is successful." You can chart a steady increase in the number of parties so that by the late 80s, there were 165-170 countries that had joined by that time. Most had ultimately concluded that their national security in fact was better enhanced by disavowing nuclear weapons and creating a regime where their neighbors also were not seeking weapons.

That said, we also knew the regional political situation in the middle east as well as south Asia was going to be the toughest nut to crack. When I came into the business in 1970, it was obvious Israel, India, and Pakistan were going to very difficult. But there were other states that were strongly against the NPT in 1970 where we held out more hope. We talked about that last time -- states such as South Africa, Argentina, Brazil, Egypt. Whoever thought that the strongest Arab state would disavow weapons before Israel did. Nobody ever thought that. But political changes can yield policy changes. Nonproliferation is essentially an effort to hold the line, i.e. sustain a international regime that satisfies those who have already joined while offering a cost/benefit ratio to those outside that can ultimately appeal under the right political leadership. Of course, your general diplomacy aimed fostering stability in volatile regions is one of the most important indirect tools you have to foster nonproliferation. I am fond of saying that the Camp David Accords were one of the biggest non proliferation events in the Middle East, as it led to a negotiated peace between Egypt and Israel. And it led Sadat to join the NPT in 1981, thus breaking a major taboo among Arabs who had continued to resist the NPT while Israel was outside the Treaty. The elimination of Egypt as a potential nuclear competitor to Israel may also have contributed to Israel's continued willingness to keep its bomb in the basement.

Q: Well then we move to the Bush I administration which would be ’89-’93.

RUST: Yeah, I would say the dominant issues during Bush I were the break up of the Soviet Union and the first gulf war. Both had major consequences for the nonproliferation business. Let’s talk about the break up of the Soviet Union first.. We were confronted with the 15 republics of the former Soviet Union, many of whom had nuclear weapons deployed in their territories including tactical nuclear weapons. So as the assemblage of republics began to break up, we were faced with a potential proliferation calamity in which all or some of the new republics would try to take possession of the nuclear weapons for bargaining or security reasons. Well of course most of the new republics had little interest or capacity to deal with nuclear weapons. And the weapons had always been under the control of the central government out of Moscow, and so it was not that difficult for the Soviet armed forces, who generally stayed loyal to Moscow during the breakup, to retain control of the weapons and ultimately return them to Russia. Nobody could ever say for sure that a weapon was not stolen during this period, but there has never been solid evidence to that effect. Apparently, we dodged a bullet, but only history will tell.

Of course, the most difficult cases were those states where long range Soviet missile forces were deployed, i.e. land based intercontinental ballistic missiles with warheads on the top of the missile. That was primarily Belarus, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and of course, Russia. It took some very skillful diplomacy by the Bush I administration to persuade them, in the first instance, to become party to the broader U.S.- Soviet arms control treaty (START) that had been signed in July 1991 -- a few months before the Soviet breakup. So the original bilateral START Treaty ultimately became a Treaty with five parties - U.S., Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine. START did not enter into force until 1994, the second year of the Clinton Administration. It took that much time to persuade

Ukraine, in particularly, to give up these nuclear missiles and to join the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state. It happened only after the Ukrainians were offered certain security and economic guarantees. The EU-U.S. and Japan all made clear there would be no integration into Western institutions unless they gave up the nukes. In retrospect, it all sort of fell into place but only after a great deal of international pressure to conform the Soviet breakup to the principles of the NPT, i.e. no new nuclear weapon states beyond those identified in the NPT should emerge. Russia inherited the former Soviet Union's designation as a nuclear weapon state under the NPT and all other former Soviet republics became non-nuclear states and joined the NPT as such. Without the NPT, there would have been no established norm or principle behind which to rally the international community to prevent further proliferation.

The other major event was the first Gulf War in ’91, when after hostilities were over led to the discovery of a nuclear weapons program in Iraq far more advanced than previously imagined. It became clear that the international safeguards and export controls and systems in place prior to that time were not effective and needed to be strengthened. So over the next couple or three years I would say ’91 to ’93, the nuclear suppliers group adopted stronger controls. And the IAEA, International Atomic Energy Agency that conducts inspections and safeguards to nuclear facilities, also strengthened its system in a way that expanded their authority to inspect and to demand greater accountability from states with nuclear programs.

This nuclear discovery in Iraq seemed to stimulate improved national policies. China and France decided it was time to join the NPT, which they did after having held the treaty at arms length for 20 years. South Africa joined the NPT and disclosed a prior nuclear weapons program. Of course, the quickly evolving political leadership situation in South Africa had the most to do with its nuclear decisions. Clearly the former white government saw majority rule coming, and decided to forswear nuclear weapons under the NPT. They told us after the fact that they dismantled six nuclear weapons prior to joining the Treaty, with the nuclear material removed from the weapons and placed under international safeguards and transferred over to peaceful purposes.

It's interesting to note that major events have stimulated great leaps forward. In ’74, India's nuclear test explosion led to the formation of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and to improvements in IAEA safeguards. The same thing occurred after the 1991 discovery of the Iraqi nuclear program.

Another development during Bush I was the first discussion of whether ACDA was still needed in the wake of the Cold War. ACDA, this argument goes, was created in 1961 during the Kennedy Administration as a specialized tool to help negotiations between ourselves and the Soviets on nuclear arms issues. And now that the Soviet Union had fallen apart, perhaps ACDA was no longer needed. Bush I and his crew didn’t really do anything along those lines, but these were the first seeds of a theme that was ultimately seized upon by the Republican majority in Congress during the Clinton Administration.

Bush I was also a time of considerable diplomacy and pressures surrounding the Pakistan nuclear program. Pakistan had gotten a "pass" on its nuclear program during the Reagan years when the Soviets were in Afghanistan. However, following the Soviet withdrawal, nonproliferation concerns were again paramount and eventually U.S. security assistance to Pakistan -- which continued under a exemption while the Soviets were in Afghanistan -- was again under pressure and ultimately ceased. I remember that Congress required an annual certification from the President as to whether or not Pakistan was cooperating effectively in restraining its nuclear program. Not surprisingly, this certification became much more difficult to make once the Soviets were out of Afghanistan. It's my sense that the only reason that there was ever any debate over this certification is because ACDA continued to force the Executive branch to confront the facts of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program despite U.S. pressure to turn it off.

Q: After the Iraqi discoveries, did you find there was better cooperation among the five nuclear weapon states in issues like export controls and safeguards?

RUST: Yes, not only among the nuclear weapons producing countries, but also with other major exporters of civil nuclear material and equipment like Germany and Japan. In 1992, the nuclear suppliers group expanded their control lists two fold -- to catch items that had previously slipped through. And these major countries decided at that time to essentially limit their major civil nuclear cooperation to NPT parties; so that if you were outside the NPT you would be getting no new nuclear supply commitments. This had been a U.S. national policy since 1978, but was not adopted by all other major suppliers until 1992. And during the first years of the Clinton there were additional leaps forward in strengthening IAEA safeguards.

Q: Well you know, from a superficial reading of the papers, one could easily come away with the impression that the French and the Germans, particularly their commercial interests, were prepared to deal with anyone including Saddam. Was there within ACDA a feeling that you had to watch out for French and German business?

RUST: Yes, particularly before the Gulf War. We had intelligence information that led us to believe that Saddam was trying to procure some things clandestinely that we thought were related to a weapons program. We often talked to the Germans and French and others about this. The only ones we were ever able to persuade very much were the British, but then we and the UK share a lot of the same intelligence. But the commercial pressures were much stronger in Germany and France, and they were more dubious about our claims that Saddam was seeking this stuff for nuclear weapons, and their commercial pressures were greater. But after ’91, and the discovery of Iraq's nuclear weapons program, the attitude was different. In the first few years of the 1990's, there was substantial positive collaboration. Recall, that a commission was set up under UN security council resolution 687 to dismantle any WMD and missile programs that were found in Iraq. Even the Russians and Chinese did not pose any substantial opposition to strengthened cooperative actions that took place at the IAEA, nuclear suppliers group, or the UN Security Council. The Chinese were coming along slowly, and many questions were raised in regard to their national export policies and practices. But they had joined the IAEA in the mid 80s. By 1991 they had become an NPT party. So in general they didn't stand in the way of collective action. All things considered, this was a heady time for nonproliferation; a lot of us felt we were doing pretty good by ’92-’93. But of course it wasn't only the quality of U.S. diplomacy that accounted for these gains; the unearthing of Iraq's nuclear weapons program provided a substantial impetus.

Q: I recall India during this time making a big deal about trying to call the Indian Ocean a nuclear free zone. You know we had ships run by nuclear power, naval ships with nuclear weapons etc. I mean this is obviously anathema, but did this fall into your bailiwick at all?

RUST: Only slightly. The Indians pursued this initiative primarily in the context of the UN. The Indian Ocean zone of peace is what they called it. Taken literally, the zone of peace could have meant that our naval vessels would not be accorded free transit rights and so on. It was dealt with by a different part of ACDA, that part that followed UN disarmament issues. We abstained or voted against it whenever the resolution came up. The British, French would usually join us in voting. We would pick up 20 or 30 of our allies which abstained. It was kind of a nuisance once or twice a year. Again in our bilateral relationship with the Indians we kept trying to explain why this was something we didn’t appreciate them doing, but again remember our relations with the Indians were pretty bad for a long time.

Q: During this time, was there also a watching brief on Iran?

