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

DR. RICHARD H. SOLOMON

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
Initial interview date: September 13, 1996

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INTERVIEW

Q: This is an interview with Dr. Richard H. Solomon on September 13, 1996. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. To start things off, I think it's important for the researchers to

know a little bit about who you are and where you're coming from. Could you tell me when and where you were born, and a bit about your family?

SOLOMON: My family background is German and French Jewish emigres who came to this country in the late 19th or early 20th centuries, and settled mostly in the eastern part of the United States. I was born in Philadelphia on June 19, 1937. My father was a furniture salesman; he sold furniture from factories to retail outlets. He died in 1945, at the age of 37, from a pulmonary embolism resulting from an operation. My mother, who had had only one year of college, picked up his profession and made a career out of the same business, that is as a saleswoman selling from factories to retail outlets. As the result of her work, she traveled quite a bit, going around to various retail outlets. At the age of 12, I was sent to a Quaker boarding school -- Westtown School in the western suburbs of Philadelphia -- for high school, out of concern that I was not getting enough adult supervision. This aspect of my early life is relevant to my involvement in public affairs. Westtown, and the Quakers generally, have a strong interest in public service. There are other distinguished U.S. diplomats who graduated from Westtown, such as Ambassadors Arthur Hummel, William Gleysteen, and Thomas Niles, although only Niles was a contemporary of mine.

My family, going back a few generations, had a variety of professional interests. The original emigres were salesmen of German silver, and went back and forth between Europe and the United States, finally settling in this country during the late part of the 19th century. One wing of the family had a number of distinguished academics; in fact, one family member was a doctor - Milton Rosenau - who established the Harvard-MIT School of Public Health in 1913. He also wrote “Preventive Medicine and Hygiene,” which was first published in 1913 and -- updated over the years -- is still a medical school textbook.

Another branch of the family, from France, included an art dealer who funded Renoir and some of the other notable impressionists at the turn of the century. That same wing of my family produced one rabbi, but generally it was a family with strong commercial interests. My grandfather on my mother's side ran a knitting mill during World War II, and did very well because of large orders, particularly producing parachute cord. When my father died, my maternal grandfather became a major sponsor in some ways of my subsequent professional development. He supported the tuition for my high school training at Westtown, and later when I was accepted at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology [MIT] he made it possible for me to attend for my undergraduate training.

Q: At Westtown, did you have any attraction towards international affairs?

SOLOMON: The family, and hence the formative environment, in which I was raised was very insular, in the sense that my family was very business oriented, as I mentioned. They were not very interested in public affairs generally, or in international affairs in particular, although of course during my early years, just before the onset of World War II and then during the War, everybody was involved in international affairs in one way or another. My father, for example, served for several years in the Coast Guard before his

death. Everybody had a sense of international affairs to some degree, and because a number of my family members were recent emigres, political and social developments in Europe were a matter of considerable interest. But professionally, there wasn't really much direct interest in international affairs. My professional development was definitely impacted by boarding school, and exposure to the concerns of the Quakers with broad-ranging public policy issues.

When I was 15 years old, I spent a summer at a Quaker work camp in California and other parts of the west. We worked with a group of Russian emigres -- this was the summer of 1953, at the height of the Cold War, and the setting served to bring policy issues to light. The Quakers, as you know, are pacifists, and they were very concerned with international developments and about American policy during the Cold War. They often tended to consider American behavior as contributing to tensions rather than alleviating them. In any event, foreign affairs issues were very much a matter of public debate in that environment. I was strongly drawn, if not to all of their opinions, then at least to their interest in public affairs, as opposed to the business environment in which I had grown up but frankly didn't find very attractive. I never considered, for example, picking up on business or commercial activity as a basis for my own career.

Q: What pointed you towards MIT?

SOLOMON: I was interested in science. In high school I had done particularly well in science. I was quite interested in photography, and my grades were strongest in the science area, which led me to conclude that chemistry would be a good area of focus. I also applied to Harvard and one or two other schools. My English grades were not as strong as my scientific grades, so I was accepted at MIT and not at Harvard. I was also accepted at Lehigh and another scientific school, Union College in Schenectady, New York. But when I was accepted at MIT in Boston, given its international reputation and the fact that Boston was a major intellectual center, I didn't have much of a problem deciding where I wanted to go to school.

Q: So you were at MIT from when to when?

SOLOMON: I graduated from high school in the spring of 1955, and began at MIT as a freshman in the fall of 1955. Halfway through my junior year, not really finding science to my liking after all, I decided to take a break from school. I wanted to have what the Germans would call a “year of wandering,” trying to figure out what I wanted to do, and so a colleague of mine, a friend from MIT, joined me in hitchhiking around Europe for nine months. Because of that experience I graduated one year later than I had originally planned, in June of 1960. Of course, also because of that experience, I had had a year’s break from school in 1958 to think about personal direction, so unlike many of my peers I went immediately from my undergraduate studies into graduate school, also at MIT.

Q: You were focusing on science at MIT when you first went there. What happened?

SOLOMON: I guess I didn't find science as intriguing as some of the social and political

issues to which I was also exposed. MIT had a very good liberal arts component; it was not a very large element of the curriculum, but for example literary criticism was one strong area. One of the best courses I ever took was a course in art and architecture. My link to science was very closely related to my interest in photography. My father had done some photographic work, and I had inherited from him a Roliflex camera. In high school I became quite interested in photography and did quite a bit of it, and the chemical development processes were of course something I enjoyed and found interesting. Consequently, one of the things I focused on at MIT was chemistry, and I continued to do photography in my spare time.

In 1958, when I decided to take a break from hard science, one of my interests was in having a period where I could really focus on the photography. I was intrigued by the artistic work of the Magnum Photographic Agency, people like Henri Cartier-Bresson, who was based at that time in Paris. I just wanted some time to build on a lot of the photographic work I had done in high school. I spent nine months basically seeing what I could come up with in the way of artistic photos in the photojournalist style, the Cartier-Bresson technique of catching the "decisive moment" of some human interaction on film.

Q: What is it...catching the moment...there is always the precise moment. He is a very good photographer. Certainly everybody who paid any attention knew his pictures.

SOLOMON: Just to jump ahead, when I was Ambassador in Manila, in 1992 or 1993, one of the things I did at the end of my relatively brief ambassadorial stint there was to go through a trunk full of photographs and put together a photographic exhibition. The photos were displayed and accompanied by jazz music at the Jefferson Cultural Center, which USIA was kind enough to put on for me. The exhibition seemed to be well received -- although it drove the French ambassador crazy because he considered himself the doyen of culture. To have the American ambassador doing something in the cultural area didn't sit very well with him.

In any event, when I came back from my nine-month hitchhiking experience in Europe, I took my portfolio of photographs on the rounds, and was recommended to Edwin Land, who was the head of the Polaroid Corporation. Based on my scientific training -- I was doing a lot of chemistry and other things that were related to photography -- plus the artistic interest that was demonstrated in the photographs, Land hired me for a summer job in 1959. I worked there two summers, teaching some courses on photography and chemistry. By the time I graduated from MIT as an undergraduate, Land offered me a position running a research laboratory at their new facility in Waltham, Massachusetts on Route 28. I didn't accept that job because I had already committed to graduate school and had just made the career decision that I didn't want to do science, or even photography. I had firmly decided that my interests lay in international affairs and politics, which had grown out of coursework that I did at MIT after my return from Europe, in my last year and a half at MIT.
As the result of my experience hitchhiking around Europe, I had begun to do some coursework in sociology at Harvard with a professor named Lawrence Wiley. Wiley, who was a professor of French civilization, had briefly served as a cultural attache under

Ambassador Douglas Dillon in Paris. I had been introduced to him by his brother, who was head of the MIT alumni association, a man I had met just before I went off to Europe. Wiley's brother -- the man at MIT -- had been associated with *Life* magazine prior to joining MIT, and I knew him from some poking around I had done [in 1958] trying to figure out if I could make a career out of photography. Through Lawrence Wiley, the French civilization professor, I arranged to spend part of the summer of 1958 in a French farm village that he was studying at the time. This was the time period in which I started to cross the bridge between photography and my science interest to things like sociology, and then later political science.

MIT at this point -- in 1957 actually -- began to organize a program in political science. When I returned from Europe, I started taking courses in the new program. I was interested for a year or two in courses in science and public policy, where the main professor was Robert Wood, who would later serve as a one-time Deputy Secretary of HUD during the Johnson administration. But I also took courses with a professor named Lucian Pye, a specialist in Chinese politics and political development issues who had been born in China. Pye, because of the way we hit it off personally and my interest in his work, got me especially interested in China, and eventually I went on to specialize in Chinese politics.

MIT, in an interesting way, knit together my scientific aptitude and my interest in public affairs. One of the big issues when I was an undergraduate was the Cold War, of course. In 1957, the Russians shot off the Sputnik. Because I was studying issues of science and public policy with Robert Wood at the time, I got pulled into that area a bit more deeply. After Sputnik, President Eisenhower selected the president of MIT, James Killian, to be his Science Adviser, and there was a sense of crisis both nationally and at the MIT campus. Robert Wood, my professor of science and public policy, played a role in putting together Killian's office as Science Adviser to the President, and one of the things I remember doing just before I went off to Europe in 1958 was making a model of Sputnik that Professor Robert Wood presented to James Killian at the end of his year as the President's first Science Adviser.

MIT was bringing science -- in the form of mathematics and modeling -- to the study of political science, so that element colored my training throughout my remaining undergraduate years. In fact, I did my undergraduate thesis at MIT in 1960 on using aerial photography as a way of gathering social science information. Also, while this was never made explicit to me, I think my involvement with Edwin Land and my work at Polaroid was on the fringe of, and might have been related to, some of the early efforts to develop overhead surveillance systems. Land was directly involved in developing the U-2 and the early satellite systems at just that time, 1959- 60. I have always wondered whether I would have been pulled into that professional arena of activity had I chosen to pursue a career with Polaroid. I was also acquainted with Professor Harold Edgerton, the developer of the stroboscopic flashlight, and at one point I considered working with EG&G, another scientific outfit that was doing photography of atomic bomb tests.

So in my educational experience, there was a synthesis of Cold War issues, science,

public policy, and foreign affairs issues. At that time, most people were concerned with the Soviet threat. Through the influence of Lucian Pye, with whom I had taken a course in Asian politics in 1959 after I returned from my European hitchhiking trip, I became increasingly concerned with issues of political development in Asia. Then, when I decided to go to graduate school, I decided to focus on China issues because everybody and his brother was at that point focusing on Russia. The China issue was hot, albeit in a different way. Through Professor Pye's encouragement I decided to take a somewhat different route in terms of my professional training.

Q: How was China? As you were getting your look at China, what were you getting from Doctor Pye, and from your own observation? How China stood at that point, and what one thought about whither China?

SOLOMON: There were two issues that made China a matter of contemporary public interest. One was the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1958 over the islands of Quemoy and Matsu, and whether there was going to be war. You remember we supported Chiang Kai-shek in his defense of Taiwan and the offshore islands. We provided him with some of the early models of the Sidewinder missile which enabled him to prevail in that confrontation. That was also a time when the first signs of political tension between the Soviets and the Chinese began to bubble to the surface. The issue of the Sino-Soviet dispute, and the position in the world of the Chinese versus that of the Soviets, became a matter of considerable interest.

In the 1960 presidential campaign, the debates between candidates Nixon and Kennedy focused in part on the Quemoy-Matsu crisis, and how the U.S. should deal with Communist China. These issues were very much in the forefront of everyone's mind, and in my formal coursework with Pye and others at MIT, as well as in the political science community nationally, a lot of attention was focused on the requirements and repercussions of national development; for example, the question of whether the democracies would develop faster than the communist states -- as in the comparison between India and China -- was a major area of study. Developmental politics was one strand in the coursework that was offered at that time, but China was a really esoteric topic. It was made personal for me through Pye, who had grown up in China himself as the child of a missionary family and had served in the Pacific theater during World War II. Pye was also interested in Asia more broadly. Apart from his interests in China, he wrote his first book on Burma, where he had served as a Marine during World War II. He wrote another book on Malaysia, or Malay as it was known at that time, and the decolonization process. For me, this was an area that offered a great mix of interests -- in Cold War issues, and the personal appeal of a rather esoteric subject through the teachings of Professor Pye.

Q: So you wanted to concentrate on Chinese, or was it political science?

SOLOMON: I wanted to concentrate on some international issue of import. Even though I was preparing for a teaching career, I was very interested in public policy, having seen not only Jim Killian go down to Washington to be the President's Science Adviser after

Sputnik, but then in 1961, when the Kennedy administration took over, virtually every faculty member with whom I had been involved was going to Washington to consult in some capacity.

Q: Sort of the last one to leave the Boston area, turn out the light practically.

SOLOMON: Everyone under whom I had studied was very much involved in public policy. I found it attractive. It made the studies that I was carrying out seem serious and relevant. So the idea of getting involved in international affairs and public policy issues really brought together a broad range of my experiences and interests: hitchhiking around Europe; seeing a world beyond the closed, business-oriented community I had grown up with in Philadelphia; the public policy concerns of the Quakers instilled during my boarding school experience; the Cold War environment; and the public policy orientation of the faculty members I had studied with.

Q: How was your graduate study? Where did you do it, and how was it put together?

SOLOMON: During the first year of my graduate work, which took place in the fall of 1960 through the spring of '61, I continued to focus on science and public policy. My continuing studies with Lucian Pye were of increasing interest, however, and a seminal event for me occurred in early June of 1961. I went to Pye's office to talk about my career direction, and what issues I should specialize in at graduate school. While we were talking, the telephone rang. On the other end of the line was Walt Rostow, who had been a professor at MIT and who specialized in comparative economics and economic history. At that point in time, he was running the Policy Planning staff for the Kennedy administration. Rostow told Pye that intelligence information indicated that the Chinese were in the midst of a major food crisis, and he wondered if Pye knew anyone who could analyze some of the information that was beginning to emerge on how the Chinese were dealing with this food crisis. Pye looked up, across his desk, and there I was suspended in the middle of a conversation with him about my career development. He said to Walt Rostow, "Well, we have a young man right here who might be right for this project. I'll get back to you."

A couple of days and several conversations later, Pye said to me, "Look, we really need someone for this project who has some Chinese language capability, because in part, the materials that are to be looked at are in Chinese. If you're serious about going off in this kind of a direction, I'll get you a scholarship to start studying Chinese." I'd been married just less than a year, and Pye's proposal would send me in a substantially new direction professionally. So I took a deep breath and said yes. Pye got me a scholarship to go down to Yale University, which had an excellent Air Force program in Chinese language studies. I spent the summer of 1961 at Yale studying the introductory Air Force course in Chinese language. It was almost all focused on oral comprehension. It was actually a study program designed for intelligence officers who would be sitting around the periphery of China listening to their radio communications.

Q: I went to the Army language school and took Russian back in '51 but I'm sure it was

the same thing.

SOLOMON: That was a course that had quite a few people who later became fairly notable in the China studies area. One member of the program was Jay Rockefeller, who had been in Japan and at that point had not yet begun his political career. There were quite a few other people in that class who subsequently pursued academic, or in some cases government, careers built around China. Once I had completed that intensive summer course, I continued with a quarter-time course focus at Harvard in Chinese language studies for the three years of my graduate training. When I got a research fellowship to go off to Asia to do my doctoral dissertation in 1963-65, I spent another summer and fall at Yale, further developing my Chinese language capacity, and then continued studying for an additional six-month period in Taiwan, and then more still later in Hong Kong. All together, starting with the Yale program, and then at Harvard, and later in Taiwan and Hong Kong, I studied Chinese formally for the better part of five years.

Q: Your focus was on Chinese affairs for your dissertation, what was this?

SOLOMON: My interests in graduate school had evolved in part in the direction of political psychology. Again, this was in some part a reflection of the concerns of the faculty at MIT in those days. There was one faculty member, an economist named Everett Hagen, who had been strongly influenced by the work of Eric Erickson, the child psychologist. I believe that Eric Erickson had spent a term at MIT in the early '60s. I had not had direct exposure to him, but his book Young Man Luther and some of his other writings had had an impact on members of the faculty and had made political psychology a matter of real interest around the MIT political science program. Also, Harold Laswell, a very famous political science professor who had studied with Freud and others in Europe, was a visiting professor at MIT around that time. He was based at Yale in those days, I believe, but was coming up to MIT to teach. At any rate, political psychology became another area of considerable interest to me, and Lucian Pye was intrigued with it as well.