RUST: Yes, no question about it. But I would say during the first decade or more of the mullahs rule Iran didn't outwardly demonstrate much evidence of interest in a nuclear program. The Shah had developed a civil nuclear power program before he was overturned. But it hadn’t gotten very far along. He was building some reactors. It wasn’t until the 90’s or perhaps the mid 90s that things were getting pretty hot. But there was always a watching brief against Tehran. Intelligence was targeted against them just like against Iraq had been. We were also worried about Libya. Everybody knew who the more radical states in the region were, and who might want to get weapons. But during the first President Bush, I don’t think the evidence of Iranian intent became high enough to justify action against procurement and certainly not at the IAEA. Of course, we know today that its clandestine actions actually began late in the Reagan Administration.

Q: How about North Korea?

RUST: Oh yeah, for sure. I am glad you asked because during Bush I most of our North Korea diplomatic effort was focused on getting the DPRK to bring into force its IAEA safeguards agreement under the NPT. The DPRK joined the NPT in 1985, and under the terms of the Treaty this safeguards agreement was required to be in force 18 months later. Here it was 1989,1990 and nothing had happened. Getting the IAEA in on the ground in North Korea was important. Of course, a lot of effort was spent on getting the Russians and Chinese to lean on the North Koreans. The IAEA got involved and I recollect that it was around this time that the North Koreans started to get at cross purposes with the IAEA. The safeguards agreement finally came into force -- I don't remember precisely when, perhaps in 1992 -- and it was the next year or late in 1992 that the IAEA came up with the first safeguards problem. We also began to see what eventually became the DPRK reprocessing facility, although there was some dispute about what it was at the time. And then early in the Clinton Administration (1993) the IAEA formally declared the DPRK in violation of its NPT safeguards agreement and the DPRK formally notified the world (March 1993) of its intention to withdraw from the NPT. This was the first such notification; the DPRK did it again ten years later. But during Bush I, we were focusing primarily on the DPRK's delay in completing its safeguards. We easily suspected that one of the reasons they were being dilatory on that was that they were doing some things internally that they didn't want the international inspectors to see. And of course we did see additional construction at one of their nuclear sites which was later confirmed to be a reprocessing plant.

Q: At the time how important was the overhead imagery, in other words, satellites taking pictures over a country? One gets the impression that this atomic nuclear stuff is something you can cook up in a lab. Does a bomb program require extensive facilities or not? Could there be an overemphasis on overhead photography?

RUST: Well, my recollection is that we had virtually no human intelligence on North Korea, so all we had were communications intercepts and overhead photography -- and probably not much in the way of intercepts. I believe we were relying primarily on overhead photography. In general, while you can cook up suspect nuclear facilities on a small scale in a lab, you need a bigger facility to produce the quantities of nuclear material necessary to make a bomb. But even then, some of the visible signatures of a large reprocessing plant may not always be in evidence and lead to doubts. As I said, there were disputes for a while about the North Korean reprocessing plant. I have seen a lot of overhead photographs over the years and have had a lot of analysts try to explain the meaning of a trench outside a facility or that this venting system resembles what you would see in a nuclear plant. It's not an exact science, and I don't recall that there was any overemphasis on photography. The intel community tapped all resources and came up with the best explanation they could for what was going on. It's as simple as that.

Q: Well Bush I leaves and Clinton comes in. The Clinton administration came in essentially on domestic policy. The phrase was "It's the economy, stupid." One did have a feeling there was a certain amount of a learning curve as they came in. Did you feel that in your business?

RUST: Well, there is always a learning curve, regardless of Administration. However, some get to arms control and nonproliferation earlier than others - Carter was particularly fast out of the box since his campaign had focused on it. I believe Clinton didn't announce the basic outlines of his nuclear nonproliferation policy until his first speech to UNGA in September, '93. The primary nuclear focus in the first couple years was to complete the work of Bush I in regard to the START Treaty. The Bush people had begun the negotiations with Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine in addition to Russia and the U.S. to try to expand START I. There was a lot of debate in '93-'94 within Ukraine about whether they should retain possession of these weapons as insurance against pressure from the Russians in the future. It took quite a bit of time to work through the Ukrainian parliament and the leadership of Ukraine at that time. A deal was finally cut which had several elements. The details are very hazy, but the Russians found some way to compensate Ukraine for the "peaceful" nuclear energy value represented by the nuclear material in the weapons; and the United States, Russia, and the British provided certain security assurances to Ukraine. This deal was culminated at a summit in December of 1994 when the START I Treaty entered into force and Ukraine officially became a non-nuclear-weapon state party under the NPT.

The Clinton nuclear nonproliferation strategy was essentially a continuation of what Bush had pursued, but with a couple major differences. One was Clinton's decision to conclude a treaty to ban nuclear explosive testing, the so-called comprehensive test ban treaty. The U.S. had generally supported since the 1950's a treaty to ban all nuclear testing, but the constellation of political forces -- international and domestic -- did not come into alignment until 1993. That said, over the years a subset of scientists and policy specialists had come to believe that it would be unwise for the U.S. to abandon the right to test as long as we had nuclear weapons; and this view coincided with the more conservative elements of the Republican party. There was a huge internal debate about this, and I recall that Secretary of Energy Hazel O'Leary played a big role in this decision; ACDA was for it, but State seemed agnostic and of course DOD seldom sees any value - regardless of Administration - in any limits on the U.S. nuclear weapons program. The other treaty we supported at that time was a treaty among all the nuclear powers that they would stop producing fissile material for weapons. No halt in the production of weapons, but they would produce no more fissile material for weapons. So those were two big initiatives that were announced in '93 by Clinton.

There was also a review about the future of ACDA, my agency that is the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. Reportedly, Warren Christopher - Clinton's first Secretary of State-- saw some merit in folding it into State; but Clinton ultimately decided to retain the status quo.

The other thing that happened in '93 at the beginning of the Clinton Administration was the North Korean notification it was going to withdraw from the NPT. This came about because once the DPRK's NPT safeguards agreement finally was implemented, the IAEA quickly discovered some suspicious activity. The DPRK declined to provide the IAEA with the necessary access and information to address this activity and the IAEA board of governors found them in violation of the treaty. The issue was forwarded to the Security Council for action. At the same time the North Koreans said, "If that is the way you are going to treat us, then we are going to withdraw from the NPT." The treaty has a withdrawal clause that allows a state to withdraw 90 days after submitting a notification of its intent to do so. The North Koreans provided this notification in March of '93 which set off a frenzied round of diplomacy for the next three months to try to persuade them otherwise. Ultimately they "suspended" their withdrawal. They did not withdraw from the treaty because a deal was negotiated, which in turn led to the famous or infamous (depending on your perspective) agreed framework of 1994. The U.S. North Korean agreed framework set in place a series of mutually agreed steps in which the North Koreans would ultimately come into compliance with the NPT, put all their facilities under safeguards. In exchange the United States would provide assistance in energy, first oil. Ultimately we would assist the South Koreans and the Japanese in building a nuclear power reactor in North Korea to help them with their energy needs. There were also other inducements in the package including expanding economic ties and improving bilateral relations etc.

We continued to work at the IAEA to improve safeguards. I mentioned that after the discovery of the Iraqi nuclear weapons program in '91, there was a move within the IAEA with strong support from the United States to improve inspection modalities and to provide better equipment such as cameras and seals. The physical scientists in our office worked many long hours to generate ideas and to develop international support for this effort.

Q: By this time, which countries were the primary focus of our nuclear nonproliferation efforts?

RUST: Let's see, by this time Argentina and Brazil had abandoned any interest in keeping the nuclear weapons option open and by early 1994, I think, had brought all their nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards. South Africa had joined the NPT. All the former Soviet republics had also joined the NPT. We were left with North Korea; and Iran because by about '94, we started to see an up tick in interest of the Islamic government to rekindle the nuclear program begun under the Shah. The Russians became interested in completing the nuclear power reactors in Iran at Bushehr that the Germans had started in the 70s. We began urging the Russians to stand down from this type of assistance to Iran unless or until we were satisfied that the Iranians were bona fide members of the NPT. However, we had no smoking gun of a violation at that time. There was a consistent effort in Iraq by the IAEA under Security Council resolutions to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. Libya's nuclear activities were also constantly monitored. While there was no doubt then of its intent, Libya was never successful in obtaining all the technology necessary nor in developing an infrastructure capable of acquiring nuclear weapons. Finally, India and Pakistan remained of intense interest. Both had clearly developed the capability to acquire nuclear weapons and as non-NPT parties there was no legal barrier to there doing so. However, the U.S. continued to counsel against that final step and to urge their acceptance of partial limits such as no testing and a halt in the production of new fissile material for nuclear weapons, and of course to adopt strong measures against the spread of their sensitive nuclear technologies to other countries.

Q: Were we doing anything with Israel? It seems that just about everybody had accepted by that time that Israel has got weapons tucked away.

RUST: I remind you that since 1978 U.S. law and policy had placed a virtual civil nuclear embargo on Israel, as well as on the other primary non-NPT parties which by the mid-1990's had dwindled to India and Pakistan. The principle behind this approach is to give states a choice; if they wish to keep their power dry and retain the freedom to acquire nuclear weapons, they certainly may do so as a sovereign state. However, under those circumstances they would ineligible for civil nuclear assistance from the U.S. And of course in 1992, all the members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group adopted essentially the same approach. It was also my impression that very senior people in each new Administration advised the Israelis to keep their nuclear program "in the basement" so to speak. We didn't need further complications in the Middle East. That said, I have no direct knowledge of such discussions.