One of the new buzz words in the study of political behavior in those days at MIT was the term “political culture.” What exactly defined political culture was an issue of open debate. Some of my coursework included anthropology and social psychology at Harvard, as well as political science courses at MIT, which focused on this notion of political culture. What is it, and how do you study it? With Pye's encouragement, I formulated a Ph.D. dissertation topic, which was a study of the Chinese political culture. Pye himself, who as I said had been born and brought up in China as a young man, was doing a somewhat similar study, and was just getting into it. He and I traded ideas, but in a sense he went off and did his study, and I did mine. He published a book that was based in part on the interaction that we had shared while I was doing my dissertation research. It was called The Spirit of Chinese Politics, which I think was published in 1968. My first book, which was titled Mao's Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture reflected our shared interest in Chinese politics, the Chinese revolution, and an effort to define what this notion of “political culture” was all about.

Q: As you got into this wasn't this rather difficult...here was a pretty closed society. You could read the papers, but there was also a heavy filter of the party apparatus.

SOLOMON: This is where I built on my interest in foreign affairs and politics. I designed a dissertation project which I ran out of Taiwan and Hong Kong that involved interviewing 100 Chinese refugees from the mainland of China who represented the three existing generations: the generation who had lived most of their lives under the Ching dynasty that collapsed in 1912; those who had lived during the Warlord period; and the more recent generation who had grown up, at least in part, under the communists. Partly on Taiwan, through the help of the refugee resettlement organization that the Taiwan authorities had established, and partly in Hong Kong, I was able to piece together a rather interesting sample of the 100 Chinese subjects who either I myself or Chinese research assistants I had hired interviewed in a study of their political socialization, their political attitudes, and their experiences in dealing with politics in China. It was really the first interview project in which an academic sat down and interviewed a structured sample of 100 Chinese. Most of Sinology, as it was then called, was analysis of classical texts and heavily Confucian-oriented, so this was an effort to apply western or American political science and social science methodology and perspectives to the study of Chinese politics.

Q: I would have thought while you were doing this, particularly in Hong Kong, which was our China watching post, and in a way that is what they were trying to do too, that you would either have run up against them, or cooperated, or done something with them. How did this work out?

SOLOMON: Actually, that was one of the ways in which I edged closer to a period of government work. As you say, the American Consulate General in Hong Kong was our major China watching site. In the study of Asia there tend to be three areas of focus: one area encompasses the Japan and Korea specialists, who of course do language training and spend their time focused on or in Japan or Korea. The second group is the China specialists. And the third area of real focus in those days was, of course, the Vietnam specialists, because the Vietnam war was just heating up. There are other areas of specialization -- South and Southeast Asia -- but Japan, China, and in those days Vietnam, were the areas that people really focused on. The Hong Kong Consulate General was a major training site, along with Taiwan, for the young career FSOs who were specializing in China. This was during the early 1960s, a time when the Foreign Service was just beginning to recover from the McCarthy period of a decade earlier. I became quite close friends with people who subsequently went on to become major figures in the career Foreign Service: Ambassador Morton Abramowitz, Ambassador Nicholas Platt, Ambassador William Gleysteen, and a number of others. James Lilley, who was at that time in the CIA, was there, as was David Gries.

A whole generation of people who specialized on China passed through either Taiwan, a situation in which I was not as directly involved in terms of contact with government people, or Hong Kong. I got to know and became colleagues with that generation of China specialists because, as you noted a moment ago, we were all in a sense doing the

same thing, along with the journalists who were there. The journalist Stanley Karnow, who has written several Pulitzer Prize-winning books on Asia, including one on China, one on Vietnam, and one on the Philippines, was stationed in Hong Kong for *The Washington Post* then. The journalists, the academics, and the Foreign Service people or other government people were all there in a kind of cauldron in Hong Kong, doing "China watching" or "Pekingology" -- staring over the border, trying to figure out what was going on inside that closed society. This was a time in which China was in a period of tremendous social and political upheaval.

Q: Was this the Great Leap Forward?

SOLOMON: The Great Leap Forward had begun in 1958 and had basically collapsed in 1961 -- which is when the food crisis began. The food crisis, of course, was the event that spurred Walt Rostow to call Lucian Pye the afternoon I was in his office in June of 1961. But out of that crisis there was a major flow of refugees into Hong Kong, particularly during 1961 and 1962. Some of those refugees went to Taiwan and became interview subjects for my dissertation project.

Q: While you were at MIT doing this, one thinks of studying China one always thinks of John Fairbank at Harvard. But was there a division? Was Fairbank a historian? Did he cast any shadow on what you were doing?

SOLOMON: John K. Fairbank was the grand old man of China studies, and as you noted he built the East Asian Center at Harvard into "the" international center for the study of Chinese politics and history. While I was at MIT, I began to have some contact with those people. There was some tension -- maybe too strong a word -- but a little bit of rivalry between Harvard and MIT. The view of the Harvard crowd seemed to be that MIT, which really consisted of Lucian Pye and maybe one or two others, was off on the periphery of things, and that the MIT folks were doing social science activities that frankly the Harvard historians found to be secondary to the work they were doing. Harvard was filled with people who were the classicists; academics who studied the old Ching dynasty texts as did Fairbank, and who were in truth not at the center of contemporary issues. However, a whole range of people who made their careers in the China studies area were associated with the Fairbank Center, such as Benjamin Schwartz, the historian who specialized in Chinese Communist history. They had some government people who upon occasion would spend a year there. For example, Charles Neuhauser, who became one of the premier CIA analysts of Chinese politics, spent a year at Harvard. While I didn't know him at that time -- he was there in '58 or '59, I think -- he and I became close colleagues when I was in government later in my career. Roderick MacFarquhar, who is today the head of the Fairbank Center, or was a few years ago, and Ezra Vogel, who has been a major professorial talent on all of Asia (Japan being his primary area of focus), were both students associated with the Fairbank Center, along with many others I might mention.

I remember that after I had come back from my initial language studies at Yale in 1961 and was doing some coursework at Harvard, I was once invited by John Fairbank to one

of his famous Thursday afternoon “teas” at his private residence. I mentioned this to Pye with some pride because I felt it indicated that I was being recognized and welcomed into that elite community. Pye just sniffed and said, “Well, you're doing them a favor by going over there.” In other words, the Harvard crowd saw themselves as the center of things, and Pye was in effect telling me, “Well, they're not the center of everything.” But, yes, the Harvard center was producing, apart from their classical historically-oriented work, some of the most interesting work at that time on contemporary China. The faculty member most associated with their work at the time was Professor Benjamin Schwartz, who had written a book that had come out in the late '50s called Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao. It was one of the first efforts to challenge the generally prevalent notion at that time that the Chinese Communists were really under the thumb of and just an adjunct to the Russian communists. There was a horrendous debate going on among a number of the Sovietologists who had made the transfer to study Chinese communism who claimed that Mao was really just an offshoot of Stalin, and a Stalinist. Ben Schwartz and others were saying “No, Mao is an indigenous Chinese revolutionary.” The way he had come to power had been the result, in fact, of his asserting himself in opposition to Stalin. Stalin, as Schwartz documented, had encouraged a number of other Chinese leaders in an effort to maintain control over the Chinese communist movement; Mao had come to power despite some actual overt opposition from Stalin. So, as you can imagine, there was very lively intellectual debate on the subject. It was indicative of the Cold War environment of that period, and indeed the influence of the McCarthy period, and produced some almost violent disputes about the character of Chinese communism in relation to Soviet communism.

Q: I'd like to capture the sort of intellectual environment because this is important in how we're looking at things. Was there a feeling, in many ways Mao was probably the best thing that could have happened to China? Not in a really good sense, but at least the Chinese were all getting fed, and they were all clothed, and they were getting health, and nobody else had been able to do that before. I've never studied China except I picked up some of this. This is even coming out of the Foreign Service as a practical matter at Mao.

SOLOMON: What you could say is the following: Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalists were generally not held in very high repute in the academic community. The academic community was also very wary of the China issue because of the legacy of McCarthyism, its impact on John Service and some of the other China specialists in the State Department. There were one or two academics who were viewed as conservative or right wing who were very friendly to the Nationalists. For the most part, however, I would say there was at least fascination with Mao and the Chinese communist experience. As I say, the initial focus was on issues like whether Chinese communism was really just an offshoot of the Soviet system -- under the control of the Comintern and Stalin -- or not. That issue was debated in the context of the evolving Sino-Soviet dispute, which broke out into the open in 1959-60. Mao was not viewed as an especially tyrannical figure; I think he was viewed with fascination, and yet there was not really a lot known yet about what was happening inside China. So your notion that “at least the Chinese on the mainland are being fed better than they were in the past, and the country is unified” was not so widely developed, at least in the academic circles. There was an element of that in

what became a pro-China element in the academic community during the Vietnam War. But at MIT, and particularly in the Center for International Studies -- which was funded in no small measure by government money -- most of the people were fairly hawkish in the Cold War environment. So, no, there wasn't an idealization of Mao or the Nationalists.

Of course, in the mid-'60s we gradually began to get a sense of how horrendous the impact of the Great Leap Forward had really been. The effort to form communes in rural China, and the attempt to organize the work force not around families and villages, but around military-style units that were as large as townships or entire counties within China, had proved to be disastrous. I would say the mainstream view was at least skepticism about what Mao was doing, although as the Vietnam War heated up, there was an increasing tendency among what you might call leftist-oriented students to idealize the Chinese revolution. You had people like Professor Mark Seldon and a number of other academics associated with what became known as the Committee for Concerned Asian Scholars expressing views that were very positive about Mao and the Chinese revolution. Certainly, this was in contrast to what I would say was the MIT view, or the main trend. Also, as I mentioned, off in the wings you had some right wing, or more conservative academics who still supported the Nationalist cause. I suppose Professor Dixie Walker would be a good example. Finally, in the middle, where I would put myself, you had people who were basically trying to figure out what was going on and who were fascinated with what little we knew, but knew it wasn't the whole story.

Q: Again, during this early to mid-'60s period, what about the recognition of China? This must have been a subject of debate. Where did that stand? Recognition by the United States of China?

SOLOMON: The Kennedy administration became seized with this issue. It's interesting how the Quemoy-Matsu crisis of '58, and then the discussion of that crisis in the Nixon-Kennedy debate in '60, really set off some interesting trends that took over a decade to fully play themselves out. Richard Nixon became fascinated with China as a result of that debate: his primary concern was the Soviet threat, so his interest in the China issue grew out of Quemoy-Matsu discussion during the campaign debates.

Kennedy himself was interested in the Chinese issue, and began exploring the idea of recognizing Communist China. In 1962, I believe, he floated the idea of recognizing Mongolia. Chiang Kai-shek shot the idea down because he considered Outer Mongolia, the People's Republic of Mongolia, as Chinese turf. The Soviets had encouraged a revolution there as early as 1924, and Mongolia at that point was under Soviet control. For Kennedy, the issue of recognizing Mongolia was really a stalking horse on the issue of establishing diplomatic relations with China. Because of the strength of the Nationalists in their lobbying activities in Washington, Kennedy's effort never got very far.

And then, of course, in the context of the Vietnam War, China was seen as a threat. In the '60s, China was encouraging revolutions in Southeast Asia. The situation in Indonesia

was probably the most dramatic attempt at a communist coup, and then the counter-coup in 1965. So the issue of dealing with Communist China, recognizing it, was very much floating around in the 1960s but hadn't come to a head yet.
The issue that really brought the matter of recognizing China to a head in the latter part of the '60s was "China in the United Nations." That issue became prominent at the time that I entered government service in 1971, when opinion in the United Nations General Assembly shifted dramatically in favor of support for admitting Communist China in place of the Nationalist Chinese, or Chiang Kai-shek's government in Taiwan. That was one of the issues that Richard Nixon had to deal with in the broader context of his own China policy, as well as his policy for dealing with the Soviet Union.

Q: Let's talk a bit about when you graduated, what did you do up to the time when you entered government service?

SOLOMON: I spent two years in Taiwan and Hong Kong doing my dissertation research. After I completed my general Ph.D. exams at MIT in June of '63, I spent the summer and fall at Yale University doing more language study, and then I studied some history at Yale with Mary Wright. Then, with my wife, I went to Taiwan in late January or early February of 1964. I spent the spring and summer months of 1964 engaged in intensive Chinese language study at the Stanford Language Program, which was then on the campus of Taiwan National University -- "Tai Da" -- in Taipei. At the end of that period we moved to Hong Kong, where I began research on my dissertation. But I had established some professional research arrangements in Taiwan so I went back and forth between Hong Kong and Taiwan over the next year.

Q: How does one support one's self on this type of thing?

SOLOMON: I had been awarded a Ford Foundation foreign affairs training fellowship, which gave me two years of support for the language study and dissertation research. And then, after I designed my dissertation research project, I had small research grants from MIT and from the University of Michigan. Before I actually went to Taiwan, in early 1964, I had been interviewed and had been offered a job at the University of Michigan as a teacher -- an assistant professor -- or, if I didn't complete my dissertation during my time in Taiwan, as a teaching assistant. So I supported myself, as I say, on the Ford Foundation grant, and then on two small research stipends I got from MIT and from Michigan. But I had the prospect of a job teaching.

In January of 1966, I left Hong Kong and went to Michigan. I was scheduled to begin teaching in the fall of 1966, so I had in effect eight or nine months to take the information that I had assembled in two years of interview work in Taiwan and Hong Kong and turn it into a dissertation. From January through August of 1966, I closeted myself and finished my dissertation. I finished it just as I began my teaching career in August of 1966, which lasted five years at Michigan.

Q: Did you have any concern that whatever you were putting together for your dissertation that there might be some cataclysmic event in China or something like that to

completely put you at the wrong end?

SOLOMON: No, because I was not doing a dissertation that was a study strictly of history. In fact, it was not history, it was -- as I mentioned earlier -- an effort to explore the concept of political culture. That is, the assumption is that in different cultures or countries, people think about politics, about how they deal with conflict, about how they relate to authority figures, either within the family or in public life, in very different ways. My dissertation topic was fairly general and was not in that sense subject to the vagaries of politics.

Q: Did you find at Michigan that there was a different attitude towards China that you were getting. This is a mid-western university, from the faculties, the students?

SOLOMON: No, I wouldn't say so. It was the same kind of diversity I'd discovered at Harvard or MIT. Many of the Michigan faculty had been trained, I think, at Harvard. The historians for the most part were interested in history and everyone was concerned about the U.S. getting into a war with China over the Vietnam conflict. I had several younger faculty colleagues, people of my generation, who were very pro-China because they were very hostile to Uncle Sam and our involvement in the Vietnam War. Professor William Rosenberg was a Russian historian who was one of the leaders of the academic left. A number of other faculty members were also on the left end of the spectrum. Michigan was a cauldron of opposition to the Vietnam War, but I wouldn't say there was so much an idealization of China, except for a few selected individuals, as much as there was a fascination with the Chinese revolution, and a real concern that the United States was going to maneuver itself into a war with China -- as had occurred, of course, in the Korean conflict in 1950.

Shortly after I began teaching in the fall of '66, Michigan -- which was being built up then as a major center for Chinese studies under the leadership of Professor Alexander Eckstein -- hired an academic who was then in government service, who was actually Deputy Consul General in Hong Kong, Doctor Alan Whiting, to join the political science faculty. Whiting had written a very famous book while at the Rand Corporation in the early 1960s called China Crosses the Yalu. While he was in the government in the mid-'60s, Alan Whiting had had some roaring debates with other members of the Foreign Service over the issue of whether China was going to cross another “Yalu” and enter into the war in Vietnam. Whiting stressed the view that yes, China was already actively on the ground in Southeast Asia, and that the United States was very likely to get into a shooting war with China in Southeast Asia, as it had in Korea in 1950. There were others who strongly disagreed with his view. In fact, Whiting had a very difficult relationship with a junior member of the Hong Kong Consulate General, a man who later became an ambassador, Burton Levin. Levin said that no, he didn't think China was going to enter the war under the circumstances at that time, and Whiting disagreed with him. Whiting was, of course, his superior, so there was some real tension in the U.S. Consulate in Hong Kong over reporting cables and interpretations of what was happening in Vietnam. The issue at dispute was whether we would end up in a war with China.