After the Madrid Middle East Peace Conference of 1993, there was a working group that covered WMD issues and the U.S. tried to get the Israelis and Egyptians in particular to engage on nuclear questions, focusing on "baby steps" and leaving the tough issue of Israeli NPT adherence to the future. That had very little success as the Egyptians ultimately could not tolerate "baby steps" and kept pushing the nuclear envelope farther than the Israelis could tolerate. There were also so called track two discussions ongoing during this period, in which ACDA played a major role. These discussions encouraged meetings among experts from regional states, both governmental and non-governmental, in an unofficial format. They might focus on what kind of elements would go into a regional nuclear weapons free zone in the middle east. There would be no negotiations; just informal discussion about how such a concept might work. The Director General of the IAEA, in response to resolutions of the IAEA Board and/or General Conference, would travel to various capitals in the middle east including Tel Aviv, talking about the need for an informal dialogue on the modalities of Middle East nuclear weapons free zone.

Few realize that the Israelis actually voted for the UN General Assembly resolution that commended the NPT back in ’68. In theory they are not against the NPT. But as long as their security concerns aren’t met, they are not going to join it. This could change if some day there is a secure peace in the region. In general, I don't think our approach to Israel was that much different from our approach to India and Pakistan. It's been clear since 1970 that there are major hurdles to overcome to get these states to forswear nuclear weapons under the NPT. That said, we still supported their joining in NPT in principle, but urged them to accept interim measures such as the comprehensive test ban treaty and the ban on production of fissile material for nuclear weapons that I mentioned earlier. One caveat: these were the views of U.S. Administrations up until the current one. The current Administration seems far less interested in the nuclear weapon risks posed by Pakistan, India, and Israel. They are taking an entirely different approach that focuses the risk solely on the rogues. Nuclear weapons in the hands of our friends, e.g. India, Israel, Pakistan, may not be desirable, but it's a fact of life and we are not going to complain about it.

Q: At this point, the nuclear rogues were considered to be Iraq and North Korea.

RUST: And Iran to some extent.

Q: Iran was a potential rogue, or maybe more than that.

RUST: We always believed Iran had a strong motivation to acquire nuclear weapons.

After all, Iraq's nuclear weapons program was officially discovered in 1991. Even though Saddam was under sanctions, it didn't take a great leap of logic to think that Iran may be heading down the nuclear path as well. Although, as I said earlier it wasn't until the mid-1990's that the intelligence started to point more conclusively in that direction. Of course, we know now that Iran began this effort ten years prior. So Iran, Iraq, North Korea, and of course Libya were very suspect during the 90s. We leaned a lot on countries that were contemplating any nuclear transactions with Iran and Libya. Iraq, of course, was under sanctions by this time and North Korea's program, at least the plutonium portion that we were aware of, was primarily an indigenous effort.

Q: Did you feel the demise of the Soviet Union had a desirable effect on the equation of the countries we were concerned about one way or another?

RUST: Certainly, the former Warsaw Pact states of Eastern Europe became more cooperative with efforts to control nuclear procurement by the rogues. Our political relationship was so much stronger and that fact translated into a greater willingness to respond favorably to U.S. demarches on nonproliferation. But, I can't say off hand that there was a noticeable difference with regard to the former Soviet republics. Iran is the only one of the rogues that entered into the calculus. It had money and was not under UN sanctions, and so the Russians, desperately in need of economic lifelines, were not particularly helpful. But frankly, even if the Soviet Union had still been in business I doubt we would have gotten much more cooperation on Iran. It's not that the Russians trust Iran - they don't; and they don't want a nuclear-armed Iran on their border. But the cost/benefit ratio between security and economics is not as clear cut to them when, as in Iran, the potentially threatening program is still at an early stage and is under international safeguards.

Q: A real concern was when the Soviet Union broke up and the Russians essentially went broke. They went through very difficult times. You had this whole nuclear establishment, all these scientists and all who didn't have a job. So they were sending out their résumés.

RUST: Right. There was a risk that this would all kind of flood into countries who were seeking their own nuclear weapons like Iran, Iraq, North Korea and so on. So the whole purpose behind Nunn-Lugar was to provide funding, to help establish scientific establishments in the former Soviet Union that would draw these scientists in and keep them employed in peaceful pursuits and decrease the chances that they would be lured away to other places.

Nunn-Lugar and related programs have done much more. They have helped to fund security upgrades at places where substantial amounts of fissile material was stored, even fissile material for peaceful applications. The concern was that, for example, 20 kilograms of peaceful plutonium sitting in Kazakhstan was no longer subject to strong central controls and moreover its sale to the highest bidder could bring in much needed cash. So the U.S. has spent probably up to $15 billion over the past 15 years in trying to find alternative employment for scientists in the former Soviet Union, protecting certain strategic assets that have not been dismantled like these stockpiles of fissile material, helping dismantle a large number of nuclear weapons and missiles and submarines. We tried to help them technically and financially with the elimination of any part of their WMD arsenal to which they were committed. Under the chemical weapons conventions, which entered into force in 1997, the Russians (and the U.S.) have agreed to dismantle huge stocks. We have helped them in the construction of these huge facilities that you need to dismantle these weapons. All U.S. allies understand this and from the Japanese to the Germans to the French to the British, the Dutch, the Italians, they all have a little piece of this.

You may have heard of science centers set up both in Moscow and one in Kiev to coordinate the distribution of grants to former Soviet WMD scientists. They review applications from these former WMD scientists for doing peaceful work. They determine if a proposal merits funding. So it is an ongoing exercise. Many other countries than the United States are involved in it. It has been ongoing for the last 15 years. Even the current administration, with its predictable suspicion of everything that preceded it, ultimately decided to continue these efforts. Of course there has always been a lot of support from the hill for this even among Republicans. That said, Lugar has occasionally been impatient about the pace of the program and of "conditionality" that intrudes - including from the Hill itself which he is unable to stop. Understandably, Congress is looking for transparency from the Russians, which they occasionally are unwilling to provide. It creates "bumps" in the road. But by and large I think that most objective observers at this stage of our history would look back and say that nothing really major that we know of in the last 15 years has leaked out of the Soviet Union to increase the prospects of proliferation elsewhere. Proliferation elsewhere has happened, and the threats are still there, but there is no indication that these increased threats are due to leakage from the former Soviet Union.

Q: In many ways what you are doing from Bush I to Clinton to Bush II really can be taken as sort of a continuum or not.

RUST: Yeah, there are aspects of Bush II that reflect a continuum. However, in other ways some of Bush II approaches diverged significantly from the continuum that was established the last 25 years. But, in general, from 1970 to 2001, there was little dispute among the Republican and Democratic Administration. When Reagan came in there was a little kind of a bump, but it settled back fairly quickly to the traditional approaches. But from 2001 on , we have had a pretty major difference.

Q: Well have we covered Clinton well?

RUST: No, I need to mention a few other things. ’95 was a key year because the NPT, that had entered into force in 1970, was per Article X subject to a decision by the parties on extension of the Treaty. It provided two or three options, indefinite extension, or extension for set periods. The parties could decide in ’95 to extend it indefinitely, or to extend it for 10 years or maybe for rolling 10 year periods. The point is when the treaty was negotiated in 1970, it was not made a permanent treaty. The NPT was an experiment. The parties decided they had to take another look after 25 years and determine how long to extend it. If the Treaty had been a bust, they could have extended it one day. So, this was a big deal. A conference was called for the Spring of 1995 to review the Treaty and make a decision on extension.

They could have extended it ten years, so that in 2005 the Treaty would end. You can imagine what the world would be like today if that had been the decision. The legal constraints against much of proliferation would come off; and countries like Iran could do whatever it pleased and there would be no NPT or IAEA safeguards agreement to serve as the legal basis on which to challenge these actions in the Security Council. The U.S. and its allies and Russia supported an indefinite extension. The primary pressure for a less than indefinite extension came from some countries in the non aligned movement who were not happy that the existing nuclear powers still had too many nuclear weapons. The NPT deal in 1970 as interpreted by many countries was that non-nuclear states would give up the right to acquire weapons if the nuclear weapons states guys promised to get rid of theirs. It is 25 years later, and I am sorry say these countries, you have not done a good enough job of getting rid of yours and we suspect you have no intention of doing so. These governments, probably never more than 15-20, pushed for something less than indefinite extension, e.g. extension for 10 years with another vote for another 10 year extension. This was a way of "keeping the pressure" on the nuclear weapon states vice an indefinite extension, which these governments believed would leave the nuclear weapon states off the hook. The reasoning goes that any threat to the viability of the NPT causes alarm in the existing nuclear weapon states as the dissolution of the Treaty could lead to rampant proliferation and threaten the current dominance of the U.S., UK, France, Russia and China. Obviously, there is something to this argument; although the analysis is not as clear cut as some in the NAM would believe.

By late ’94, the Clinton administration under prodding from ACDA finally realized the importance of this decision and gave the NPT extension a high priority for 1995. Secretary of State Warren Christopher made clear this was one of the President top foreign policy priorities and that a concerted diplomatic plan had to be undertaken. Weekly, then twice a week, then as we got closer, almost every day, representatives from all the State regional bureaus and the arms control agency got together to coordinate their diplomatic efforts to persuade all countries that this treaty should be extended indefinitely. The United States worked with nuclear weapons states, our allies, Eastern European states, in an effort to go into the conference with as much support as we possibly could. We weren’t alone in this by any means. Most NPT parties continued to share the view that the chance of nuclear war would increase if we have more nuclear powers. So even if some were dissatisfied with the efforts of the nuclear weapon states, it was a "no brainer" for many to make the NPT a permanent fixture of the global security framework.