Q: How did you get into the government?

SOLOMON: Well, it goes through a few stages. I taught at Michigan until January of 1969 when I got another research grant. In January of 1969, I returned with my family to Hong Kong for a second period of research. This research was based on my earlier work there and my focus on political culture. But this time I was going to focus much more on contemporary politics and try to show how Mao was trying to transform China and its political culture in terms of contemporary events.

Q: What period were you there then?

SOLOMON: At Michigan?

Q: No, in Hong Kong.

SOLOMON: My second stint in Hong Kong was January through August of 1969.

Q: I'm trying to remember. Was the Cultural Revolution...if I recall the Little Red Book, the Cultural Revolution was in full swing wasn't it?

SOLOMON: That's correct. Now what was going on there is complicated, but related to this. The Cultural Revolution began in China in terms of a leadership dispute in the fall of 1965. That's when we began to see overt political tensions. It actually had its origins in the failure of the Great Leap Forward, and Mao's loss of influence and support from his other colleagues that had come out in the early '60s. But we didn't see it at that point. It hadn't taken on the form of the Cultural Revolution. The first time I was in Hong Kong (1964-65), the early phase of the Cultural Revolution was just beginning. The second time I was there, in 1969, it was a matter of major purge, massive campaigns, and real violence, only some of which we could see from the outside. But what came to a head in the summer of 1969, while I was in Hong Kong, was the growing tension between China and the Soviet Union. In the summer of that year there were major border clashes along the Sino-Soviet frontier that had their precursors in the early part of 1969, and all the propaganda coming out in Hong Kong that summer asserted that the Chinese people should get ready for war with the Russians. The propaganda appeal to “get ready right now” was just one indicator of the sense of intense urgency about the growing tensions between China and the Soviet Union.

Q: As you did your studies, did you see any reflections...was the Cultural Revolution going contrary to what you saw of the political culture of China, the Mao generation?

SOLOMON: The big issue was that Mao was a very confrontational personality. He differed from the traditional Chinese political culture in that he would press confrontations, whereas the traditional Chinese approach was to try to minimize them, to submit to authority, and to avoid confrontation. Mao, however, decided to take on Khrushchev frontally, which he did after Khrushchev's anti-Stalin speech in '56. One could see that situation in terms of the evolving Sino-Soviet dispute. What that meant for

China taking us on, in terms of Vietnam, was unclear. And as I said, some people said, "Oh, the Chinese are going to take us on. They have all these internal problems, so they'll try to externalize all this conflict by confronting the United States." And others said, "No, no, they've got tremendous internal difficulties, they've got their confrontation with the Russians; they can't take us on as well." There was real division of opinion on that issue.

Q: Then you had your Hong Kong time in '69, and then what?

SOLOMON: When I came back from Hong Kong in the late summer of 1969 I had, in effect, the second half of what became my first major book, Mao's Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture. I wrote it through the fall of 1969, and into the winter of 1970. It was ultimately published in September of 1971, which is relevant only because at that point I was working in the government, and it came out on the eve of President Nixon's China trip, which I'll comment on in a minute.

In any event, in the fall of 1969 I began to think about applying for a fellowship through the Council on Foreign Relations, which has a foreign area fellows program. I applied, I guess, in the spring of 1970, but I applied for another period of research. The response I got back was, "Well, we're interested in you, but you've already done a lot of research. Why don't you have a period of experience in the government?" So, in the fall of 1970, the Council on Foreign Relations approached Henry Kissinger, and asked him whether he would be interested in taking me on his staff. The year before, that is 1970, Kissinger had had another Council on Foreign Relations fellow on his staff, a Europeanist. That individual hadn't worked out too well, I was told, so there was some uncertainty about whether he'd want to take on another. But in the spring of 1971, I think it was in April, after months of not hearing anything, I got a letter from the National Security Council staff saying that I had been chosen to be a Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow on the NSC staff beginning in the fall of 1971.

Q: I always like to get the beginning of a segment. How long were you there?

SOLOMON: On the NSC?

Q: Yes.

SOLOMON: Let me back up. During that period I had also looked into the possibility of being on the State Department's Policy Planning Staff. I was told -- I think this was probably in the spring of 1970 -- that if I was politically plugged in as a Republican (this was again in the Nixon period) they might look at me. It was clear the Policy Planning Staff was used to place political analysts, or academics, or others who had a strong political orientation. Kissinger, however, was building up his staff -- apparently as he felt was needed -- by the substance. So in late August of '71 I started what I thought would be a year on the NSC staff under this Council on Foreign Relations fellowship program. I have to preface this by saying that I was teaching at Michigan during this period. It was a time of great political turmoil on the campus because of the Vietnam War and social tension. You remember Kent State. That was 1970.

Q: Kent State was the spring of '70. I was in Saigon at the time.

SOLOMON: I had outsiders come into the classroom and tell my students -- this is the summer of '70 -- that they should go out and buy guns. There was a lot of racial tension, as well as anti-Vietnam War tension on the Michigan campus. Classes were frequently disrupted. There were teach-ins. It was not a very intellectual environment; it was very tense at many points in time. In any event, it was in that environment that I received a letter from the NSC staff saying that I would be working on the NSC staff starting that fall. A couple of months later, word got around that Nixon was going to give a major statement on television on July 15, 1971. I remember I was getting ready to have dinner at a friend's house and somebody said, "Well, should we watch Nixon's statement?" I said, "Oh, let's not. It's more Vietnam." I was sick of it. "No, no, let's watch it." So we watched it, and I was as flabbergasted as were all the others in the room when Nixon announced that Kissinger had just been to China, and that he, Nixon, would be going to China sometime in early '72.

Right after that announcement, I mean within an hour, I got a telephone call from a State Department friend of mine whom I had gotten to know when I was living in Hong Kong back in '64-'65. He congratulated me, saying that by working on Kissinger's NSC staff, as opposed to in the State Department, I was going to be right in the middle of all the preparations for the Nixon trip to China. Obviously that made me feel good, made me feel that my experience was going to be really interesting. So I went to Washington in the late summer of 1971 and, again, I had a year's support from the Council on Foreign Relations for this assignment. As it turned out, I immediately got heavily drawn into the whole process of normalizing U.S. relations with China under the Nixon and Kissinger administration of that policy. I ended up extending my tour, first for one year, then another year, and I ended up staying on the NSC staff until the end of June 1976 - almost five years.

Q: Could you give a description...you arrive at the NSC, first time really in government, new boy on the block, your vision of these things is always different than when you get used to it. How did you see the whole environment, and the people when you first arrived?

SOLOMON: First of all, I knew a number of the people I was working with. My initial supervisor was John Holdridge, who I had known a bit, although not all that well. A number of the other people on the staff I had had some contact with, as well, but I was really green. I mean I only had a very impressionistic view of what life in the government was likely to be all about. And it was pieced together out of the experiences I had had first as a graduate student at MIT where all the faculty members were going down to Washington, then by rubbing elbows in Hong Kong with the Foreign Service officers. I had a general sense of what government service entailed, and I was interested in policy and policy issues, and in public affairs, but I really didn't have any sense of bureaucratic process.

Entering the policy world, I got three jolts. First, I'd just finished writing a 600-page book, which as I mentioned earlier had grown out of my research in Taiwan and Hong Kong. The book was in the press publication process, and came out a month or so after I started my work on the NSC. Suddenly, I was expected to start writing things that were two or three pages long. Going from voluminous academic writing to very terse memo writing, and distilling one's interpretation of what usually were very complex and often indeterminate events into something that would be digestible by people in the bureaucracy, was a big shock. I got used to it, but it was one of the major changes.

The second major change was the adjustment from being public and having everything I said -- whether it was in teaching a class, or writing an article, or writing an op-ed piece -- be under my own name, and being personally responsible for my own statements. Suddenly, I found myself an anonymous junior NSC staffer; the memos I initially wrote weren't even sent up under my own name. I would do the drafting of an interpretive piece for John Holdridge and it would go up under his name. I found that offensive, as any academic would, because in the academic arena you live and die by your written word, and your ideas. That was a big change.

The third change, of course, was the hyper-secrecy and the sensitivity about discretion that came, not just from working in the government and working with classified information, but working on a specific policy issue that was of hyper-sensitivity to the Nixon administration. Politically, it was extremely loaded work. This was an issue that Nixon, and Kissinger in particular, wanted to control out of the White House. Bureaucratic tensions were particularly intense. Whether I was rubbing elbows with former journalistic people I knew, like Stanley Karnow, or people in other government agencies with whom I was acquainted, like Charles Neuhauser in the CIA, or even other State Department personnel, I suddenly had to learn to be very discreet, and to worry about imparting certain information. It was in stark contrast to the free-wheeling academic discussions I was used to. In these three ways, making the transition from academic life to government work, and particularly with the responsibilities and involvement I had on the China issue, was quite a shock. It was quite a transition.

Q: There had been this opening to China, it was just there, what was your role, and what was your feeling towards how the people involved...now John Holdridge obviously knew something about it. He had studied Chinese and dealt with this. But none of the people there had ever done more than the Kissinger visit to China, if that. And all of a sudden you're dealing with this. What was your impression, and what were you doing?

SOLOMON: Let's just say I had to earn my spurs and build a role for myself. I still don't know all of the issues that were in play when Kissinger decided to hire me, but I assume there was a judgment made that to have someone with Chinese language capability and a sense of their politics would be especially useful. So on that basis, I was brought in. However, Kissinger was extremely concerned about leaks, as was Nixon, and about loss of political control in this very controversial move that Nixon had made -- sending Kissinger to China and trying to engage the Chinese in a normalization process. Moreover, in time Kissinger realized that he had been made a diplomatic superstar by the

China opening. His return from the secret trip to China had catapulted him up to a level of international recognition that had a very powerful impact on his career, as well as the careers of a lot of other people, myself included. However, Kissinger was frankly very jealous of who got credit, and of the visibility that resulted from all facets of the China issue. I think initially, for the first couple of months, until he could figure out what I was about and whether he could trust me, I was kept very much on the margin of the preparations for Nixon's China trip.

I can remember my first few weeks: Holdridge had me drafting replies to correspondence. It had nothing to do with China in particular; I was just being read into the various intelligence categories. I didn't have access to specially compartmentalized intelligence for several months. Initially they were watching me and trying to figure out whether I could be trusted and what kind of a contribution I could make. Initially my contribution focused on the efforts to build support for the Nixon/China opening in the American academic community. Kissinger made a second trip, his first public trip, to China in October of 1971. This was to advance the process of preparing for Nixon's visit. I was given the job of putting together some of the possibilities for academic and other exchanges with China. I can remember that because of my academic background, I knew a lot of the players in the academic China community who were very active and interested in Sino-American relations. Professor Alexander Eckstein, the man who had hired me at Michigan, was one of those people. So initially, I played a role in liaising or bridging over to the academic community. Those same academic ties also had an impact in terms of the first real operational assignment I had, which was as Nixon and Kissinger's representative in the Chinese ping-pong team's American tour in April of 1972. In the spring of 1971, the world had been flabbergasted when Zhou En-lai invited the American ping-pong team that was in Japan to China; it caused a tremendous commotion. This was the precursor to Kissinger's secret trip.

Q: It was called at the time ping-pong diplomacy.

SOLOMON: It became known as "ping-pong diplomacy." It was Mao and Zhou En-lai trying to signal to the world that they were prepared to deal with the United States. This was a counterpart to Nixon's secret communications with the Chinese, which had been going on for some time. Partly through public statements like his *Foreign Affairs* article of 1967, and then through diplomatic communications that began in 1969 or '70, Nixon signaled to Zhou and Mao that he was interested in engaging China. So there was signaling going on and the ping-pong diplomacy was part of it. I had been on the NSC staff almost six months at that point, and I think people like Kissinger and Al Haig -- his deputy at the time, although both became Secretaries of State -- seemed to have developed confidence in me; so I was assigned to escort the Chinese ping-pong team around as the "eyes and ears" of the White House, and as a political adviser to some of the people from the State Department, USIA, and others who were helping to organize that tour. The ping-pong team's visit was ostensibly organized by an outfit called the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, of which I had been a member for some years. It was basically an academic organization concerned with improving public education and understanding about China. Alexander Eckstein was the president of the

National Committee on U.S.-China Relations at that point, so we collaborated, he in Michigan and me now in the White House, in organizing the ping-pong tour.

Q: How did it go?

SOLOMON: It was extremely intense. It went beautifully because all the world was fascinated with China. Remember, the tour occurred about a month and a half after the end of Nixon's triumphal visit to China in February of '72. So the atmosphere in the States was quite positive. Of course there was some opposition; Reverend MacIntyre and some of the strongly anti-communist groups were out demonstrating against the ping-pong team. On the whole, however, there was a very warm and fascinated response to things Chinese by the American public, whether it was panda bears or ping-pong. We had all been worried about the possibility of going to war with China as the result of the Vietnam conflict, and suddenly this process of normalization had unexpectedly begun.

That said, there were all sorts of internal tensions in the organization of the China ping-pong team's tour. Particularly, conflict arose between the American Ping-Pong Federation, which was the official host organization, headed by a man named Graham Steenhoven, and the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, at that point headed by Alexander Eckstein, and the U.S. government, which saw the tour as a critical political event in the effort to build public support for formal relations with China. Additionally, there was the Taiwan factor. Taiwan was very upset about the Nixon initiative, and while they didn't overtly oppose the ping-pong trip, or normalization, they saw themselves as extremely vulnerable.

Remember, Taiwan had been kicked out of the UN in the fall of 1971. When Nixon began the process of normalizing relations with Beijing, Chiang Kai-shek on Taiwan didn't know what this was going to mean for him. I remember vividly a match that was played out at the University of Maryland during the ping-pong tour. This would have been sometime in April of '72. The Taiwanese turned out a huge claque of their supporters who shouted slogans enticing the Chinese ping-pong players to defect to Taiwan. So this ping-pong tour got caught up in all of these internal political strains.

Q: In something like this were you just eyes and ears, or were you hand too? I mean were you trying to make sure the thing went well?

SOLOMON: I was there to make sure that there were no foul-ups, and the government delegation that accompanied the Chinese players included FBI and CIA types for security reasons. We were obviously interested in learning as much about the mood and the views of the Chinese who had come over for this tour. We were also concerned about security, and we believe there were some security threats to the delegation at one point. So the coordination among the Ping-Pong Federation, the academics, and the various government agencies was a very complicated matter. The White House, apart from myself, had assigned John Scali -- at that point, Nixon's director of communications -- to the ping-pong tour. Scali and the politicos in the White House were very much on edge about Kissinger gaining so much limelight out of China opening. They wanted to make

sure that the credit went to the President, who had taken the initiative to send him to China in the first place. So there was that line of tension as well. I took my orders day-by-day from General Haig, who was at that point Kissinger's deputy. I was basically there to try to keep peace among the various parties who were part of this traveling road show, and where there were problems to let General Haig know about it. I had to use my own judgment on the spot to make sure things worked smoothly, or to evaluate the tour's effect in writing situation reports that would go back to the White House.

Q: When you were in the preparations for Nixon's visit, were you dragged into the China end, or were you still on so-called probation?
SOLOMON: The answer is, I was partly dragged in, and I partly pushed my way in. Some of the issues that were being talked about were at the core of our national security strategy planning. There were discussions between Kissinger and Defense officials in China that I don't think have yet been fully revealed. But the core issue that China and the United States were worried about was the Soviet threat. The Chinese were still worried in the wake of the Sino-Soviet border clashes of 1969, still worried whether Brezhnev and company were going to go to war with them. A lot of defense issues were being discussed that were as sensitive as any I can imagine our government talking about with anyone. I don't think the State Department, or even the Defense Department, was privy to the content of those conversations. It was all bottled up in the White House, and I was not brought into those talks. Discussions also dealt with how to end the Vietnam War. So, a lot of exceptionally sensitive issues were on the table, some of which I was aware of but was not directly involved in -- I frankly didn't have a lot of background to deal with them.

My primary role in preparing for Nixon's personal trip to China in February of '72 was writing background briefing materials. Here, my academic background, the work I had done in Hong Kong and all the rest, served me well. I was able to boil down some of the history I had learned about Mao, about his personality, the state of play in the Chinese political scene, and the Cultural Revolution. I wrote several six- or eight-page interpretative memos, which were pretty long for government work. So my original contribution, in a sense, was writing these background briefing materials for Nixon as he prepared for his trip.

Q: I think many of the accounts, particularly of the Cultural Revolution that have come out, Mao is coming out as much more of a monster in a way than had been originally seen. Here are Nixon and Kissinger both going out, sort of a new opening, did you find there was a coloration that you were comfortable with? Or was there a spirit or what have you as you did these things?
SOLOMON: The dark side of Mao was not so evident. As we're talking here, in August of 1996, we have the benefit of a book by Mao's doctor that came out a couple of years ago that makes Mao look like a dissolute emperor. At that time Mao was viewed as a tough revolutionary, a fascinating figure, not a demon. Again, we didn't really have a lot of information about China's internal politics, which from today's perspective Mao played a very dark role in. What we knew was that the Cultural Revolution seemed to be tearing the leadership apart. Within a month of my beginning work on the NSC, that is in

September of 1971, there was the incident where the Defense Minister Lin Piao, the man who at that point appeared to be Mao's chosen successor, disappeared. We had some initial intelligence reports about his disappearance that turned out to be wrong, and it took several months before the truth of what had happened filtered out of China: that he had tried to defect to the Soviet Union, that his plane had crashed in Mongolia. Why had he defected? What was going on inside the leadership? We frankly didn't know. All that we knew was that, in contrast to the situation during Kissinger's secret visit to Beijing in July of '71, and during his second visit in October of '71, suddenly the military was all over the place maintaining security. The atmosphere was extremely tense, and we didn't really know what was going on. Had there been a coup? Why was the military now in control of everything? There were all sorts of speculations, but we really didn't know.

Again, one of my jobs was to liaise with the intelligence community; knowing something about Kissinger's interest, or perspectives, I was to write interpretative pieces which would try to put the political environment, the context, in which Kissinger and Nixon were operating with the Chinese leadership, into some perspective.

Q: Did you get any feedback on these studies that you were giving?

SOLOMON: I guess I had two or three kinds of feedback. I heard from Winston Lord that Nixon had found the interpretative pieces that I was writing of interest. I also heard general comments to the effect that since I had joined the NSC staff, the quality of analysis and writing out of the Asia section had improved substantially. After nine months or so, I told Kissinger directly that I found it gratifying and interesting to work for him, and he indicated that he would like me to stay on. That led me to extending my stay with the NSC -- initially for another year, and eventually for what wound up being a five-year tour. Apparently, they found me analytically, politically, and otherwise acceptable -- they were comfortable with me, and even given their somewhat paranoid view of what was going on in the world and in our domestic politics, they seemed to trust me.

I might point out that the first trip that I made to China with Kissinger was in June of 1972, after the ping-pong tour. We left Washington in a violent rainstorm on June 17, 1972. That was the night of the Watergate break-in. So there is an interesting intersection -- just from a personal point of view -- between Watergate and the China opening.

Q: At least you weren't there, you could show you were on a plane.

SOLOMON: Well, I eventually had some dealings with John Dean, and there was a general atmosphere around that White House that reflected...

Q: I was going to ask about the atmosphere because obviously Kissinger was, particularly after the China thing, had a very high profile and if there's anything the presidential staff dislikes more than somebody having a high profile, other than the president, I don't know.

SOLOMON: That was an issue that, again as an academic coming into this environment, you had to learn to deal with. You had to learn when to keep your head down, when to be anonymous, and also how to let some of your friends out there know you were still in the game. I don't remember exactly the date, but I guess it was during the ping-pong tour, that President Nixon received the Chinese ping-pong delegation in the White House, and the event was televised. I remember standing in the background while they went through the ceremony. I knew it was being televised and I wasn't exactly aware of the whole layout, but it turned out that I was standing behind Nixon. I was probably ten feet behind him, but because they had a television camera, my mother and my academic friends could all see me standing there, apparently right behind Nixon. I was later cautioned by the White House people that I should watch my visibility, as this was Nixon's show, and that I should stay out of the picture.

Q: Why don't we stop at this point, I'd like to put something on the end here. We're just into the early time of your being on the NSC staff. The question I want to put is, how did Alexander Haig operate at this early time in '72, and maybe a little about the personality of Henry Kissinger from your view, and then about your trip to China with Henry Kissinger in June of '72. And then we'll continue from there.

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Q: Today is the 13th of September, 1996. Shall we start as I said, from your perspective during the time you were there, can you talk a bit about Alexander Haig?

SOLOMON: Well, I wasn't fully aware of Haig's role on the NSC at the time, but that became more evident later -- because of comments and remarks in various people's memoirs. Nixon had first opposed the appointment of several academics as Kissinger's closer associates, in particular Morton Halperin, who had worked closely with Kissinger at Harvard. Halperin had hoped to be Kissinger's deputy on the NSC staff, but apparently the appointment was opposed by the President's political staff. The scuttlebutt was that the so-called "Berlin Wall" -- the Ehrlichman and Haldeman types -- didn't want too many liberal academics on the NSC. Also, there was a certain anti-Semitic element purported to be part of their thinking. In any event, the argument was that in order to balance experience and perspective, a military person should be Kissinger's deputy. So Al Haig was put in as the deputy. I honestly don't know the origins of his candidacy, but the word, as it came to me, was that Nixon had put Al Haig in there, ostensibly because he was a professional military man -- but in reality to keep an eye on Kissinger, and make sure that he did the President's bidding.

Frankly, I never saw, and probably would not have seen, signs of overt tension between the two men, but during my time working for Kissinger there was an interesting dynamic between them. Kissinger clearly tried to gain Haig's support and to co-opt him; Haig was operating between Kissinger and the President, clearly maintaining his good working relations with the President, but also working closely with Henry. Later on, during the most critical period of Watergate, Haig became Chief of Staff. I dealt with Haig, who presented himself as the President's man, particularly on the China issue. Haig went to

China in December of 1971 as an additional preliminary to the Nixon trip in February of 1972, and I had dealings with him in that context. I worked particularly closely with him during the ping-pong tour in April of '72, and have maintained contact with him since, although once he moved out of the NSC system -- initially to the Chief of Staff position, and then, of course, later on in the various professional military positions -- I didn't have much active contact with him.

Q: What was your feeling, coming out of the academic side--here's a military man, did you feel that he was picking up the nuances of international relations?

SOLOMON: Haig postured himself as an enforcer, as making sure that the President's orders were being followed. I remember writing one analytical memo for him, I think it was in the fall of '72, about changes in the coalitions within the United Nations as they affected U.S. influence, and consequently, who we would have to work with. I remember Haig sent a little note back to me, saying that he found the analysis very helpful. But for the most part I dealt with him in an operational mode. As I mentioned earlier, during the ping-pong tour of the Chinese national team in April of '72, Nixon and Kissinger were extremely concerned that the tour would go well, and they seconded me to coordinate and be their eyes and ears. But the politicos also put John Scali, the President's communications director, on the tour, and there were Secret Service people to make sure the security was all right, and a lot of government support. The tour went well as far as everyone could see, but behind the scenes the coordination among the government people and the two private sector groups was really strained at some points. I remember telling General Haig one night, when I'd come back to Washington in the middle of the tour, that John Scali was conducting himself in a way that was causing extreme tension, particularly with Professor Eckstein. I remember Haig bellowing back at me that, dammit, I should support the President's man, John Scali! I gulped, and responded by saying, “Yes, General, but the reality is that the President's man is causing some real problems in the running of the trip.” In retrospect, the fact that I came back at Haig with a firm judgment probably saved my working relationship with him, rather than straining it. He respected my judgment, but as I said, Haig postured himself as the President's enforcer.

Q: You went with Henry Kissinger on the trip.

SOLOMON: The first time I went to China myself with Kissinger was in June of 1972.

Q: Which trip was this?

SOLOMON: This was Kissinger's fourth trip. He went secretly in July of '71; he went openly for the first time in October of '71; then he went with the President in February of '72. So the June, 1972 trip would have been his fourth.

Q: What was the purpose of this trip?

SOLOMON: It was to follow up on, and to implement, understandings reached between

the President and Chairman Mao and Zhou En-lai during the President's trip in February of '72, to try to carry forward the relationship with the Chinese, which was still very new, less than a year old. It was very important to Nixon's foreign policy, and of course to Chairman Mao's, and the fourth trip was intended to try to carry the discussions and the relationship forward.

Q: What was your role?

SOLOMON: My specific role was to support Kissinger and his immediate deputy, John Holdridge, in organizing exchanges of various types, cultural and academic exchanges with the Chinese.

Q: You've been studying Chinese and China, and all of a sudden you're there. What was your impression?

SOLOMON: It's funny. I remember getting off the plane in Beijing, and the smell, the aroma in the air reminded me, in that first split second as we got off the plane, of the same aroma I remembered from earlier times when I had been a student in Taiwan. There was something in the air that "smelled of the country" as it were; it was for me personally a dramatic event for several reasons. One, we left Washington on the 17th of June in a blinding rainstorm late in the afternoon. We headed out to Andrews about 5:00 in the afternoon and flew straight to Hawaii. In retrospect, that was the Friday, the rainy evening, of the Watergate break-in. So the event that was to bring down President Nixon, in that sense, intersected with the event that was his greatest foreign policy triumph. That is, the China opening. Of course, we didn't know this at the time.

The other thing that made the event dramatic, other than the great excitement and the sense of adventure that came with going to China for the first time during what was still an early phase in the reestablishment of direct dealings, was that we arrived in China on my birthday, the 19th of June. After we had settled into the guest house in the Diaoyutai compound, after we had been in the rooms for about half an hour, Zhou En-lai came to the guest house and met with the whole group. I felt as if I'd died and gone to heaven. Here I was, I had just turned 35 years old, and I figured life was all going to be downhill from that point, that is on my birthday. Meeting Zhou En-lai, in China, a country I never thought I'd visit because of the Cold War, and having an interaction with the Prime Minister, was quite exciting. The entire American delegation met with Zhou En-lai in what the Chinese call the ko-ting, the guest reception area of the guest house. Zhou began by noting that there were some new faces in Henry's delegation, and specifically said he noticed that Mr. Solomon was in China for the first time. The Chinese had obviously done their intelligence briefing work effectively. Zhou said he wanted to thank me, Mr. Solomon, for escorting the Chinese ping-pong team around the United States. He said he wanted to know where I had learned to speak Chinese. I replied, in Chinese, "Oh, your ping-pong players taught me." Kissinger's head snapped around as I said it in Chinese, and in that Germanic voice he rumbled, "Well, I see we're going to need a translator for one of my staff." Later I got chewed out by one of my colleagues for speaking Chinese and in a sense upstaging Kissinger. Henry was obviously put off by it, because the next

morning as we were going to take a tour of the Forbidden City, as I came to the front of the guest house to meet with the group, Kissinger, who was speaking to Vice Foreign Minister Qiao Guanghua, saw me out of the corner of his eye, and he rumbled, "I forbid Mr. Solomon from speaking Chinese in my presence." And Qiao, who was a rather provocative character, turned to me and said something in Chinese that should have called for a response in Chinese, which I did not do. In any event, that was a very interesting personal experience being in China for the first time, and with Kissinger.

The opening to China was very new then. We visited the Friendship Store, and the electricity was marginal. They didn't have all the lights on. You'd go to look at a display case and they'd turn the lights on for you. It was an old building that a year or two later was torn down. The Chinese were still nervous about being too friendly with Americans. I can remember in the Friendship Store seeing one of the counter girls studying a book of English, and I said to her in Chinese, "Oh, I see you're studying English," and tried to strike up a conversation. She looked very embarrassed, turned the book over, and wouldn't interact with me. There was still a lot of tension in the context of the Cultural Revolution, and after decades of criticism of "American imperialism." We were still viewed in that context: not to be trusted, bad guys.

That said, we were warmly received by Zhou En-lai and his people. The talks, which focused at that point on issues related to ending the Vietnam War, and the common threat faced by both countries from the Soviet Union, imparted a great deal of historical weight to the talks that Kissinger was carrying out with Zhou En-lai.

Q: Were you there at those talks?

SOLOMON: I was not directly involved in those talks. I was involved in the so-called "counterpart talks," which focused on the effort to expand cultural and other exchanges beyond the ping-pong area. One incident was rather interesting at the time for what it said about internal tensions within the Chinese delegation. There was a Chinese official named Xiong Xianghui, who was the counterpart of the two American negotiators, Alfred Jenkins and John Holdridge. Our side, at Kissinger's guidance, proposed developing some economic exchanges. In response, Xiong Xianghui sniffed -- in the policy context that he thought was in force at that point -- "Well, China has no interest in economic exchanges with other countries." Later we learned that he had been severely criticized by Zhou En-lai for not understanding that China wanted to expand relations with the United States. We never saw Xiong again. So you could see that the Chinese officials were operating in a complex political environment, one in which they didn't fully understand the direction Chairman Mao and Zhou En-lai wanted to take in China's relationship with the United States. They no doubt were having trouble reconciling the tension between Mao's opening to the U.S. and the political radicalism of Mao's wife and the others in the "Gang of Four," who were still very much against the "bourgeoisie" in all of its internal and international forms.

Q: You said you were involved on the exchange business. I talked to people who were involved at various times with the Soviets on exchanges, and the Soviets tended to want to

have, as far as exchanges, ballet and jazz orchestras, but as far as students going they wanted mainly their students to go in and learn everything they could in the field of mathematics, physics, that sort of thing, and they wanted our Americans to go look at icons. How did you find this with the Chinese at this early period?

SOLOMON: Well, during the early period, the exchange programs were tightly controlled and structured. They involved primarily the exchange of established professionals in the science area. Musical or other entertainment groups of various sorts, and the free-wheeling exchanges of students did not begin in China until the spring/summer of 1978, when Deng Xiaoping was back in charge. In 1972 the limited and tightly controlled exchanges were intended to gradually turn public opinion in each country in a more positive direction. Later on, when the exchanges did open up, Chinese students came over in tens of thousands. They tended to focus on the sciences and engineering; some in the business management area; very few, I think, in the social sciences. There was a tremendous imbalance in the exchange programs; that is, not many American students went to China to study. That's a pattern that persists, even though the numbers have increased on both sides. But during the early phase, the focus was not on lasting exchanges of the sort involved in training students. It was much more an effort to shape public opinion.

Q: Did you get any feel for dealing with the Chinese officialdom at that time?

SOLOMON: Well, what I can say is that I was impressed by their cordial, correct manner. We were just beginning to develop ongoing personal contacts. For example, during the ping-pong tour in April of '72, my counterpart in the Chinese delegation was a gentleman named Qian Dayung, who later turned out to be an intelligence officer. I worked with Qian for the next five years. In fact, when I decided to leave the government in the spring of 1976, I was at a dinner party with Qian and I mentioned to him that I would be leaving the NSC for the Rand Corporation. His immediate reaction was, “Oh, that means that Kissinger will not be completing normalization.” This was during the Ford administration, and he correctly assessed that I would have stayed through the completion of the normalization process if I had thought it was going to occur any time soon, which is what the Chinese were hoping would happen. So, I had developed that kind of a relationship with this man, Qian Dayung. The whole process was just beginning in 1972, based on the Nixon trip and various Kissinger trips, of which there were eventually nine. We were dealing with Mao's purported niece, Wang Hairong, with “Nancy” Tang, and with two or three others, including a woman named Shen Ruoyun and her husband Yang Youyong. We were to work with these people for the entire period I was in the government. In that sense, we were establishing personal relationships that -- over time -- developed a certain warmth, if not intimacy. Familiarity might be a better word than warmth.

Q: Warmth here is when you get a level down, how difficult the Chinese bureaucracy is. It basically doesn't want to move on things, and they can be very difficult to deal with. Did you run across any of that?

SOLOMON: The Chinese bureaucracy was beyond our perception at that point. We were dealing with issues that were managed personally by Zhou En-lai and the entourage of senior officials immediately around him. It was an initiative that had the authority and the personal support of Chairman Mao. So at that point in time the relationship was not institutionalized. It was very political, and managed at the top of the political system. In that sense we never really had to worry very much about the bureaucracy. We only began to feel its weight and its resistance when we established liaison offices in the spring of 1973. Then, issues like what buildings we could occupy, and the kinds of facilities that they wanted versus what we wanted, required a certain amount of horse trading. Those issues were suddenly on the table, and Kissinger and Zhou, to some degree, had to accommodate the effects of bureaucratic influence. But right up until Zhou En-lai's death, and I would say right up until normalization in late 1978, the relationship between Washington and Beijing was so political, and so important to the senior leadership, that it really operated outside the workings of the respective bureaucracies.