By that time we had 175 parties or something like that. Anyway, to make a long story short, it took an enormous amount of time of the Arms Control Agency and of my office. I was responsible for one of the major U.S. initiatives for the Conference which had to do with negative security assurances, which are commitments by nuclear weapons states not to use nuclear weapons against NPT non-nuclear parties. We believe we could gain more support for an indefinite extension if the nuclear weapons states undertook a new initiative on non use of nuclear weapons. So I single handedly pretty much coordinated an effort that led to each of the five nuclear weapons states issuing their own national declarations in April of 1995. There was a Security Council resolution about a week later that welcomed these statements. Of course, the Clinton Administration was also engaged in serious negotiations on a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; a fact that also helped to generate more support for an indefinite NPT extension. The outcome was a success. By about the 3rd week of the four week Conference, about 110 NPT parties had publicly committed to indefinite extension. Since only a majority of 175 was needed to make this decision, we were over the top and the opponents conceded defeat.

In 1996 the CTBT was opened for signature and the United States signed it. The United States in '96 also signed two protocols to nuclear weapons free zone treaties, the South pacific and the African nuclear free zone treaties. These were treaties negotiated by the regional states, sort of regional NPTs but which also had protocols under which nuclear weapons states would pledge not to use nuclear weapons against parties in the zone. There were two major developments in 1997. One was the model IAEA safeguards protocol, which was designed to significantly expand the authority of the IAEA to apply safeguards in NPT parties. ACDA led the negotiations and the IAEA Board of Governors approved the Protocol in June of that year, I believe.

The other major 1997 development was the Administration's decision to merge ACDA into the State Department, an action that it had resisted from 1993. I recall Director John Holum calling to senior staff together and breaking the news. This deal was cut by the White House to gain the acquiescence of Senator Jesse Helms in allowing the chemical weapons convention ratification issue to go to the floor of the Senate. The Administration had to give up something and Helms has been pushing for a long time for an integration of the foreign affairs agencies. So USIA and ACDA both were selected to merger into the State Department. It was to happen very quickly. So over a period of about eight to ten weeks in the summer of '97 I served on a special task force working with PM in State to work out the specifics of this merger. I was one of only three people in the arms control agency involved in the merger of the substantive offices; there was a very senior political appointee and two assistant policy specialist on strategic nuclear mattes. By this time I had some 25 years in ACDA so I was one of the longer-serving employees, particularly in nonproliferation. Ultimately, while most of the planning had been done and presented to the Congress, the merger was postponed because the necessary legislative authority didn't pass that year. There was no real Congressional opposition to the merger, but it got hung up in one of the myriad ways that Congress ties itself in knots.

Q: Well what was the push to do this?

RUST: The Chemical weapons convention. It had been a long-standing issue on the international arms control agenda, but had not gotten much momentum until after the use of chemical weapons in the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980's. President Bush I placed the United States behind the effort during his Presidency, and the Clinton Administration picked it up. The Convention was about to come into force in late April 1997 -- without the United States as a party -- and that fact had increased the priority for the Administration. Lengthy hearings had been held, and the only real obstacle was Senator Helms -- then chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. All the prior Administration argument about the importance of an independent ACDA went out the window in the face of the deal to get the CWC to the Senate floor for a vote. In the final analysis, the administration decided at senior levels that it was worth doing. The chemical weapons convention was a very important global regime banning stockpiling, production, possession of chemical weapons. The United States wanted to be part of this. WMD proliferation was becoming more important all the time and this was the preeminent global treaty in the chemical weapons area.

As we learned later, secret negotiations with the Hill had been ongoing for up to two months, i.e. Feb.-April 1997. The Administration tried to establish an organizational approach to the merger that would preserve in State as much as possible of ACDA's arms control and nonproliferation expertise and policy role. They largely accomplished that goal; the merger actually occurred on April 1, 1999. We had a number of T-shirts made up; coincidentally I have mine on right now. It is a picture of an ocean liner, marked ACDA, going down into the ocean marked "State Department" with a caption "she went before her time." On April first of 1999, both USIA and ACDA were absorbed into the State Department and we became State Department employees as of that day.

Q: What was this going to do to ACDA? I mean I am talking about the personnel? How was this viewed by you all?

RUST: Well from the very beginning, it was made clear that they didn’t see this consolidation as leading to any RIF, a reduction in force. There had been very little overlap between State and ACDA; so the primary task was to take 200 staff from ACDA and the 50-60 from PM working these issues and place them into a organizational structure that made sense within State. We created two new bureaus, an arms control bureau and a non proliferation bureau in the State Department. PM stayed, as it had many functions other than arms control and nonproliferation, and was still a sizable bureau. That was the plan we first worked out in ’97. So while most ACDA staff were very distressed over this development, no one lost their job.

Q: Well did you have any feel that, as part of this reorganization, any of these people were out to get you, the Pentagon, the State department, the staff of the Congress, or was this Jesse Helms trying to throw his weight around or what?

RUST: No, this was Helms. Throughout his career he had very serious question about the value of negotiating with the Soviets or anybody that led to treaties or limits on U.S. nuclear forces, or any kind of U.S. military forces. He just didn’t believe in it. So he thought having a separate agency to do it was superfluous. It ought to be part of the State Department. If you are going to do this, then coordinate it with everything else. Don’t give it independent power. Submerge it under the State Department. There is a certain rationale to this. I kept telling my colleagues that other global functional issues like human rights, democracy and drugs don’t have their separate agency. So who is to say that arms control and non proliferation can't function well as part of the State Department? You know prior to 1999 as an ACDA officer, I would call a desk officer and may or may not get cooperation. But as part of the Department, your entree was much better. So our access and our ability to work with State regional bureaus was greatly improved as a result of this.

But as time passed and Bush II came into office, even the State Department's role in these areas greatly diminished through both policy decisions and ultimately another reorganization. The nuclear arms control function in State has been virtually eliminated, and the nuclear nonproliferation portfolio has, in my view, been greatly weakened and dispersed.

While I have no doubt that an independent ACDA is a better approach to arms control and nonproliferation than absorbing these functions into State, the most important factors are the policies in these areas of the Administration as a whole and the ability of an ACDA Director to work effectively with the Secretary of State. Only if both of these factors break positively will the United States be able to enjoy maximum security benefit from arms control and nonproliferation tools. Moreover, in an Administration with a heightened emphasis on these topics it should be sufficient to have robust functional State Dept. bureaus on nonproliferation and arms control. The one downside is if the Secretary of State sides with a regional bureau over the arms control and/or nonproliferation bureau, the issue is then dead. With ACDA, the issue could still go all the way to the President.

The Director of ACDA always had the right under law to go directly to the President, but to do so in opposition to the Secretary of State was not an option one utilized very often. Most directors of ACDA understood that; but on the other hand when it became necessary to state a position different from State we were able to do that. We had our own seat at the table. If it got to senior levels even at the National Security Council, if it was an arms control or a non proliferation issue, the ACDA director sat there with the Secretary of State and the Defense department whoever it was, to advise the president. So that independence could make a difference at times.

Q: What did the merger of ACDA into State do from your perspective?

RUST: Well it helped my access to State Department people. They listened to us. Before, I often had to go through a nonproliferation officer in PM, i.e. persuade PM of my position and then hope that he or she could do the same with the regional desk officer. Well I didn't have to work through them anymore because I was part of State. The other major effect, however, was that my portfolio narrowed significantly. ACDA used to do everything nuclear non proliferation, but once we became part of State we all had to take our little piece of the pie. In ACDA, there might be 15 different topics on which I could opine every week and try to influence. For example, in ACDA I had developed considerable experience in the area of U.S. and international nuclear export policies, laws and regulations in addition to the expertise in treaties such as the NPT and NWFZ treaties. But in State, I had to choose between these two areas. But I didn't really have any trouble adjusting. I had been in government almost 30 years by now and had had plenty of opportunity to range far and wide on nuclear nonproliferation. I was planning to retire in a few years and didn't really mind narrowing my portfolio. Unfortunately, it didn't lead to any shorter hours as State has its own tempo -- which is always fast.

Q: Anything else before we move to Bush II ?

RUST: Yes, checking my notes I almost forgot to mention the May 1998 nuclear tests by India and Pakistan because that was a huge event in the second Clinton term. I still remember being called by a friend, “Did you hear that Delhi has announced that they conducted a nuclear test this morning?” I didn't believe it at first. But in retrospect, we should not have been that surprised. A hard line nationalist political party took over the Indian government in 1997.....

Q: Hindu Nationalists they were called.

RUST: Yes, the BJP. They kept talking about the importance of India becoming a major player on the international scene. Clearly, they decided that one way to do that was to conduct a series of nuclear tests and become a declared nuclear weapons state. So for the next two years, 75% of my work was focused on trying to deal with this. One person dealt with the political aspects of the issue, and I dealt with the nuts and bolts of the sanctions that U.S. law mandated in the aftermath of such nuclear tests. Remember that in 1996, a comprehensive test ban treaty had been signed, so these Indian and Pakistani tests were a severe blow to that treaty, to nonproliferation in general, and of course to the prospects of stability in South Asia not to mention increasing the risk of regional nuclear war. Of course, the Indians used the "threat" from China as the primary reason for going nuclear, but most analysts with ample knowledge of India realized this was all about prestige -- getting a seat at the table with the big boys.