Q: Did you get any feel, or from what you were also hearing from Henry Kissinger and others, about the relationship between Zhou En-lai and Mao Tse-tung?

SOLOMON: That became an issue of considerable debate in 1973 because in China there was a lot of tension in the political process that we could see. We didn't fully understand its dynamics. The first real shock, of course, was the disappearance of the Defense Minister, Lin Piao, in early September of 1971. That was between Kissinger's first, secret trip and his second, open trip in October of '71. People were shocked because as far as everyone could tell, Lin Piao was Chairman Mao's chosen successor. Suddenly he disappeared, and there was no explanation. It took some months before an explanation came out, although we had some inkling of it through intelligence sources. And then you had the escalation, probably beginning in late '72 or early ‘73, of the Cultural Revolution.

Two things were going on. One was that Zhou En-lai's health was deteriorating, and we became aware of that, I think, only in early '73. The second thing, of course, was the question of the successor to Chairman Mao. He eventually died in the summer of '76, but we were aware earlier that his health was not all that good. With the additional questions posed by Zhou En-lai's deteriorating health, the political tensions within the leadership escalated in the context of what the Chinese called the Cultural Revolution, which had started in late '65 and was still ongoing.

There was a political campaign that began in 1973 called the “Criticize Lin Piao, Criticize Confucius” campaign (Pi-Lin, Pi-Kong Yun Dong). The speculation among China specialists was that Confucius was really a symbol for Zhou En-lai, and that the radicals, the Gang of Four -- although we didn't call them the Gang of Four at that time -- including Chairman Mao's wife and some other radicals we could identify, were attacking Premier Zhou. A number of us found it hard to believe that such an attack could occur on a man whom we thought had enormous prestige, especially given the fact that he seemed to be working so closely as Chairman Mao's Foreign Minister, and as the implementer of his policy activity.

In retrospect, I would say that we were correct in surmising that Zhou En-lai might be under criticism, and we probably overestimated the degree to which Chairman Mao was supporting him. Some people say that Chairman Mao was ready to dump Zhou by 1973 or '74. He died, I think, in early 1974, but it was unclear to us whether the criticism of "Confucius" reflected Mao's intention, or a maneuver of Mao's wife, Jiang Ching, at a time when Mao had become ill or physically frail. It was an issue of considerable debate within the China-watching community.

Q: You returned in the summer of '72 from this trip. Was Watergate a word that was passed around the corridors or anything like that at the time?

SOLOMON: I would have to go back and look in the newspapers to see when "Watergate" became an issue in political parlance. Of course, the break-in people had been arrested on the very night of the crime, during my first trip to China, on June 17th, but it took some months for the whole thing to unfold. It wasn't until early 1973 that I think it really became an issue in the U.S.-China relationship. I think it was in early '73 that we began seeing intelligence reports indicating that the Chinese thought that Nixon was under attack on "Watergate" because of his opening to China. Interestingly enough, the Russians were interpreting Watergate at that point as reflecting Nixon's pursuit of detente with them. So both these foreign governments were interpreting the evolving Watergate scandal as a foreign policy-relevant issue rather than a domestic political issue, which shows how insular or self-centered they were in their view of the world.

Q: Going back, I think Watergate really didn't come up until after the elections, November of '72 when Nixon was reelected. I mean, it had been around but it hadn't become something that...

SOLOMON: I remember that at one point in 1973 -- I think we went to China twice with Kissinger in '73, and I honestly don't remember whether it was the first or second trip -- Kissinger met with Chairman Mao, and Mao at one point, in his earthy language, said that he wondered why the American people were "farting about Watergate." Nancy Tang, the interpreter, was embarrassed by this phrasing, and she interpreted it to Kissinger as the Chairman saying that he wondered why the American people were "making such a fuss about Watergate." Zhou En-lai sort of needled her and said, "Well that's not exactly the way the Chairman put it." And Nancy Tang then said to Winston Lord, "Well, your wife is Chinese. She can tell you what fang pi means," which is the term the Chairman had used. The point is that Mao was worried about Nixon's political standing at that point in '73. As I said, I don't remember whether it was the beginning or the end of the year. His scatological way of expressing himself was a manifestation of his disparaging what was going on, and his expression of some concern about it.

Q: On these other trips that you were making with Kissinger, about six more after the first one. What types of things were you working on?

SOLOMON: Well, over time I was gradually pulled more deeply into the politics and the international issues associated with it. John Holdridge, who had been the senior man on

the NSC staff when I first came on board in the fall of 1971, left the NSC in the spring of 1973, and became the co-director of the Liaison Office with Al Jenkins. I was promoted to the senior staff at just about the point that Kissinger went over to the State Department to be Secretary of State. As you remember, Henry was double-hatted for a time, acting as both National Security Adviser and Secretary of State. I was given the senior portfolio for dealing with China and Korea, and in that context, I dealt much more directly with the issues associated with normalization. Kissinger kept certain elements of the process under very tight wraps. He was talking with the Chinese about military and defense issues, and these talks were compartmentalized because Kissinger was talking about very sensitive issues related to Soviet military deployments and our arms control negotiations. So he would take military and arms control specialists with him on his various trips, and they would work with him on some of those very sensitive issues.

Q: How did he use you?

SOLOMON: I was used to coordinate with the State Department, because when he moved to State to become Secretary, Henry straddled both institutions. I was part of the China team, working with Winston Lord, who had moved over to become Director of the Policy Staff, and Arthur Hummel, who was the Assistant Secretary of State for Asia. We maintained the same working relationships among the same small group of officials who had been staffing Kissinger from the beginning, with the exception of the addition of Hummel and the departure of Holdridge and Jenkins, now both located in Beijing. What this arrangement required was organizing Henry's trips in terms of the issues that he would talk about, and that affected the U.S.-China relationship -- the normalization process, and the range of international problems that Kissinger would cover with Zhou En-lai, and later with Deng Xiaoping. Those issues could range from Korea, to the Soviet Union, to Middle East developments -- almost any issue, but related mostly to the play of the strategic triangle, the U.S.-China-Soviet interactions.

Q: What about Korea at that time? Korea has always been, and remains, one of those places where something could happen starting a war and this would necessarily impact on the Chinese-American relationship.

SOLOMON: The policy perspective that shaped those discussions was that the Chinese, and Chairman Mao in particular, were so concerned about the Soviets that they were prepared to give short shrift to their smaller socialist allies. I'm thinking about both Vietnam and North Korea in the context of China's efforts to develop a relationship with the U.S. Vietnam, in the concluding phase of the war, had its own political dynamic. I mentioned in the first of these interviews how Zhou En-lai had wanted to tape record his discussion with Kissinger during the secret trip. While Kissinger rejected the suggestion, our impression was that Zhou wanted the tape to be able to play it to the Vietnamese, and probably to the North Koreans, in order to demonstrate that he was not selling out their interests.

On Kissinger's second trip to China in October of '71, Kim Il Song, the North Korean leader, sent a message to Kissinger through Zhou En-lai saying that he was prepared to

open discussions with the United States on the issue of the removal of American forces from the Korean Peninsula. Of course, Kissinger made it clear that that discussion was not one he was prepared to enter, but he did say at the time that from his perspective, American troops were not a permanent deployment, “a permanent fixture” of American foreign policy in their deployment on the Korean Peninsula. Basically, the Chinese were fending off any major development with the Koreans and the Vietnamese; they were just passing messages. In the case of the Koreans, they certainly would not have wanted instability or a war on the Korean Peninsula given their concerns about the Soviets, just as we did not. I think that was the broad framework within which the discussions of Korea took place.

The Vietnam issue was much more delicate because of the bombing, the fact that there was a negotiation underway to end the war. As you remember, the negotiations had been going on in Paris for some time, but they really did not come to a head until after the Christmas bombing in 1972, with the finale at the Paris negotiations in the spring of '73.

Q: How did the Vietnam negotiations and the agreement of Europe and what you were seeing and by gathering analysis. How did this agreement impact on our relations with the Chinese?

SOLOMON: I remember the two trips we took to China in 1973 -- actually I took three that year, because in addition to the two Kissinger trips, I went with a Congressional delegation early in the year. During the first Kissinger trip, which was before the Paris Accords were signed, things were still fairly tight with the Chinese. During the second trip, which occurred after the Paris Accords had been signed, and after the war was -- at least as far as America's involvement -- concluded through diplomacy, Kissinger felt that the Chinese were much more relaxed about their dealings with us. They seemed anxious at that point to move the relationship forward. The ending of the Vietnam War put them in a position where they felt that the constraints imposed on them by the war, the need to stand by an ally, had been released. The Chinese started focusing much more on accelerating the normalization of the U.S.-China relationship for its value to them in terms of dealing with the Soviets, and to establish the basis for handling the Taiwan issue.

Q: Within the NSC staff, particularly those dealing with Vietnam, what was the feeling of the staff about the Paris Peace Accord?

SOLOMON: Well, John Negroponte was the primary official providing staff/support for Kissinger on the Vietnam War. Negroponte had succeeded Richard Smyser, who had been the Vietnam specialist at the time Kissinger made the secret trip, and had actually gone with Kissinger to China, precisely for the purpose of staffing him on Vietnam issues. It's no secret that Negroponte felt that the pressure that Nixon and Kissinger were putting on their regime to sign the Paris Accords was a sell-out. He was very critical of the settlement. That, I think, has been out in the press. There's not a whole lot I can add. I was not directly privy to a lot of Negroponte's interactions with Kissinger, but the issue of standing by an ally, and whether the Paris agreement gave the communists an open

door to walk into the south, was a very bitter issue for many people. I believe that Negroponte was not the only one who was unhappy with the agreement.

Q: What were you picking up, again from your perspective. The Chinese were deadly serious about trying to get along with us as a counter to the Soviets. We'd been living with the Soviets for a long time. Did we see that the Chinese fear there was reason for them to be more concerned about the Soviets. Was the threat any greater?

SOLOMON: That issue became a matter of some debate. The Chinese were on the track that Chairman Mao had initiated, and you can argue about the time at which he had initiated it, but I believe it goes back to the late '60s, after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the Sino-Soviet border clashes in 1969.

Q: The Usury River?

SOLOMON: Yes, the fight over *Chen Bao Dao* [island]. The Chairman had concluded - - and with good reason -- that in 1969 the Soviets posed a major, and an imminent, military threat. I was in Hong Kong then, and the Chinese media was stridently calling for the people to prepare for war "right now." In time, and particularly after Deng Xiaoping had been rehabilitated after 1974, the argument between Kissinger and Deng was whether the Soviet threat was greater to China or the United States. The Chinese, Deng Xiaoping in particular, resisted the notion that China was afraid of the Soviets. He rejected the notion that the Soviets were gearing up to attack China. The phrase that the Chinese developed was that the Soviets were "feinting towards the East but preparing to attack in the West." Deng argued that Soviet pressure on China was just a distraction from their real plan, which was to put military pressure of one sort or another on the NATO alliance, or on the United States. Kissinger argued the opposite, and this became a matter not only of debate, but ultimately a source of distrust. I think the Chinese came to feel that Kissinger was distorting the information about Soviet deployments that he was giving to them as a way of trying to scare them, and thereby strengthen their sense of need to be dealing with the United States. We picked up at several points some diplomatic reporting in 1975 in which Deng Xiaoping would tell visiting American Congressional people that he wasn't sure he could believe everything that Kissinger was telling him about the Soviet threat. So that issue -- how serious the Soviet threat was to China or to the U.S. -- ultimately became a matter of debate and some distrust, because each side saw the other as trying to influence its options by painting the immediate threat from the Soviets as a greater one than they were willing to admit.

Q: You left in '76?

SOLOMON: I left the NSC staff in the middle of 1976, right after our 200th national anniversary, right after the July 4th celebration.

Q: Can you talk a bit about the last days of the Nixon's administration, or the last days of Nixon as seen from the NSC?

SOLOMON: Well, by early 1974 it became very clear that Nixon was seriously wounded politically, and that the focus of the President on international issues contracted. The sense of initiative and the sense of tremendous progress and excitement brought about by detente, by the opening to China, began to dissipate as the President's preoccupation with Watergate deepened. There was an increasing sense of drift among the people involved in the NSC. There was also the assumption that Kissinger was all the more influential because the country, the Congress, the President, all wanted foreign policy to remain unaffected as much as possible by Watergate. So there was no sense of a decrease in Kissinger's own prestige. Indeed the judgment was that he became Secretary of State in part because of the country's desire for stability in the foreign affairs area. This was a time when the Cold War was still very intense. So Kissinger's power, ironically, increased, but the flexibility and the sense of focus on foreign policy initiatives really did contract.

I can still vividly recall the most dramatic political event I've ever personally experienced: it was Nixon's resignation and then Gerry Ford's swearing in as the new president in August of 1974. That was really a dramatic, and very moving, very painful, human event. I remember being in the East Room of the White House when Nixon and his family assembled for a farewell statement. Nixon put on his glasses in public for the first time, talked about his mother, and quoted Teddy Roosevelt. He was a mortally wounded political figure. I walked out on the south portico and watched him get into the helicopter and fly off. And then, a few hours later, we went back to the same room to watch Gerry Ford being sworn in as the new President. All of that was very dramatic stuff. It riveted everybody working in that environment. It was very disturbing, moving in human terms, and generated an important element of uncertainty about where the country was going in these foreign policy initiatives. Kissinger, again, was providing continuity. In staffing out Henry's dealings with the new President at that time, the thrust of our communications to the Chinese, and all the others, was that there would be continuity in America's foreign policy.

Q: Did you feel any particular change in the work you were doing, and our relationship with China with the Ford administration?
SOLOMON: Once Ford was in, the issue for the Chinese became whether Ford and Kissinger would carry through on the Nixon policy of completing the normalization of relations. They viewed normalization as a commitment, an obligation to be completed during what remained of Nixon's second term. During the two or three Kissinger trips to China before the Ford summit trip in December of 1975, the focus was the effort by the Chinese to pressure Kissinger into completing normalization. My job was to staff out that process. We were still writing memos on the assumption that the effort would be made to complete normalization, but the increasing message from the White House political people -- from Don Rumsfeld, who became Ford's Chief of Staff and later Secretary of Defense, and from Dick Cheney, who succeeded Rumsfeld as Chief of Staff -- was that the conservative Republicans would not support Gerry Ford in completing normalization. So that became the big issue between the U.S. and China. Kissinger was trapped between what Nixon had led the Chinese to expect, and the limits of what Gerry Ford, a much less powerful leader, could in fact accomplish.

This situation led to some very interesting, and very tense, exchanges with the Chinese as they tried to strong-arm Kissinger. I particularly remember the October '75 trip, which was just before the Ford summit trip in December. The Chinese, Deng Xiaoping especially, put a variety of pressures on Kissinger, trying to get him to deliver President Ford to the finale of Nixon's normalization policy. That did not happen, and our relations with the Chinese were very strained for a period.

This was the time of the so-called "Halloween weekend massacre" in Washington, when Kissinger lost his position as National Security Adviser; when George Bush, who at that point was the Liaison Office Chief, was recalled to Washington to head up the CIA; when James Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense, was dismissed. In this situation of domestic U.S. turmoil, with the Chinese putting pressure on Kissinger to complete normalization, suddenly the Chinese were faced with what looked to them like a major coup, or a purge, within the Ford administration. They suddenly panicked, fearing that all their supporters in Washington and those who were taking a hard line against the Soviet Union -- Schlesinger in particular -- were now on the political outs. In that context, almost overnight, they took the pressure off Kissinger and proceeded with the Ford summit meeting. They realized that they had reached the limit of progress on normalization. They could pressure Kissinger and Ford no longer to complete the process at that point in time.

Q: One of the things any American diplomat--this is true of any diplomat--but American diplomats have is trying to explain how our system works, and particularly the power of the media, public opinion, and most particularly Congress. In fact one of our fallbacks has always been, well we'd sure like to do it, but we can't get it through Congress. But it is true. Did you find in your work with the Chinese, in one way another, that you're trying to explain the American system and it just wasn't the way other people perceived it?

SOLOMON: Kissinger and Nixon made an effort, following the Nixon summit in 1972, to get Congressional leaders over to China, to try to broaden the basis of political support in Congress for normalization with China. But also, I think, exchanges were intended to educate the Chinese about how the Congress works, and its impact on our politics. I remember the first group of Congressional leaders that I escorted to China, people like Doc Morgan, Clem Zablocki, and other House leaders. The group was headed by Warren Magnuson on the Democratic side. I forget who the Republican leader was. They were out of control on policy. The Congressional leaders did not really understand what was behind Nixon's policy, much less its nuances. I remember most vividly a dinner at which Zhou En-lai received this delegation. During the dinner Senator Magnuson said to Zhou that he didn't understand why Taiwan shouldn't be independent. Al Jenkins was kicking Magnuson under the table, trying to get him to shut up because it was such a disastrous opinion to articulate; we didn't know whether the Chinese would see this as a provocation, or as something more than just Magnuson's personal point of view.
There were similar problems a year later when a Senate delegation headed by Senator Fulbright went to China. Fulbright engaged in some frank self-criticism about the Vietnam War, and expressed apologies to Zhou for American involvement. When his remarks were cabled back to the White House, Kissinger and others were outraged. Zhou

En-lai and other senior Chinese officials were exposed to these views, and whether they fully understood how our Congress worked and the challenge of any White House to build a coalition of political support for a controversial policy is a matter you can debate. Certainly the Chinese were well aware of Congressional opposition to the Vietnam War, so I think they probably understood that Congress was a source of pressure on any administration. And, of course, they were well aware of factional conflicts from their own internal politics. But at the same time, I think, they viewed Nixon as very strong politically. After all, he had won a tremendous victory in 1972 over McGovern, and I think they told themselves that his opening to China was one reason that the President had done so well in the campaign. They couldn't understand, I think, what Watergate was all about. I mentioned earlier that they seemed to interpret it -- at least in part -- as criticism of Nixon for his China opening, even if there were other issues used as the point of attack. Whether they really understood the limits of what Ford could do politically to complete normalization is unclear. In any event, they knew what their interests were, and they were pressing for as much as they could get.

Q: When Ford ended Kissinger as the National Security adviser and made him wear just one hat, that of Secretary of State. How did that affect the NSC at that time?

SOLOMON: Well, there really wasn't a major effect in the sense that Brent Scowcroft, who succeeded Al Haig as Kissinger's deputy, had been running the NSC on a day-to-day basis anyway. He simply moved into position as the NSC Adviser, and in that sense there was general continuity in policy and perspective. But we could also see initiative at this point shift a bit to the State Department. I mean, when I began working on the NSC in '71, and then into '72 and '73, the State Department was playing second or third fiddle to the initiatives that Nixon was taking out of the White House. The NSC staff was in a controlling position on much of this policy, with the State Department in a very secondary position as far as providing staff support, and not really in the lead in terms of policy. That situation began to shift when Kissinger went to the State Department in 1973. Then, after Ford became President, there just wasn't the experience, the interest, the focus on foreign policy in the White House that had been evident under Nixon. In that sense, the NSC became -- I won't say a rump operation, but it became a secondary center of activity.

That said, at least in the areas with which I was concerned, my working relations with the key players, including Kissinger, Scowcroft, and staffers like Lord and Arthur Hummel, continued to work well. They were sustained at Kissinger's direction, and there wasn't a major shift in the policies and support work I was doing. The real change was the sense of uncertainty and the lack of political weight that substantially undermined the Ford administration after Nixon had to resign.

Q: Did the China relationship play any role in the '76 election?

SOLOMON: Not really, because Kissinger and the domestic political endorsers around President Ford were determined that the relationship between the U.S. and China would not become an election issue. This is why we got through the Ford visit to China in

December of 1975 without completing normalization. And at that point, the China issue was on hold until after the '76 elections.

Q: I think we better explain at this point what you mean by normalization in the context of the period and time.

SOLOMON: Normalization with China, taking as the point of departure Kissinger's secret trip to China in July of '71, meant initiating and broadening a political dialogue that would ultimately lead to U.S. diplomatic recognition of the People's Republic of China. What that process meant for our formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan was unclear at the outset. In many ways, that was the core political issue for China: that is, would we break diplomatic relations with Taiwan? That was their expectation. I think that at the beginning of the normalization process in '71, Nixon and Kissinger hadn't fully thought through where they were prepared to go in that regard. I think they held the hope that they could maintain some kind of official relationship with Taiwan even as they moved to establish formal diplomatic relations with Beijing. But that issue was unresolved. It was a subject of increasing debate as the end of the Ford administration approached, and as the Chinese put forward their terms for completion of the normalization process. It had to be done, according to Deng Xiaoping, in "the Japanese model," meaning that the U.S. should follow the example of Japan, which had broken formal diplomatic relations with Taiwan when they normalized with Beijing. That was the core political issue as it affected domestic politics in the U.S. and China's interests. The model of normalization wasn't fully resolved until the Carter administration.

Q: You had China as your principal focus. When you're talking about that within the NSC, did that include relations with Taiwan?

SOLOMON: It did, and our relations with Taiwan became increasingly compartmentalized and limited as our dialogue with Beijing developed. There wasn't a great deal of movement or activity in our dealings with Taiwan. Chiang Kai-shek was still alive, but then he died, I believe, in the summer of 1975. Taiwan, of course, had been deeply shocked by the Kissinger secret trip, as was Japan and lots of other folks. But once the Republic of China was expelled from the UN in the fall of '71, there was an increasing tentativeness to their policy. Nixon was very strong in the Republican party, and it wasn't clear how much Taiwan was encouraging its core of supporters, people like Barry Goldwater, to work against Nixon. I'm sure there was some of that activity. But the Taiwan relationship was at that point quite secondary to the dialogue with China.
Q: You left in the summer of '76, bicentennial, around July of '76.

SOLOMON: July 3rd was my formal last day.

Q: When you left there, what was your feeling about whither the relationship with China at that point?

SOLOMON: When I left I assumed that the relationship eventually would be normalized, but I made the judgment in the spring of 1976 that President Ford was unlikely to win a

second term. That judgment was just an instinct, but I assumed that in that context I would probably be asked to leave the NSC by the new administration, and so I was unlikely to be in a position to help complete the normalization process. So I made a decision to go to the Rand Corporation, on the assumption that as a non-career person I would be leaving the administration. I assumed that the China relationship would endure, and that the people who came on with Carter -- and I didn't know at that point specifically who they would be -- would complete the process. I knew that Zbigniew Brzezinski was one of Carter's advisers, but certainly prior to the election it wasn't clear who would be Secretary of State, or National Security Adviser. However, I assumed that Carter would pick up the China policy one way or another.

Q: You worked for Rand from '76 until when?

SOLOMON: 1986.

Q: Could you explain a bit about Rand in this '76 to '86 period, what it did? Because Rand acts as one of those shadow organizations. I mean not secret, but its both in and out with the government. Could you explain what it was about?

SOLOMON: There are formal institutional relationships, and then there are personal relationships. I'll begin on the institutional side. Rand is what is now called a FFRDC -- a Federally Funded Research and Development Center. At that point, Rand conducted about two-thirds of its work under contract to the Defense Department. One of DoD's sub-components, the Air Force, had been the original founder of Rand. By 1986, Rand was beginning to work for the Army, and for the office of the Secretary of Defense directly. It carried out a wide range of research projects for the Pentagon. It also had about one-third of its work focused on domestic issues, and when I went to Rand I was head of what at that time was called the Social Science Department, which employed some researchers who worked on national security issues, and others who focused on domestic policy issues. My job was to coordinate the people who did that research, either on national security or domestic issues. Clients were predominately in the Defense Department.

At a personal level, I carried with me, or developed -- as did many of the Rand staff -- working relationships with various government offices, because we had the institutional framework of Rand as a contractor and as an institution able to conduct classified research. I continued to work on the China issue from my Rand base. Indeed, one thing I might mention is that when the Carter administration assumed office, a colleague of mine, who had succeeded me at Michigan, Professor Michel Oksenberg, took my place on the NSC staff. Brzezinski replaced Scowcroft, and Brzezinski's deputy was a man named David Aaron, a non-career person. Aaron -- unlike Brzezinski or Oksenberg -- was not all that enamored of the China policy issue. And in 1978 -- I think it was in the summer of '78 -- as the Carter people began to look seriously at the normalization issue, David Aaron asked me to do what he termed a "Team B" study of the pros and cons of moving the U.S.-China relationship to full normalization: that is, breaking official diplomatic relations with Taiwan and establishing them with Beijing. I did an internal

paper on this issue for him. Aaron asked that I do the assessment in secret; that I not mention it to Brzezinski or Oksenberg, his NSC colleagues, or to anyone at the State Department, such as Assistant Secretary Richard Holbrooke. I made it clear to him that generally, my position was that normalization was good for our national interests. I think he was looking for someone who would critique and speak out against it, but that's not where I came out on the issue.

At that time, I was going back and forth between Los Angeles and Washington in my Rand job, managing contractual relations with the Defense Department and other government agencies, and also doing some projects of my own, of which this Team B study on normalization for David Aaron was an example. Later, after normalization was completed, I mentioned the study to Dick Holbrooke. He commented that Aaron had drawn me into a "cruel game." Aaron and Oksenberg at the NSC had very bad relationships with Holbrooke, so I guess it appeared that David Aaron had played me against Holbrooke, and even Oksenberg, in their bureaucratic and personal rivalries.

Q: Could you explain the Team A, Team B Study concept which was not unpopular then. I don't know if it's the Team A, Team B.

SOLOMON: The "Team A, Team B" approach was initially developed by George Bush when he was head of the CIA. There were profound differences at that time over the question of how strong the Soviet economy was. So Bush organized an analytical competition. Team A made the case that the Soviet Union's economy was very strong, and that its military strength was growing. Team B challenged that assumption, saying that the Soviet system was in real economic trouble. The notion of organizing a counter voice where you had a very contentions policy issue was given prominence by that "Team A, Team B" experience. I just characterized the memo I did for David Aaron on the normalization issue as a kind of "Team B" effort.

Q: When the relationship was normalized with China...was it '78?

SOLOMON: December of '78.

Q: Did it fall within the perimeters of where you had assumed it would be going?

SOLOMON: Yes, it was very close to the outcome that I would have expected. You could argue in retrospect that if Nixon had not been fatally wounded by Watergate, he might have been able to negotiate some form of official relationship with Taiwan. But that was not clear, and the plan to accomplish this end had not really been worked out. Kissinger at several points in time expressed to Zhou En-lai and later to Deng Xiaoping the view that Taiwan's future should be worked out peacefully. I think that was the degree of specificity of what we expected before the end of the Nixon-Ford period. The issue was never discussed in operational detail before the Carter administration.

During the Carter administration's first year, 1977, China policy was basically undertaken at the initiative of the State Department, which meant Secretary of State

Vance. Vance, in his discussion with Deng Xiaoping in 1977, put forward the argument that the U.S. needed to maintain an official relationship with Taiwan. Deng Xiaoping attacked Vance, saying that this position was a setback to the U.S.-China relationship. He said that normalization could only occur according to "the Japanese model." Again, to explain, Japan had broken diplomatic relations with Taiwan upon normalization with China. What, otherwise, "the Japanese model" of normalization meant was not specified, but the Chinese kept pressure on Vance to make it clear they were not prepared to accept some kind of residual official U.S. relationship with Taiwan. The Chinese, as part of their negotiating ploy, made Vance the whipping boy and the focus of criticism for expecting that we could maintain normal relations with Taiwan. They said his 1977 visit was not a good one. At the same time, they began to accord Zbig Brzezinski, who was very anti-Soviet, much more respect than Vance. They hoped that Brzezinski would deliver the President to a much more accommodating position regarding normalization, with less official concern over the Taiwan relationship, and more active collaboration with China.

Q: During your 10 years at Rand were there any other things that you were involved in concerning foreign affairs?

SOLOMON: Apart from managing the political or social science department, which was basically a manpower pool -- I recruited individual researchers for both domestic and international security research -- I also managed a research program within the context of a very confusing "matrix" system of management that Rand had in place for international security policy issues. In that capacity I carried out a range of projects dealing mostly with Asian security issues. In 1979, I organized a major conference at Rand on the topic of "Asian Security in the 1980s." A year later the papers from the conference were published as a book. I also worked on a range of defense and foreign policy issues at Rand. I ran a big project the last three years I was there -- 1983 to '86 -- a study of Chinese negotiating behavior based on my experience in dealing with the Chinese. That project resulted in a book-length study that was first published on a classified basis within the government, and then a decade later was finally made public.

Q: What are the salient points about, as you saw it, Chinese negotiating behavior that would be different from others?

SOLOMON: Well, in that study the key point I made was that the Chinese structured their negotiating around the manipulation of personal relationships, what I called the "Games of Guanxi." *Guanxi* is a Chinese term meaning social connections or relationships. I said that the core of their strategy is to cultivate what they call an "old friend," an official sympathetic to them, as their U.S. negotiating counterpart. They felt that Kissinger had become one; Al Haig became one. The "old friend," as their agent in the counterpart government, then was pressured to deliver outcomes of policy, negotiations, or aspects of the bilateral relationship that would serve their interests. So the issue was, how did they cultivate "old friends" and then manipulate them in their negotiating behavior? The book assessed a range of manipulative strategies, enticement tactics, and pressure tactics that the Chinese used in managing relationships with their "old friends."

Q: Did you ever get any feedback from the Chinese?

SOLOMON: I never did, and knowing them I assumed I never would. The book initially had a declassified summary, and I'm sure they read it very carefully. But I've never received a critique of the study from them. Indirectly, I did receive a critique of my first book, Mao's Revolution and the Chinese Political Culture, which was an academic study that came out in September of 1971, when I'd just begun to work for Nixon. The book contained some interpretations of the Cultural Revolution and other aspects of Chinese internal politics. I once received a letter, late in the fall of '71, from the author Han Su Yin, the woman who wrote Love is a Many Splendored Thing. She was going to China very frequently at that time, as were many people at that point, and she wrote me a letter while on a book tour in the U.S. She wrote it on Holiday Inn stationary, saying that her "contacts" in Beijing thought that my assessment of the Cultural Revolution, and of the "Hundred Flowers" period, was an accurate understanding of the political campaigns in China. I don't know what purpose she had in conveying that opinion to me, but at least it told me that the Chinese had translated my academic book and had evaluated it very carefully to see how well the people around Nixon and Kissinger were able to interpret their politics for the American leadership. Of course, I assumed that in a similar fashion, they translated my negotiating book and its summary when it came out. The summary came out in 1986, but the full book only came out in 1995. That's a topic in which I'm sure the Chinese are still interested, but they'd never tell you that to your face.

Q: I thought we might stop at this point and we'll pick it up the next time in '86 when you left Rand and did what?

SOLOMON: In January of 1986, while I was at the Rand Corporation, I received a phone call from Mike Armacost who at that time was the Under Secretary of State for Policy, saying that Secretary of State George Shultz wanted me to come back to head up the Policy Planning staff. So I tendered my recognition from Rand and began work on the Policy Planning staff in March of 1986.

* * *

Q: We're now in '86 in Policy Planning. Policy planning becomes all things, I mean it can be almost anything including not even anything to do with policy planning. When you received the call, how did you conceive it was going to be used, or had been used up to then?

SOLOMON: Well, as I think I said in my last tape, I had been told in late 1984 by Bud MacFarlane, President Reagan's National Security Adviser and a colleague from my days on the NSC, that I was being considered for the position of Assistant Secretary for East Asia. Yet after "getting the word," almost a year went by and nothing had happened. Apparently, Senator Helms had held up the appointment of Winston Lord as Ambassador to China for complex political and ideological reasons. In resolving that situation, the White House and State Department decided to put somebody in the East Asia job who

was a favorite of Helms' -- some kind of a trade-off for Helms' approving Winston Lord's nomination. Helms did ultimately let Winston Lord's nomination go through, so although I had had my head into the East Asian job, it suddenly went away. Frankly, I hadn't spent a whole lot of time thinking about the role that Policy Planning would play.