ACDA was constantly pushing State to take a more condemnatory stand against these tests and to set a precedent that would help to discourage others from following suit. Strobe Talbot was the lead man for Madeleine Albright, and our senior people were meeting with Strobe about twice a week. The State regional officials were always trying to minimize the sanctions. And of course the Commerce Department didn't want this event to have a substantial impact on U.S.-Indian trade. They argued: "Yes, we would have preferred they not acquire nuclear weapons, but both countries are friends. The horse is out of the barn; they're not going back. So what good is it to impose comprehensive sanctions, particularly since we will just lose trade opportunities to other countries." So it was a constant fight, particularly with Commerce and inside the State Department. After the dust settled, we got very strong support globally for political condemnation of these tests. The P-5 Foreign Ministers met in Geneva in June 1998 to issue a strongly worded statement; the UN Security Council passed a unanimous resolution of condemnation and that established benchmarks for India and Pakistan to remedy the serious damage done to international security by these tests. And the EU, Japan and Australia also adopted a wide range of political and economic sanctions; and the support of these countries also led to a delay and/or denial of non-humanitarian loans to India and Pakistan from international financial institutions.

Even the president was pretty strong there for awhile because he said, “India has done the wrong thing. They are on the wrong side of history.” I remember that quote very well. The U.S. and Russia were substantially reducing their nuclear weapons in the aftermath of the Cold War, and yet the Indians moved to become a nuclear weapons state. Of course the Pakistanis, despite considerable international pressure, followed a few weeks later.

This solid wall of disapproval and punitive actions did not last very long, unfortunately. The Clinton Administration itself had already begun, before May 1998, an effort to overcome the decades long estrangement in our bilateral relations with India. And after six months or so the furor over the tests died down, and there was considerable pressure from the Congressional Indian caucus, State regional officials, and South Asian NGO's to relax the sanctions. Some of this occurred before Clinton left office, but they all disappeared after 9-11-2001 for obvious reasons.

RUST: One other thing -- sorry for belaboring this period of time, but in 2000 there was another NPT review conference, and I was at the right hand of the senior Ambassador in charge of U.S. preparations. It was an enormously satisfying diplomatic experience for me; he told me later that he relied very heavily on my advice. I did a lot of drafting. I did a lot of negotiating with other governments at my level at the review conference. Much to the surprise of pundits and diplomats from many NPT parties, the conference arrived at a substantive consensus outcome. .

Q: What were we trying to come out with?

RUST: Well, as I mentioned earlier, the NPT had been indefinitely extended in ’95. And many non-nuclear NPT parties felt that with this decision out of the way, it would be more difficult to obtain progress on nuclear disarmament. Unfortunately, events between 1995 and 2000 tended to reinforce that perception. While the comprehensive test ban had been signed in 1996, the U.S. Senate had disapproved ratification in the fall of 1999 and the U.S.-Russian START process had atrophied during Clinton's presidency. This created an unfavorable political climate going into the 2000 review conference, not to mention the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests of 1998 and continued concerns over compliance with the NPT by North Korea, Iran and Iraq. So by the opening of the 2000 conference, there was a lot of public speculation about whether NPT parties could rally behind the Treaty, or whether it was on the verge of collapsing. I should note that these conferences are held every five years and are viewed as a way to "take the temperature" of the Treaty. Do the parties spend all their time in pointed or even bitter public recrimination, or are they willing to sit down in private to search for compromise formulations that both review the operation of the Treaty as well chart the way forward? We actually did the latter. We despaired in advance about the prospects for consensus among the 150+ parties that attend such conferences, and would have been happy with an outcome where the U.S. was seen as a constructive actor and where no nations threatened to leave the Treaty. In five previous review conferences, consensus had been achieved only twice on a comprehensive substantive final document.

It came down to some high level Washington decisions, and Arab states placed a great deal of pressure on Iraq to accept an outcome that singled out their continued defiance of Security Council resolutions dealing with WMD. The Conference did not adjourn until after an all-night session that went until 5:00 AM, and then reconvened to seal the compromise at 11:00 AM. We were able to achieve it contrary to everybody's expectations. So that was a pretty high point in my career. Everybody came out of the 2000 conference feeling pretty good about the treaty. Nobody was about to run away from it. Nobody was thinking we had achieved Nirvana but they were encouraged. We accomplished this because the Clinton Administration's arms control and nonproliferation policies were more favorable toward treaties in general, and thus it was willing to show flexibility to gain an outcome that strengthened the NPT. Yes, the CTBT had been voted down by the Republican Senate, but the Democratic administration had not wavered in its support of the treaty. So that was an immensely satisfying experience. We spent four weeks in New York at that conference. They were all 20 hour days. I was at the computer drafting constantly. So that ended the Clinton years on a very up note for me. Even though ACDA had gone away, one of my best friends was ambassador at large in charge of the delegation . he and I worked out a lot of stuff together.

Q: Who was that?

RUST: His name is Norman Wulf. He was a career civil servant, who retired in 2002. He is a lawyer, worked law of sea issues in the early 80s and then started working nuclear non proliferation. A retired navy officer, he knows international legal stuff. Very astute multilateralist. Knows when to take a hard line, when to show flexibility. Knows where our red lines are. It is possible to achieve outcomes that are positive for your country's interest. But you also have to know when to say no. He was personable. He listened to people. He showed respect for their opinions. All that contributed to a positive outcome.

Q. OK, so now we go on to 2001.

RUST: We all knew based on some of the speeches that candidate George W. Bush made during the campaign, that things were going to change. He had come out against ratification of the comprehensive test ban treaty. And he thought that negotiating agreements with Russia to limit nuclear forces was a waste of time, which meant that the strategic nuclear negotiating process dating from 1968 was gone. Bush thought that we should just set our nuclear force levels wherever it made sense; why bother with a treaty? It took too long to negotiate one in any event, and besides we needed the flexibility to build back up if necessary. And of course, he was a strong supporter of missile defenses and it was clear the ABM Treaty could be history as well. Of course, none of this necessarily directly impacts nuclear nonproliferation. Nothing he said led any of us to believe that he would forsake the NPT or the IAEA or any other of the traditional multilateral nonproliferation tools. Yet, his position on strategic nuclear issues tracked with prominent neo-conservative thinking in the Republican party and so we braced ourselves for topsy turvy policy changes that would probably down grade multilateral approaches, even in nonproliferation. John Bolton was confirmed as the Under Secretary of State in charge of arms control and nonproliferation, and soon he had a team of Assistant Secretaries to carry out his preferences.

The first couple years things went along without much change in my area of the world, i.e. NPT and IAEA. U/S Bolton focused his early energies on the Biological Weapons Convention, North Korea, Iraq and making sure the U.S. reversed position on the International Criminal Courts. There was an interagency nonproliferation policy review, but little changed for my office initially as the President reaffirmed the importance of the NPT and IAEA, and the need to strengthen their activities. The new Administration placed a much stronger emphasis on the need for compliance and enforcement of the nonproliferation obligations under the NPT and IAEA, but that didn't create much difficulty for my office as we were more than ready to develop and implement stronger steps in these areas. So we set in motion some policies that were aimed at strengthening those aspects of our policy.

My other focus was on preparations for the 2005 NPT Review Conference, which began in 2002.

I also got involved in Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty issues both in Southeast Asia and Central Asia. The Southeast Asia Treaty had opened for signature in 1995, and the Central Asian treaty was still in draft in 2001. Most of this diplomacy was simply managing the status quo, as the Administration was not prepared to become actively engaged unless and until it had conducted a policy review in this area.

By way of background, I mentioned NWFZ in one of the earlier interviews. I can't remember what I said before, but these are regional treaties that ban the acquisition of nuclear weapons by regional states and prohibit the deployment of nuclear weapons in territories in the region by any state. Each of these treaties has at least one protocol for the nuclear weapon states. The Southeast Asian nations had messed up the protocol they had drafted. None of the nuclear weapons states supported it initially. So consultations had begun around ’97-’98, twice a year up until about the year 2001 on ways to try to resolve these differences. The Southeast Asian states insisted that their undertakings in the treaty extended out into the South China sea 200 miles rather than the standard 12 mile territorial limit. Whenever a security treaty is concluded, in which states claim authority for security issues out to 200 miles, it is not going to go anywhere with a major naval power. They are just not going to recognize sovereign security claims out that far. So we, along with the UK, France, Russia and China, had been busy during the latter part of the Clinton Administration figuring out a way to find compromise approaches that would deal with this. There was very little activity on this Treaty between 2001-2005. The pace is set by the regional states, and ASEAN clearly had other priorities. The Central Asian states, however, were being pushed strongly by the UN, a sponsor of the negotiations, to conclude a NWFZ treaty. We coordinated with the other nuclear weapon states on these negotiations, although the Central Asian states pretty much ignored what we, the UK and France had to say. It appeared to us that those who still retained security ties to Russia were slanting the Treaty in a fashion that favored Moscow. To make a long story short, the final text was not acceptable to the U.S., UK and France - we urged it be changed before it was opened for signature. They took another look at it, and that's where I left it when I retired. The last overseas mission I undertook was a P-5 meeting in Geneva to discuss our respective positions on the draft Treaty. Since I left, the Treaty has been signed with the same objectionable language. Personally, I don't see how the U.S. could support the Treaty and sign the Protocol as it now stands.

Q: Well how did you find working with the new people. I mean some of them like Bolton had been around for a long time. But with others, I mean did they come in looking upon you as being a bunch of wild eyed liberals or were they willing to draw on your knowledge and experience to learn the job? How did you find these people?