Just before I began the job, I had a lunch session with Secretary Shultz, and he did not give me very detailed guidance in terms of what he wanted me to do. We talked about the speechwriting aspect of the position and how he wanted to coordinate the speechwriting. Much of the final reviewing of his speeches was actually done by his Executive Assistant, Charles Hill. But Shultz also talked about issues that were then seizing him. Of course, at that time what was really grabbing everybody's attention was Gorbachev's leadership in the Soviet Union, and what that implied for the evolution of U.S.-Soviet relations. We spent a good deal of time talking about that issue, and as it turned out, my job focused much more on the evolution of the Soviet situation than it did on matters of Asia which, of course, had been my area of specialization up to then.

There were other areas of activity, like the Middle East, which were obviously of concern to Shultz, but basically I went into the job without a highly structured sense of where the substantive focus would be. It evolved "like Topsy," in accord with the demands of the immediate period of history in which the Secretary, the administration, was functioning.

Having said that, let me comment about a general issue related to the functioning of the Policy Planning staff in the State Department: each Secretary of State uses the staff in very personalized ways. Sometimes the speeches are done there; other times, speeches are written and coordinated out of the Public Affairs Bureau. We handled speechwriting, and I inherited several staffers who were very good drafters and played a major role in creating the speeches.

One of the issues that you don't learn about until you're in the saddle is the tension between the Policy Planning staff and the operating regional bureaus. It's very clear that the operating bureaus aren't interested in having the long-term planners meddle in current policy. I think any Policy Planning Director finds a strained-at-best relationship with the regional bureaus, and his ability to function in that environment really depends on his access to and support from the Secretary of State. George Shultz was a man who really used the bureaucracy, delegated responsibility, and used the organization of the Department in a very substantial way. He gave a lot of authority to his assistant secretaries. I would have to say in candor that the European Bureau was the most closed-door bureau of any with which I ever interacted. They went to great lengths to make sure I was not at meetings, not invited to various meetings in their area, and generally made life a struggle in a context where much of my activity dealt with Europe. I was running planning talks with the APAC group, the Atlantic Policy Advisory group, and ultimately became deeply involved in the last years of the Gorbachev regime, which I'll come back to in a minute.

A number of the other bureaus were much less sensitive, and collaborated with us in some useful ways. But that is an example of the relationship between the planners and the

operators, which I certainly didn't anticipate and which turned out to be a real test of bureaucratic skills. Shultz was very supportive of the regional bureaus -- Roz Ridgway's European Bureau was one of his favorites, and also Gaston Sigur and his Asian Bureau. All these folks had Shultz' support, but I did as well. I would sit in on all the morning staff meetings, including the small morning meetings he held with the Assistant Secretaries back in a small inner office. I knew what was going on. I was always there and the other Assistant Secretaries knew that I had the Secretary's ear, and in that sense I was able to stay in the game.

Much of my role -- or I would say the more innovative element of it -- evolved around Shultz' growing dialogue with Foreign Minister Shevardnadze and the other Soviet leaders.

Q: Shevardnadze being the Minister of the Soviet Union under Gorbachev.

SOLOMON: Shultz had the planning staff pull together materials on what he called "global trends." That is, Shultz, from his work with Bechtel in the private sector, was acutely aware of the globalizing trends in the world economy. He was very much interested in the writings and the work of Walt Wriston, CEO [chief executive officer] of Citicorp. Shultz was an intellectual, and he tried to develop intellectual arguments to try to convince the Soviets that the way they were managing their affairs was putting them in a position where they could not compete with the major trends in world affairs. One trend was the dramatic shift toward political democratization, which by the mid-1980s was becoming very evident on a global scale. For Shultz, it was particularly focused around the collapse of the Marcos regime in the Philippines, and the rise to power in 1986 of Corazon Aquino. This trend had begun in Spain and Portugal back in the mid-'70s, and it subsequently affected Chile and other Latin American countries, as well as the Philippines. The combination of the globalizing world economy and democratization as a political trend of global scope were two developments that intrigued Shultz and gave him enormous confidence in the future of the United States. These trends provided the intellectual focus for the materials that we on the Planning staff put together, and that Shultz then used in his discussions with Shevardnadze and Gorbachev. While we'll never know exactly what effect those materials had on the thinking of the Soviet leadership, I assume it did help to reshape their view of the world as they tried to cope with a system that was failing. Gorbachev was trying to save the system, ultimately failing in that role.

This development made my job very interesting. I went with Shultz on virtually all of his trips to the Soviet Union, and got to work with his inner team, apart from the Assistant Secretaries, upon whom he relied for implementing policy. Shultz relied a great deal on his counselor, Max Kampelman, on his special arms control negotiator Paul Nitze, and several other senior officials, and I worked closely with them. I saw them every day at the morning staff meetings and we would develop ways of collaborating.

Q: How would this work? I mean you're taking people dealing more with speciality things, and you could collaborate them but you found yourself sort of pounding at the door of the European affairs.

SOLOMON: Well, usually there was an occasion or two early on where you had to get the Secretary to weigh in to make sure you were in a meeting. I remember vividly Shevardnadze coming to Washington at some point in 1986, and the European Bureau made sure that my name was not on the invitation list. This was an afternoon luncheon discussion. So I went to the Executive Secretary, who at that point was Nick Platt, and to Charlie Hill, his Executive Assistant, and said, "Look. If the Secretary wants me to support him in some way in his dealings with the Soviets, I should be there. If we're not in the room, we're not going to be very credible or effective." The way it worked out, I was a backbencher at first; I had a seat on the side without my name on the table. That was the concession that the European Bureau agreed to initially, although ultimately my role developed beyond that. Indeed, one of the things I am pleased to have done occurred a year later. Having developed an active dialogue with my Soviet equivalent, the head of their planning staff, I was the first foreigner invited to give a speech to what was called the "collegium" of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. I gave a speech about the global trends that were transforming the world, and what they meant for Soviet-American relations. So once the Secretary got me in the door, as it were, then the European Bureau had to accept me as a fact of life, and we got along adequately well. Some other bureaus were much more collaborative.

Q: It sounds like you were doing more of what the outsider would think a policy planner would do. You were intellectually engaged in whither the United States. I've had the feeling that some policy planners were strictly brought in as nuts and bolts people, sort of a fire brigade to run around and use it for various things.

SOLOMON: It again depends on the operating style of the Secretary. Shultz, as I said, was an intellectual. He would hold "policy seminars," as he called them, on Saturday mornings. He would pick a topic that was of interest to him, and he would have the Policy Planning Staff coordinate the meeting, prepare some background materials, and run the seminar. We would invite people from the NSC, Defense, CIA, and the State Department to give brief presentations and talk out the policy implications of some issue that Shultz felt was on the agenda but was of a broader scope, not of an immediate operational concern. That reflected, again, his fairly broad range of interests and intellectual style.

I've worked for or observed other Secretaries of State who were lawyers, political operatives, or businessmen. They don't tend to use the Planning Staff in a planning mode. The Planning Director, if he has the confidence of the Secretary, operates almost as an aide de camp, someone who travels with him all the time, takes notes. In the case of James Baker, and my successor on the planning staff, Dennis Ross, the Director became a kind of a personal support staff with the Executive Secretary, or the Executive Assistant, playing much more of a bureaucratic management role. Shultz, as I mentioned, had a broader intellectual view and turned to his Executive Secretary, or his Executive Assistant, for much more intellectual support, and he wanted the Planning staff to think more broadly.

Q: I find it interesting as you talk about his intellectual engagement. One always thinks a

decade earlier of Henry Kissinger who had very obviously intellectual engagement, but one in contrast as I see it, and correct me, his was actually a little pessimistic view of the United States and whither its role in the United States. Please correct me if I'm wrong. This is right after Vietnam, he saw the Soviet Union as maybe someone you had to do business with quickly before it got any stronger. Did you have a feeling of a difference. This optimism of Shultz I find very interesting.

SOLOMON: That, again, is substantially a personality quirk, although it was probably characteristic of the times and, I would suggest, reflected the character of the President and the people he brought around him. Nixon had a dark view of the world of politics. He came to power with the burdens of the Vietnam War and the Cold War. Henry Kissinger, for whatever reasons, had a kind of personal Weltschmertz, a kind of Spenglerian view of the decline, or at least the difficulties, the United States faced. That personal characteristic, I am sure, was reinforced by a combination of the Vietnam burden and then Watergate. It made him feel that the United States was vulnerable and on the defensive.

Shultz, on the other hand, worked for Ronald Reagan, who had a natural optimism about him, a sense that our system was the right system, and that in contrast to the United States, the Soviet Union -- despite being an evil empire -- was in fact a failing system. And Shultz, who had had stints of work with Ronald Reagan, seemed to carry some of that optimism. One thing Shultz always used to talk about with a kind of awe was the creativity, the power and immensity, of the American economy. His work at Bechtel, as well as his times as Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Labor, and Director of OMB, gave him a good feel for our economy. He saw it as an engine of enormous strength and creativity.

Q: As you were looking at it, what was the thought, you were with the Policy Planning from '86 to when?

SOLOMON: 1989.

Q: What was the feeling of whither the Soviet Union, and then our relation to it? This was '86.

SOLOMON: Well, when I came on the Planning Staff, Gorbachev had just published his book on *perestroika*. He was putting out all kinds of signals about the problems the Soviet Union faced, and his desire to open up the system and work out a new relationship with the United States. Class struggle was over in his writing. He began to talk of universal human values and the need to get along with the United States. So it was a very different mood out of Moscow, and Shultz was very quick to pick up on it. Much of our dealing with the Soviets at that time was focused on the arms control process. We had had a big fight over the intermediate-range nuclear force negotiation, and had come out ahead through some difficult negotiations. Ronald Reagan had built up a national mood that ours was a moral system, the way of the future, and that the Soviets were on the decline and represented an evil system. That general atmosphere permeated the arms

control process. After Gorbachev came to power in '85, you had a leadership in Moscow that was on the defensive. So there were some real tests, probably the greatest of which was the Reykjavik summit meeting in 1987. The Soviets were on the defensive for much of that period, and of course, a year or two after the end of the Reagan administration the Soviet Union collapsed. Shultz pressed the Soviets in that period on human rights issues, for example; the issue became part of the U.S.-Soviet dialogue. That was a real accomplishment in promoting change in the Soviet Union.

Q: Were there times when you were dealing with this, changing Soviet Union, that you were up against a conflicting things of one, trying to help this regime move into a more benign one, or two, let the scoundrels wanton(?), but don't make it easy for them.

SOLOMON: During the whole Shultz period, there were very deep and very personalized tensions between State and Defense, frankly between the Secretaries themselves as individuals. Shultz and the Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, did not like each other, and the tension was mirrored between the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Richard Perle, and his counterpart at the State Department, Richard Burt, who at one point was Assistant Secretary for Europe. So there was a lot of tension between the hard-liners, of whom I suppose Richard Perle would be characteristic, and the more flexible diplomatic types. This policy tension was personalized in a way that earlier had been seen in the Carter administration between the lawyers: the fairly mild-mannered character of Cyrus Vance on the one hand, and on the other, National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, who was much more aggressively hard-line towards the Soviets. Those kinds of personalized and policy-oriented tensions could make the work of those lower down in the system pretty miserable.

Q: Was there the equivalent to a Policy planner for the Pentagon with whom you would be dealing with?

SOLOMON: The short answer is no, there really wasn't a counterpart. The planning system in Defense was set up during the Bush administration by Paul Wolfowitz.

Q: Other themes that were going on during this period, one, is still the Central American affair. Did you get involved in that?

SOLOMON: We were aware that something was going on. Everybody was aware of tensions over Central American policy. During the first year or so of my tenure on the Planning Staff, in 1986 or 1987, I poked around a little bit with Assistant Secretary Arnold Raphel, for example, and Elliott Abrams when he took over the American Regional Affairs Bureau, which dealt with Central and South America. It was very clear that doors were not open for discussion, and one got a sense -- from one's personal political antenna -- that there were issues of great sensitivity at play, and as a Planner, I couldn’t make a positive difference, much less even get in the door. We would likely get drawn into a deep bureaucratic struggle. There was enough rumoring in the hallways about some real problems with our policy, particularly as it related to Iran. At that point the link between Iran and the Contras had not yet come out, but basically I concluded that

those were areas where pushing to get into the play of the policy was not likely to elicit Shultz's support. Of course, later we learned that there were problems and serious political issues underlying the bureaucratic resistance to becoming involved.

Q: Did you have the feeling that Shultz was allowing other forces to take over the Central American side because of the President's strong interest in that?
SOLOMON: Shultz seemed to me to be very circumspect, and he probably was aware that there might have been some serious problems there. I suspect he said some things at the cabinet level, or even the presidential level, on an off-the-record basis, but he was protecting himself from involvement in some things that we were only vaguely aware of at the time. Only later did we see the degree of his involvement in meetings and phone calls that were related to the Iran-Contra range of activities. These were recorded in meticulous detail by his Executive Secretary, Charlie Hill.

Q: But even beyond the underlying Iran-Contra affair, you have a President who is talking about great concern about a splitting communist revolution in Central America and as a policy planner, I mean at a certain point you're looking at that, not the tactics. Was that something that was on your plate?

SOLOMON: Not really. We did very little on Central America. I made one trip to South America. It was fascinating, but in terms of policy issues it was not related to Iran-Contra. The issue where we made a significant contribution in terms of consistent involvement over a three-year period was the decline, or the transformation as we saw it, of the Soviet Union.

Q: What about the perennial, as I can only describe it, title squabble between the Israelis and the Palestinians?

SOLOMON: We had a very strong group of people working on the Middle East, and one of the more interesting trips I took was to Israel, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The people who, for the past seven or eight years, have been running the peace process on our side, Dennis Ross, Aaron Miller, Dan Kurtzer, are all people who worked for me on the Planning Staff. They were providing support for Shultz on those issues. Through the NEA bureau -- Near Eastern Affairs -- we dealt with the Israelis and Egyptians, by running planning talks, but my staff provided assessments for Shultz about the phase of the peace process as it existed at that point, and what we could do to try to keep it going. But, of course as you know, Shultz was not caught up in a Middle East “shuttle” the way that Warren Christopher was, earlier and later.

Q: What about the Far East from the Policy Planning perspective?

SOLOMON: First of all, Shultz had high confidence in his Assistant Secretary, Gaston Sigur, so operationally we watched, more than involved ourselves. And, like the other bureaus, East Asia was always sensitive to our activities. What we focused on in that period was Gorbachev's effort to reestablish working relations with the Chinese leadership. There was a major Gorbachev speech in September of '86 where he in effect

opened the door to a new China policy and that grabbed everybody's interest and attention. Ultimately, it took three years to reach the point where Gorbachev made a trip to China to normalize relations. We were in a period in the late '80s, when we had very good relations with the Chinese. The Russians were courting the Chinese to try to avoid being totally isolated in that relationship. Indeed, I think two of the most interesting trips to China I took in terms of just broad exposure were with Shultz in '87 and '88. We saw the Chinese leadership at a time when they were quite open to us, and when Premier Zhao Ziyang was trying to move things towards reform. We did not see until the spring of 1989 -- that is, the eve of Tiananmen -- that issues like corruption, inflation, and uneven development of the country had created such political and social strains that the Chinese leadership was almost in danger of losing control of its system. It wasn't terribly visible to us as outsiders that they were getting themselves into serious trouble.

Q: Japan was that just pretty much an economic problem at that point?

SOLOMON: The economic issues were at the top of the agenda, but they were less intense than they became a couple of years later. My recollection is that relations with Japan were fairly stable. Korea was starting to bubble up, both South and North. But again, the Assistant Secretary for East Asia, Gaston Sigur, was particularly active in Korean affairs, especially as the Koreans went through democratic transition, away from military government.

Q: How about Vietnam? The idea of opening up relations, or was this not particularly on our books at that time?

SOLOMON: I don't remember exactly the state of play. It was not something we were active in. But I did become directly involved in that issue when I became Assistant Secretary for East Asia in the spring of 1989. So I guess by implication the Vietnam situation was ripening slowly. The issue that was still very much at the top of the agenda was the issue of accounting for our POWs [prisoners of war] and MIAs [missing in action]. Indeed, when I was Assistant Secretary, one of the big issues was whether we could hold out the prospect of normalizing U.S. relations with Vietnam as an incentive to get the Vietnamese to account for our POW/MIAs. There was a lot of resistance from U.S. veterans' groups to normalizing relations with the Vietnamese before they returned what was presumed to be a warehouse full of remains of missing American servicemen.