RUST: Bolton claimed to have an open mind, initially, but I think he quickly discovered the advice he would get from career people was simply not compatible with his "take no prisoners" approach. I swear that the notion of "compromise" is simply not in the man's vocabulary; or if he does concede something to the views of another country, it's only at the 11th hour and probably because someone at a higher political level told him to do so. His philosophy seemed to be that you don't deal with bad actors; you can't trust them, so even if you're trying to devise multilateral approaches to deal with these bad actors, it's the U.S. way or the highway. With Bolton, our approach was to draw a line in the sand and if compromise could not reached on our side of the line, then the U.S. would opt out. We sat on the sidelines from 2003-05 in regard to Iran, because Bolton could not stomach the approach the EU was taking with Iran. It's almost a given that Bolton took this approach with the blessing of the Vice President's office. And of course, the ultimate solution to John Bolton in some cases is probably regime change. Well, it's a little off the charts from my experience to have regime change as a policy option when it comes to nonproliferation. My approach is that if it's a bad regime, you use nonproliferation tools to contain any WMD threat as much as possible, hoping ultimately for a combination of sticks and carrots that will change the regime's policies. Maybe that won't happen until there are dramatic political changes, including possibly a regime change, but until then there needs to be consistent international pressure on the state not to acquire nuclear weapons. And the U.S. must play a leadership role in that effort.

Sure Bolton used some career staff; aspects of the Administration's policy were consonant with past approaches and in those circumstances he drew on government experts. But, even then, there was no room for thinking that went beyond the strict policy guidelines prescribed by Bolton. John was pretty much a one man policy apparatus. He surrounded himself with loyal political aides, who would follow his instructions to the letter. There was no room for questioning; if you asked a staffer "why" Under Secretary Bolton wanted to take a particular approach, you seldom got an answer. It didn't matter; all you needed to know was that My Bolton wanted it this way. I doubt if any important policy of any kind John ever pushed was vetted with anybody but himself, and maybe the Vice President's Office and DOD and probably Bob Joseph at the NSC. He knew this business very well from his previous work at IO and from work outside the government during the Clinton years. He was an extraordinarily bright guy in international law. I mean he knew this stuff. He also picked people that he felt he could trust as assistant secretaries in the non proliferation, arms control, and verification bureaus. Although, he made a mistake in the non proliferation bureau when he brought in a career foreign service officer, who had once worked for Bolton in IO during Bush I, but who over the past decade had developed into a senior officer who could not be bullied.

Q: Who was that?

RUST: John Wolf. During the Clinton years Wolf had become an ambassador to Malaysia and taken on other senior positions. By 2002, he was in his early 50s I think, had been in the foreign service for 25 years; and couldn't be pushed around or be told how to think. Certainly, Wolf was loyal to the Administration, to Secretary of State Powell, and followed John Bolton's wishes much of the time. It didn't take long, however, for John Wolf to get crossways with Bolton. If Wolf disagreed, he said so. Well, you don't do that very many times to John Bolton before you get into his "dog house" big time. I wasn't privy to their relationship, but it was my impression that Wolf occasionally had different ideas about how best to pursue our nonproliferation diplomacy whether in regard to Iran, North Korea, NPT, or IAEA.

So to return briefly to your question about whether the career staff could work the new people; certainly, in the case of John Wolf, the answer is yes. He was pragmatic and trusted career staff to pursue approaches consistent with the President's policies. Wolf chose a highly respected career civil servant as his PDAS, and a former Dick Lugar staffer as the political DAS. It was a pretty collegial place; tense and frantic, but the career staff felt they were being utilized. Wolf left in July 2004, after many serious run-ins with Bolton, and the PDAS led the bureau for 10 months. A new political leader for NP was never confirmed, as by early 2005 the reorganization issue began to surface with Bolton making clear that he wanted to merge NP with the Arms Control Bureau. And the AC Assistant Secretary, loyal to Bolton to a fault, was actually placed in charged of NP in the final months before its merger with AC.

Q: Well it's not unusual to go through a period of posturing before you settle down to get something done.

RUST: Well no, Bolton wasn't posturing. My impression was that Bolton wanted the outcome to be "tough" according to his criteria; and if he can't get that kind of outcome, then it's not worth doing. Solidarity among countries on a weak solution is worse than nothing at all, according to this type of thinking. He isn't alone in his frustration with the slow pace of the international community in responding to dire proliferation threats. It was clear from the git-go in 2003 that Iran had violated the NPT and that the Security Council should take up the case. But it took many years of further IAEA investigation and of continuing Iran's non-cooperation before the IAEA Board referred the matter to the Security Council. Unfortunately, that's the way the system works. But John Bolton has no patience with institutions that can’t respond to what he views as such obvious dangers.

Q: This is tape four, side one with Dean Rust.

RUST: Of course, it was largely the Russians and the Chinese who were reluctant to push the Iran and North Korean cases at a faster pace, particularly an approach that included sanctions. The UK and France were also not happy with the Russians and the Chinese, but in the last analysis they felt it was better to keep the P-5 together than to try to force an outcome that would require the Chinese and the Russians either to vote against or veto a resolution. It is true that the longer the IAEA worked in Iran, the more we all knew about what had really gone on there. But the delays have still not solved the problem and meanwhile Iran is several years farther along with its enrichment program. Multilateral institutions may be the only effective peaceful way to deal with these issues, but if they don't become more responsive to proliferation the U.S. and others will take steps on their own.

The irony of the current situation is that Bolton's 2005-06 tenure at the UN involved U.S. acceptance of nonproliferation outcomes that we would never have gone along with while Bolton was Under Secretary of State. He and his allies in the Vice President's office, OSD and NSC would have seen to that. That group of folks is now dispersed and Rice is pretty much able to call the tune. She takes a tough line, but she is putting P-5 solidarity ahead of substance. I remember reading recently, upon Bolton's resignation from the UN job, quoting anonymous sources in the French and British government that whenever they ran into a problem with Bolton in New York, they would just go over his head. They would contact Rice or Nick Burns, who were willing to sit down and work something out." Bolton was just never that way.

My principal difficulty with Bolton in my last two years came in connection with preparations for the 2005 NPT Review Conference. This process, which has occurred every five years since 1970, has little direct impact on operational issues, but it does define the general political setting in which NPT implementation takes place. In 2005, debate ranged from the key questions of Iran and DPRK violations, IAEA safeguards, nuclear export controls, to the pace of nuclear disarmament by existing nuclear weapon states including the U.S. Given the NAM preoccupation with nuclear disarmament, these NPT fora generally include a lot of U.S. bashing and pressure for getting rid of our nuclear weapons. Israel also comes in for more than its share of criticism from Muslim states. Bolton loathes this type of fora and debate. He has little patience for those who are more concerned about U.S. nukes than about Iran's violations. The result is he doesn't really care what happens; he is not prepared to support an activist U.S. approach designed to forge common ground. He just wants to get out of the NPT review process with our skin, and hopefully without much blame for any negative outcome, which unfortunately was virtually preordained in 2005.

He is disdainful of any real diplomacy re the NPT review conference because he knows the U.S. will be asked to "pay a price" if the U.S. is to obtain consensus support for U.S. policies, for example, in regard to NPT violations by Iran and DPRK. He felt the Clinton Adm. paid too high a price in 2000 for the consensus outcome that was achieved. And so his approach is to essentially dismiss the concerns of states that talk about what they perceive as the failure of the United States and Russia and others to reduce nuclear forces. He clearly resents the efforts of some states to use the NPT to imply some constraints on U.S. freedom of action with regard to its nuclear forces. But, on the other hand, Bolton did want the U.S. out there with a concerted campaign on issues of importance to us, e.g. Iranian violations. Of course, that's fine; but when you fail to address the concerns of others you don't get much receptivity to your own priorities. The main point as I perceived is that Bolton et. al see no value in trying to do smart diplomacy, i.e. find ways to listen and take even symbolic steps on nuclear disarmament issues with the view that treating others' concerns with respect will gain you a more sympathetic ear for U.S. policies toward Iranian violations.

This is counterintuitive diplomacy from my traditional perspective. All my efforts in regard to 2005 to pursue smart diplomacy, as I called it earlier, were met with a blank stare. When this situation was combined with deep distrust by Bolton of the NP bureau and of my office, the working situation for about 18 months was barely tolerable. Bolton loaded up the U.S. preparatory process with his own bureaucratic allies with instructions to keep a close watch over NP. They made our life a living hell.

Q: When did you retire?
RUST: September 30, 2005.

Q: Wasn't Bolton at the UN by then?

RUST: Yes, but for all matters leading up to and including the 2005 NPT Review Conference, he was still serving as Undersecretary there or calling the shots through his loyal minions.

Q: So you worked for him.

RUST: Yeah, indirectly. He had two or three bureaus that reported to him and the non proliferation bureau was one of them. I was in the non proliferation bureau.

Q: How did you find dealing with him?

RUST: Well I had virtually no personal interaction with him at all. He visited our office within a month of his swearing-in, and did a quick walk through. I asked him about the NPT. As I recall, he said that he didn't see the need in the NPT review process for the United States to explain to others what we were doing with our own nuclear weapons. I suggested that it was useful to place our own nuclear arms control efforts on the record if for no other than presentational reasons. I think he said something to the effect that he doesn't do "presentational" stuff. I think there were two other times when I was even in the same room with him. I had a lot of interaction with the NP Assistant Secretary as well as the PDAS and DAS.

Q: Who was that?

RUST: Well John Wolf first, and then Wolf's PDAS, Susan Burk served as Acting A/S from July 2004 to February 2005 and then Steve Rademaker until I retired. As I mentioned before, John Wolf proved to be a little too independent for John Bolton's taste - and Susan Burk, a career officer, was also not afraid to give unvarnished advice to Bolton. Andy Semmel was the DAS in NP, with direct responsibility for NPT and IAEA matters. He too was pragmatic and willing to take on board our advice. But Steve was loyal to Bolton, to a fault, and simply carried out what Bolton wanted.

Q: You are making a salute sign.

RUST: Well, yes, that's what Bolton expected when he barked out orders. No discussion, no consideration of whether his approach had a chance of achieving what he wanted. I like Steve Rademaker, and I think he had pretty good instincts on the tactical NPT questions that came up. But there just wasn't any room for other approaches once Bolton had spoken. His confirmation hearings to become UN Ambassador included many examples of where Bolton took out after career people who dared challenge his assumptions or his facts. But that's what were supposed to do, that is ensure a full airing of options and consequences. But of course, those who owed their political positions to John Bolton were not in a very good position to disagree, even if they thought he was wrong.

Q: Did 9/11 have any particular effect on what you were up to in the aftermath?

RUST: Not immediately, at least on NPT issues. Our office did have considerable input into efforts by the IAEA to expand quickly its programs to help countries strengthen security over nuclear material, i.e. to deal with an increased risk of nuclear terrorism. Moreover, on NPT, we tried to emphasize that by limiting states with nuclear weapons, the NPT also was a positive element in preventing nuclear terrorism. Of course, over time, the imperative of anti-terrorism cooperation with non-NPT parties India and Pakistan led the Administration essentially to ignore these countries nuclear programs and to abandon even a pretense of being concerned that they had nuclear weapons. This led effectively to a policy of selective nonproliferation -- i.e. we vigorously oppose proliferation to the rogues, but if it's a democracy and friend of the U.S. and the "horse is already out of the barn" -- you know, why bother? This culminated in the July 2005 decision to overturn 30 years of U.S. policy of nuclear fuel supply and declare an exception for non-NPT India. For three decades the U.S. had led international efforts to grant preferences to NPT parties in the supply of nuclear fuel; this was a way of creating benefits for those who joined the Treaty and rewarding those who did the right thing. But for the sake of cooperation with India on anti-terrorism, we repudiated this policy. Unbelievable! All that was gained was India's sense of self-worth; it had been seeking respect for its nuclear weapons for many years, and we finally gave it to them. We've been trying to persuade other countries just the opposite for years, i.e. that the acquisition of nuclear weapons is not the way to international respect.

Q: After 9/11, there was much made of Iraq's programs of weapons of mass destruction. Where did you nuclear people who were experts dealing with it come out? I mean the administration claimed Iraq was developing nuclear weapons.

RUST: Prior to 9/11 and then between 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq, in NPT fora we would describe the events that led to the discovery of Saddam's nuclear weapons program in the early 90s, note that Iraq was found to be in violation of the NPT, but that sanctions and inspections had pretty much removed whatever technology and material had been acquired for that purpose. That said, it became clear in the late 90s early 2000 that he was trying to reconstitute his nuclear weapons program, which means we started to see some evidence of procurement that one would undertake if one were to reconstitute a nuclear weapons program. Now, as I am fond of telling people, you can dismantle a car with 20,000 parts and dispose of all those parts. If you decide to build another car, you will begin the process of procuring the parts with the goal of reassembly. While "reconstitution" was probably a fair description, it doesn’t mean a thing unless you know where in the process you are; and what your chances are for getting a new high performance engine, i.e. the nuclear material in the case of a nuclear weapons. to say reconstituted unless you can say relatively where that means. I wasn't a careful student of the Iraqi intelligence, but it seemed that some procurement was ongoing, but there was little evidence that they were very far along.

That said, Iraq had never satisfactorily answered all the IAEA's questions in regard to its nuclear program dating from 1991 and thus the U.S. was loathe to conclude that Iraq's nuclear file, so called, was clean. There had been a decade of inspections in Iraq, and while most of the previous nuclear program seemed to have been dealt with, these residual questions kept the U.S. from giving Saddam a green light. In NPT fora, we continued to cite Iraqi NPT violations and its failure to fully satisfy the IAEA and the Security Council. In contrast, both France and Russia were prepared to declare the nuclear program as in compliance but U.S. and UK opposition prevented a consensus on the Security Council for that conclusion.

Well as everybody knows there was a last surge of nuclear inspections by the IAEA before the war. The IAEA didn't find anything serious, although the Iraqis still weren't able to answer all the IAEA's questions. After the invasion, we began to get a lot of criticism in NPT and IAEA fora that we were not willing to put our trust in these treaties and multilateral institutions. There's no question that the Iraqi invasion undermined the U.S. leadership role in the NPT. Many states were simply not prepared to work constructively with us in these fora, as we were perceived as having abandoned international solutions at least in this case. This perception along with the view that the United States was not fulfilling its nuclear disarmament-related obligations under the NPT severely weakened our hand. While many NPT parties granted our point about Iran and North Korean NPT violations, we had little influence to persuade them of the need to take these threats seriously. We had not only "dissed" the NPT and IAEA by invading Iraq, but we were ignoring their concerns about nuclear disarmament. Under the circumstances, many non-nuclear states, particularly from the NAM, would not give us the time of day in NPT and IAEA fora.

Q: Well did you find yourself disheartened?

RUST: Of course. But I also don't want to exaggerate the situation. Myself and my colleagues had a lot of interaction with officials at our level and were able to advance an understanding of Administration policy in the areas of compliance and enforcement of the NPT. And we developed good ideas and ways of implementing the Treaty that would strengthen the Treaty against violators or potential violators. The Administration deserves credit for heightening international focus on these matters, and getting a good dialogue going particular with our allies and the other nuclear weapon states. One of my legacies to the NPT over the last three or four years, by the time I left in 2005, was the introduction of a number of policies dealing with NPT implementation that I believed were very supportive of Administration goals. If NPT parties (including the U.S.) ever find it possible within the NPT review process to sit down and constructively work through these issues, they actually might make some progress.

But with Bolton in charge we were on a short leash and had virtually no flexibility; we had little room for compromise on U.S. priorities and of course it was impermissible to grant any credence to other countries concerns about U.S. nuclear policies. Internally, we floated many ideas on nuclear disarmament -- most with little more than of symbolic reinforcement of U.S. obligations and Bolton (and DOD of course) wanted nothing to do with them. And underlying a lot of this was Bolton's desire to put a "stake in the heart" of the consensus outcome of the 2000 NPT review Conference. He seemed viscerally opposed to this outcome primarily because of the compromises made by the Clinton Administration on nuclear disarmament issues. Of course, the 2000 outcome had become the holy grail for the NAM; to their thinking, it had set out a path to nuclear disarmament. My view was that we should be up front about Bush Adm. nuclear policies and how they affected the 2000 outcome in general, but to offer a constructive alternative. We didn't want U.S. nuclear policies to become the issue; it was important for the U.S. to keep "on message" with regard to violations by Iran and North Korea. But typically, Bolton kept insisting on publicly discrediting the entire nuclear disarmament outcome from the 2000 Conference, effectively undermining our ability to maximize support for U.S. approaches on nuclear nonproliferation.

Q: Well, what about North Korean developments during that time?

RUST: I was involved in just a piece of that issue, the North Korean withdrawal of the NPT in January 2003. State Assistant Secretary Jim Kelly went to Pyongyang and confronted them with evidence of their enrichment program, in August 2002 I believe. They reacted strongly and within the next few months had thrown out IAEA inspectors, and provided notification of their withdrawal from the treaty You recall that 10 years before -- 1993 -- they had provided notification of their withdrawal, but then stopped action on the withdrawal. This time they went ahead with it. So as of April, 2003, the U.S. considered them out of the treaty. There was a huge international debate, primarily in private channels about the legality of their withdrawal action. While State/L developed the legal position, I was very much central in that issue for the non proliferation bureau. I developed a lot of U.S. policy on how we dealt with the whole issue. We also used this opportunity to develop some ideas for the future should there be a other withdrawals and/or notifications of withdrawals, that is how parties ought to react. There was a great deal of interest among NPT parties about this as it was the first withdrawal from the Treaty.

But on the NPT review process itself, the bureaucratics became enormously difficult as Bolton and John Wolf became alienated from each other, and Bolton having no trust in the non proliferation bureau. So he set up an elaborate bureaucratic mechanism that further diluted our own authority and brought into the process some State offices willing to spout his rigid approach to the letter. The two policy bureaus in State that worked the closest with us on the NPT had been told to "watch" NP and the clearance process was an absolute nightmare. Bolton and his loyalists in State also worked directly with the Defense Department to thwart any of NP's policy ideas. They were all fighting against the non proliferation bureau and to a lesser extent the Department of Energy, because the Department of Energy was led by some moderate appointees. After a while, any pretense of cooperation within State had gone out the door. I would get calls on my draft policy papers from State officers saying that they would clear as long as DOD did. I can recall a mid-level interagency meeting on the NPT review process chaired by the NSC at which NP had the action. But three count 'em three Bolton staff showed up at the meeting and the internal State differences were laid bare for all to see, with Bolton staff colluding at the table with DOD to counter NP recommendations.

Q: Oh boy! Did that inspire you to leave?

RUST: Well yeah. I almost left before the Review Conference, but I've spent almost three decades developing my expertise and reputation in these areas. I knew how to do these things, and I knew how to do them even for a hard liner like John Bolton. Or at least I thought I did. John Wolf and his deputies were trying to persuade Bolton that the NP career staff could help achieve an outcome that would not only promote the NPT, but also limit any damage to U.S. interests. But he would not have it. He could not remove us from the process because our office was the action office. But he could see to it there were enough other bureaucratic elements involved that would make our daily life just an absolute nightmare. I think he disliked the whole NPT multilateral process and saw so little value in it that he didn't care. He didn't want the U.S. working to promote a constructive outcome, even though it was Presidential policy dating from 2002 to find ways to strengthen the NPT. The NPT was ok as long as it operated consistent with John Bolton's views.

I recall that during the few months between Rice's swearing-in and the Conference, some of Rice's aides wanted us to look for initiatives that would help burnish the U.S. contribution to the Conference. Bolton was on his way out by then and had to manage from afar to ensure these ideas never went anywhere. And he also intercepted a recommendation from NP to the Secretary that she deliver the opening U.S. address to the Conference. He didn't want any high level U.S. attention to the Conference, although Rice's office claimed ultimately that her absence was due to other factors.

Q: Did you get any feel that Secretaries Powell and Rice wanted to leave this to Bolton as somebody they didn't want to tangle with?

RUST: Well, coincidentally I am reading Karen DeYoung's biography of Powell; the last 200 pages are about Powell's tenure as Secretary of State. If I recall correctly, DeYoung writes that Powell discovered very early on that Bolton was a policy mole inside the department and that Powell had to deal with him accordingly. There were certain issues where he wouldn't take on Bolton, and there were other times when he had to call Bolton into the woodshed. That pretty much conforms with my impression during the period in question. But Bolton always knew that he had Cheney's and Rumsfeld's support. Powell and Armitage were aware of the pressure that the NP bureau was under, but could offer little more than "we feel your pain." I had the impression that Powell did his best to neutralize Bolton within the State Department on the critical issues such as North Korea and Iran, but with mixed success. But on the major institutional and treaty questions related to the NPT and IAEA, these were almost always below Powell's radar and Bolton got his way. It seemed obvious to me that Rice was not going to allow John Bolton to remain at the Department in Washington and screw up her years as Secretary of State. Nobody wanted to tangle with John Bolton, because it could always lead to a power struggle involving Vice President Cheney -- which at that time was virtually unwinnable

Bolton was actively exercising his Under Secretary duties at State until around March 2005 when there was an announcement of his moving to the UN and an announcement of his replacement. As it turned out his replacement went through the hearings pretty quickly, but wasn't sworn in until June 1. But during that interregnum, all of Bolton's people were still in place in State. They knew precisely what his agenda was, and I feel certain that Bolton found a way to continue communication with a few trusted aides. And frankly his people are still in place in the State Department under Bolton's successor Bob Joseph.

In retrospect, standard U.S. diplomatic approaches to nuclear nonproliferation were essentially put on hold during President Bush's first term. You couldn't tell that from the President's publicly announced policies; because while the Administration had some new and good ideas that focused on sanctions and interdiction, the official policy also stressed a continuation of support for tools like the NPT and IAEA. But in practice, no matter how hard we tried to use these standard tools, Bolton and his supporters around the Administration would find some way to derail them. The normal give and take of diplomacy was in short supply. For example, the neo-cons preferred approach to North Korea's and Iran's NPT violations was regime change, and unless other countries were prepared to take the toughest possible diplomatic approach, Bolton saw no purpose in trying to work constructively with the EU and others on diplomatic solutions. The U.S. would stake a strong position, but would leave it to others rather than compromise. I recall a well-informed State Department source saying something to the effect that "the neocons are trying to keep us from negotiating with others on the North Korean issue but ultimately there will be no alternative." The neocons did their best for the longest time during the Powell years at State to keep us at arms length from any kind of negotiations with the North Koreans.

Q: Some believe this approach helped to precipitate the nuclear test.

RUST: Well, yes. You can make that argument. Once Rice went to State, things began to change. We got behind the EU-3 in their negotiations with Iran in March 2005; a position that had been impossible during the President's first term. Bolton was on his way out, and Rice has the ear of the President. Powell did not. Rumsfeld was increasingly weakened and even the Vice President's office began to lose its clout. On North Korea, we took positions under Rice at State that were not possible to adopt during the first term. Bolton must have gone crazy during his time as UN Ambassador; he was arguing for compromises on Security Council resolutions at Rice's instructions that he would have never gone along with during when he was Under Secretary. I've probably said it before in these interviews, but he's very suspicious of joint statements of any kind. I was involved in backstopping a couple of these related to the NPT while he was Under Secretary. And in both occasions, the effort failed because he played a tough game and was unwilling to utilize flexibility that Washington was prepared to give him in developing language. He decided on his own that the final product was going to be worse than no product at all. In one case, Bolton delayed the beginning of negotiations with the UK and France by at least six months by refusing to respond to a joint UK/French draft. Under Rice, the UK and France became so upset they went around Bolton to Nick Burns, but in that case it was too late. The Russians had been pushing for engagement with the U.S. on a P-5 statement for the NPT Review Conference for nearly a year in advance, but we didn't finally sit down with them until about a month before the Conference. In all these cases, the career staff were on top of the issue and prepared to play an active role, but Bolton always stood in the way. Usually, I would take anywhere from 5-15 working days to get an interagency cleared product, and then he would veto it -- because he always had the final say. And trying to go around him on anything but the highest priority items never made sense.

At the 2005 NPT Review Conference, contrary to my advice, the U.S. took a low key approach and just tried to stay out of trouble rather than be a constructive force. I didn't go because I would have been butting heads with Bolton and his people on the delegation the entire time, with no one in Washington to support my views. The Conference was consumed with procedural wrangles with very little substantive discussion, but to its credit the U.S. delegation managed to avoid most of the blame for these matters. There was a strong sub-text, however, that ascribed the general malaise in the NPT to U.S. nuclear policies and to perceived U.S. disdain for multilateralism generally, including the NPT. We did little to counter that perception at the Conference. Certainly, we reinforced time and again the need to take action against present and future violators of the NPT's nonproliferation provisions; however, on nuclear disarmament, while providing many facts, we showed little sympathy for or understanding of the views of other countries. In general, the watchword seemed to be: multilateralism in arms control is great if it constrains others but not the U.S, and if others agree with the U.S. on implementation, otherwise it doesn't serve U.S. interests.

The final straw was the reorganization that took place over the last year or so I was there. It began with an April 2004 OIG inspection which culminated in a recommendation strongly supported by Bolton to merge the Arms Control and Nonproliferation Bureaus.

This recommendation was made in good faith, I believe, but it was incredibly stupid. It actually diminished State's diplomatic resources in nonproliferation, and eliminated decades of arms control experience. Of course, Bolton took it from there and ensured that the final outcome led to the displacement of career officials who he believed were not sufficiently loyal to him during his tenure as Under Secretary. While he was gone to NY by the time it was implemented, his "people" saw to it that the influence of many career arms control and nonproliferation officials (many from the former ACDA) was severely diminished. This was accomplished by collapsing some offices, and putting a Bolton-favored official in charge; in three new offices related to nonproliferation, they were able to find a DOD detailee, a political appointee, and a person from the former verification bureau as Acting Office Directors. Other key offices were given to Foreign Service Officers. Unquestionably, the State Department has been seriously weakened in its overall staff resources to do nonproliferation and arms control. As many as 25-30 career staff in these areas have left State since early 2004. I published an article in the June 2006 Arms Control Today that was critical of this reorganization and the way it was managed. The implementation of the reorganization was politically motivated. Anyone remotely aware of John Bolton's relationship to career staff at State would not be surprised if his "people" at State carried this out in a manner to reward those perceived to be loyal and punish those believe to be disloyal. Of course, with John Bolton in charge, the standards of loyalty are not compatible with the normal debate and discussion inherent in all good policy development and implementation.

Q: It is pretty dismal.

RUST: Oh it is terrible. And it was dispiriting to have it occur at the end of my career.

Q: Frankly you retired…

RUST: September 30, 2005.

Q: So what have you been doing since?

RUST: Well it has been about 14 months. I became a consultant to the Department of Energy. State offered me a consultancy, but I knew that it was just courtesy, and that I wouldn't be listened to. So I go in to DOE maybe one or two days every two months or something and sit around and we talk. I draft papers for them, and I give them advice on things. I have followed the press and the media and the journals in my areas. The Arms Control Association has sought my advice a couple times. I am in regular E-mail contact with them on things that have happened. They sometimes want to know about the historical significance of something, or an issue comes up that deals with details they're not familiar with. I plan and sometimes even draft Op-Eds and letters to the editor. I've sent a few in, but nothing's appeared in print. I get together informally with former nonproliferation colleagues who have retired to socialize and to kibbutz about ways to influence opinion. The U.S.-India nuclear deal is something I strongly oppose and I have served as a resource to some who are actively lobbying the Congress. Otherwise, I have continued my amateur singing with a local barbershop harmony chapter, worked around the home, read a lot of books, and spent more time with my brother and sister in Ohio. My partner, Suzanne, and I have no kids but have eight nieces and nephews, and I've been trying to stay in closer touch with them. Most are now in their 20's and it's great fun to watch them making their way in the world, and sharing in that from the perspective of my now 63 years. Once Suzanne retires, we will chart our future from there.

Q: Well I want to thank you very much.

RUST: Yes, thank you.

End of interview