Q: I would think there would be a natural relationship between INR and Policy Planning in a perfect world. These are the people who do in-depth research, not caught up with the day-to-day workings that a desk officer would have. Did you find any collaboration with INR or not?

SOLOMON: We had very good relations with INR. But Shultz' attitude was that intelligence should be kept quite some distance from policy making. He kept Mort Abramowitz, who was then the Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research, at arm's length because he didn't want the intelligence function to be corrupted by policy making opportunities. INR under Shultz interfaced most actively with the Under

Secretary for Political Affairs, who was a close friend of Abramowitz and mine, Mike Armacost. The three of us had a lot of interaction. INR under Abramowitz was producing a current intelligence brief every morning, which was seen as much stronger than the National Intelligence Daily produced by the CIA. Indeed, just speculating, I think one reason Shultz kept INR at some distance, through the interface with the Under Secretaries, is that he wanted some way of filtering out things that might have been going that he did not want to be brought into, like Iran-Contra.

Q: The CIA too, at that time William Casey was not always there, but the CIA was somewhat suspect, wasn't it, within the policy things of being rather than telling it like it is, it was telling like they wanted to be.

SOLOMON: There was that element of it. In general, there was an awareness that Ollie North and some of the White House or NSC Staff "cowboys," as they were referred to, and CIA Director Bill Casey were doing things that were a problem. I remember vividly in 1987 bumping into a very close friend of mine, Bernie Kalb, who was then Shultz' Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs. I came out of a meeting from the Secretary's office and Kalb was sitting there looking very agitated. It turned out he was going in to tender his resignation to Shultz because the White House was asking the State Department to fudge facts or somehow get drawn into some obfuscation, lying about things related to the situation in Central America. Kalb didn't want his integrity compromised, so he resigned. We were all aware that there were such things happening on the edges, but Shultz worked to keep himself and the Department as much at a distance from them as possible. Ultimately, his aloofness led to distrust, bad feelings, with the man who became his successor, Jim Baker. Baker at that point was the President's Chief of Staff. He was trying to protect the President, and he felt that Shultz was trying to protect Shultz.

Q: Going back to the initial concentration which was in the Soviet Union. Were you getting out of INR, or EUR or anywhere else as one was looking at this for the future the really depths of the disintegrating of economy, the ethnic problems. We all get so used to it that it no longer had almost any impact?

SOLOMON: Here again I have to reconstruct the timing. There were great debates about what was going on in the Soviet Union. The CIA, which was the lead agent in the government for such assessments, seriously overestimated the strength of the Soviet economy. A contrarian group that included several of my former Rand colleagues, such as Charles Wolf, who was the head of the Rand economics department for many years, Albert Wohlstetter, and Harry Rowan organized a kind of "Team B" movement that said the Soviet economy was in deep, deep trouble, and perhaps was not sustainable. I forget all the arguments but that was the debate in the mid-'80s. These people had credibility with Shultz and others at the White House, and were able to get in and make presentations. Wolf and Wohlstetter were held in high regard by Bud MacFarlane, and he arranged for them to brief the President and other senior officials on what they viewed as the failing Soviet economy.

Q: Did you have the feeling because of Shultz's relationship with Shevardnadze and by

inference with Gorbachev, that we were hoping for the best as far as the Soviet Union somehow making it get through rather than them saying this is a doomed form of government?

SOLOMON: Here again, it would take some work to reconstruct what I saw and heard. I'm sure that there were highly divergent views. Some were quite prepared to see the evil empire collapse and to facilitate such a development. Others thought that a collapse could be dangerous as they assessed the implications of what "collapse" really meant. At the end of my tenure as Director of Policy Planning -- after the elections in the fall of 1988, when we knew that the Bush administration was coming in -- I convened a couple of sessions of well-informed people, including Jim Woolsey, Hal Sonnenfeldt, Jim Thomson from Rand, and others. We held a series of brainstorming sessions on what the Bush administration was likely to encounter in its first years in terms of the changing world. We predicted that the reunification of Germany was likely to be a development that would occur in the early years of the Bush administration. We were actually very cautious about putting that idea forward because it seemed at that time an almost unbelievable development. Yet we could see signs of it coming. We did not, and I guess this answers your question indirectly, we did not sense that the Soviet Union itself was likely to collapse. But, of course, we were too cautious on Germany, and not farsighted in assessing how far the Soviet Union had deteriorated.

Q: This is something that if you had got into that, you could get sort of far ahead. That would ruin your credibility.

SOLOMON: Well, that's the issue.

Q: Before we leave the Policy Planning, could we talk a bit about the speech making business. Sometimes the State speeches, basically policy statements. Can you talk about maybe how one would be put together?

SOLOMON: Well, I can tell you how a speech should be put together, and then how they actually *were* put together. The way it should happen is that a decision is made, usually by the relevant bureau in consultation with the Secretary, that a speech is needed on some subject. At that point, the bureaucratic agent coordinating the speechwriting process -- which in this case was Policy Planning -- should sit down with the Secretary and find out what he or she wants to say. With the guidance of the Secretary, the coordinating bureau should get written input from the relevant regional bureau, and then the drafters should prepare a draft to be reviewed by the relevant bureau, and then sent to the Secretary in a third-draft state. That is, the Secretary should get a somewhat polished draft, but still early on enough in the writing process for the Secretary to say, "No, I want to emphasize this or that," or "I don't want to say that." We tried this approach with Shultz and it never worked. We would do the drafts on our own, and they would get to the second- or third-draft stage without any guidance from the Secretary. Basically our staff, in coordination with the regional bureau, put a draft together. Then it would go to the Secretary, although what that really meant is that it would go to Charlie Hill, Shultz' Executive Assistant. Shultz had unquestioned confidence in Charlie. Hill would really do the final review and

polishing, adapting the draft based on whatever Shultz might have told him, or on Charlie's own judgment about what Shultz would want to say. Shultz, as you know, had an economics background. I'm told he never got an economics speech from his speechwriters that he was ever happy with. He was a man who I think had real trouble writing himself. He has written very few things on his own; he generally has had a collaborator, Ken Dam, Charlie Hill, or someone else. He was not an easy man to work for in the speechwriting mode. I could conceptualize a rational process of drafting, but it almost never worked that way.

Q: What would initiate, in other words, let's have a speech on China. Would that come out of the EA bureau usually?

SOLOMON: Almost anywhere. That is, it could be the bureau, we could propose it, or it could come from the Secretary himself. So there was no fixed process, and there were different kinds of speeches. When Shultz went to the ASEAN post-ministerial meetings in Asia, for example, that always called for a speech by the Secretary. So we would always put something together in that kind of case. Generally, these were boilerplate statements on issues in which everyone knew the standard policy positions. They were not innovative statements. That was one type of speech. Another type that we worked on had more of an innovative quality. The first speech I did for Shultz was to the Stanford Alumni Club in Paris, in which he talked about the information revolution. The planning staff put the speech together, consulting with various people, and even getting some guidance from Shultz himself. I remember redoing the speech with the Secretary on the plane from Washington to Paris, fine tuning it with him. So there would be speeches of different purposes, and the manner in which they were put together would reflect Shultz' own style and interests.

Q: From your perspective of the role of the White House, the NSC, but of Ronald Reagan, did he make speeches on foreign affairs while you were there. I mean did there seem to be much of initiative coming out of there?

SOLOMON: Yes, there were speeches that were almost all done by his own speechwriters. My speechwriting staff knew and worked fairly actively with the White House speechwriters, and we would provide input. We didn't provide final drafts, but we would be aware that a Presidential speech was being prepared: it would be coordinated by the Secretary with the regional bureaus, and to some degree with the Planning Staff.

Q: Then turning to George Bush when was elected in 1988. He names Jim Baker as his Secretary of State. You were sort of Shultz' person, and Baker was not in the best relations with George Shultz because of the fact that George Shultz was not completely trying to protect the President in this Iran-Contra thing. Did you feel that you were sort of the Shultz team being replaced? Or how did you feel about this?

SOLOMON: I knew George Bush rather well, having worked with him when he was the head of the China Liaison Office back in the mid-'70s. I also had had dealings with him when he was Vice President. In fact, he was consulted about my coming back to

Washington in 1986 to run the Planning Staff. I was told he supported my being brought back to do that. So I had some history with George Bush, and had dealt with him on a fair number of occasions. For example, when Gorbachev visited Washington in 1987 or '88, Bush was involved in some of the activities. He gave a lunch for Gorbachev, and I helped put that event together on his behalf. So I had the kind of contacts with Bush that led me to expect that I might be kept on. Indeed, at the very end of the Reagan administration it was announced that the Middle East specialist who worked for me, Dennis Ross, would become the new Director of Policy Planning. I had a talk with Ross, and he indicated that I was being considered for a number of positions. I worked out an arrangement with him where I was converted from being the Director of Policy Planning to a consultant, which continued to provide me with a paycheck while things were sorted out. I went for three and a half months in a period of some uncertainty. The new administration had named Richard Armitage to be the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, but he withdrew his name for personal reasons. Actually, I was getting on an airplane to go off on a skiing vacation in April when one of the gate agents at Dulles Airport grabbed me and said, "The Secretary of State wants to talk with you." I laughed, and said, "Sure." She said, "No, no, it's true!" She gave me a phone number and I called Baker from the airplane. He offered me the job. So it wasn't as if I had only known the Reagan people; I had a working relationship with George Bush, as well.

Q: You mentioned Dennis Ross and he is still a prominent figure in negotiations in the Middle East peace process. Could you describe, as you saw him, how he operated at the time he worked for you?

SOLOMON: Well, Dennis in some ways...we brought him back from California to work on Middle East issues. He'd been out on the West Coast, and he was somebody who knew the Middle East political issues. He had also worked on the Soviet Union. He was one of the people, along with Aaron Miller, who began working on the Middle East Peace Process in the NEA Bureau, on aspects of the Arab-Israeli negotiations at that point in time.

Q: Did you have any problem in becoming Assistant Secretary for East Asian Affairs?

SOLOMON: You mean in terms of...

Q: Senate confirmation.
SOLOMON: No. For whatever set of reasons, there was not an objection raised and even Senator Helms, who was generally not kindly disposed to people who had worked for Henry Kissinger, gave me no trouble. There was a two-month confirmation period, and I was confirmed by the middle of June.

Q: You were confirmed just at the beginning of the latter half of the great year, 1989. How did you view looking at it, you had obviously been catching up on things. How did you view East Asia in that period? What were the problems, what were the issues?

SOLOMON: The first thing that hit me was Cambodia. I had been nominated in April

and within a month, the French equivalent of Assistant Secretary, the Asia Director from the Quai d'Orsay, a man named Claude Martin, came to Washington. He was taking the lead, along with the Indonesians, in organizing a new conference that would deal with Cambodia. We did not know each other, so he came to take my measure and figure out what role he wanted the Americans to play in this conference. We began what turned out to be a rather productive collaboration. What Martin was doing was laying the basis for a big conference that was held in Paris in August of 1989 that sought to end the Cambodian civil war. The conference effort was precipitated by the Vietnamese decision to withdraw from Cambodia because of the cutoff of Soviet aid. The Soviets were collapsing at that point, and they had pulled back on their aid commitments in Southeast Asia.

Secondly, there was China. I had not been to China with Bush in February, 1989. The first trip he made as President was to Japan and China, in February of '89, when I was not yet in the government; I was still a consultant. I knew, of course, that Bush was very interested in China because of his diplomatic service there in 1974-75. At some point in May [1989], one of the senior Chinese leaders came to the United States and we learned that things were really starting to get hot because of ongoing demonstrations in Beijing. Gorbachev had gone to Beijing in the middle of May of 1989. I was still unconfirmed, but I was watching everything. So we knew that there was a lot happening there as well as in the Soviet Union. And then, a week before I was confirmed, Tiananmen happened.

Q: This was sort of the suppression of the dissents...

SOLOMON: The final suppression of the dissidents, on the night of June 3rd-4th. I was confirmed, I think, on the 14th of June. I remember talking to Secretary Baker just as the CNN images of gunfire were showing up on the TV in our office. Just before Baker was having either a news conference or an encounter with the President, I had said, “Mr. Secretary, from what we are seeing on the television, the situation there has turned pretty nasty.” The use of gunfire had occurred after weeks of stalemate between the demonstrators and the government; and the President had urged the visiting senior Chinese leader to show restraint. In that context the U.S.-China relationship basically fell apart. It didn't take very long for me to see that I was likely to have very little work to do on China: the shooting of the students, the suppression of the demonstration, had totally destroyed the base of political support in the U.S., in the Congress, for normal dealings with the Chinese leadership.

Q: What was the analysis for this really inept handling of this whole thing, on the part of the Chinese leadership. Because it dragged on, everybody was knowing something had to happen and it wasn't going to be very good because they let it go too long.

SOLOMON: The basic analysis was that the Chinese leadership was split over how to respond to the demands of the students and the other demonstrators. There was an element around Premier Zhao Ziyang that wanted to be accommodating, that recognized the sources of discontent in economic tensions, and opposition to corruption. This element in the leadership wanted to use political means to defuse the opposition. By late May, the situation had become quite polarized. The students, who had been

demonstrating in Tiananmen Square since April, were playing to the mass media, and became uncompromising. The Chinese leadership was basically split down the middle about how to deal with them. Shortly after Tiananmen, Zhao and the other "soft liners" were purged, and the "hard line" element around Li Peng emerged and took responsibility for suppressing the demonstration. Basically, Tiananmen was an example of the leadership being caught up in the social and political forces generated by China's dramatic economic growth, which by that time had been going on for about a decade. People could see the rapid growth, but from afar we were not aware of the internal strains related to income inequality and corruption.

I had gone to China with Shultz in July of '88 and I remember Zhao Ziyang speaking apparently confidently about how they were soon going to move to convertible currency. We later learned that a month after that meeting, in August, the leadership had met and assessed the serious troubles they were facing because of the rapid pace of growth and all the negative phenomena associated with it. The leadership was paralyzed for a while about how to deal with the situation, especially after the demonstrations began. They didn't want to suppress the students and other demonstrators in front of the world media who had assembled in Beijing for the Gorbachev visit in May. Given Deng Xiaoping's policy of kai fang, of opening China to the world, they were trapped in their own openness and visibility. Ultimately, the result of the openness and growth, ironically, was that it destroyed political support in the U.S. for the Chinese leadership.

Q: Then you were Assistant Secretary from when to when?

SOLOMON: From June of 1989 through June or July of 1992.

Q: During this time, why don't we follow through the China side. I remember there was a western world, and many other parts, sort of aghast at what happened. Were you looking for ways to repair the damage, to reopen dialogue?

SOLOMON: Well, basically what happened with China policy was that right after the shooting, the repression at Tiananmen, the President himself knew that he faced a deep political crisis. He, together with Baker, the Secretary of State, decided to immediately impose some sanctions on China because if they didn't, Congress would have made the situation even worse. I was not involved in the basic decision to impose sanctions, but the approach was to do so in a way that would mollify the domestic outcry, yet not be so severe as to damage the relationship. Baker, unfortunately, phrased one of the sanctions in terms of "no high-level exchanges." What he had in mind was canceling the visit to China of then-Secretary of Commerce Mosbacher, who was scheduled to go to go China as head of the U.S.-China binational commercial commission. Baker didn't mean to imply that all high level contact be cut off, it was just these formal exchanges. But the press and Congress didn't view it that way. Suddenly the impression was that the policy was to cut off all high level contacts with the Chinese leadership.

My understanding is that the President got very upset at that implication; he felt that Baker had mishandled implementation of the sanctions policy. And Baker dropped the

China policy account like a hot potato. I think he felt that he had mismanaged the response in terms of what the President wanted. Baker subsequently would say, "The desk officer for China works in the White House," and he, Baker, at that point was delighted not to have to deal with the China relationship, which he viewed as a political loser. So at that point, the State Department was basically out of the China business, except for the Deputy Secretary. The link between the State Department and the White House on China policy became Deputy Secretary Eagleburger, who dealt with Brent Scowcroft, Bush's National Security Adviser. I think Baker was informed about developments, but as of late June 1989, State had very little to do with China.

Q: Of course, the irony is here you are a China expert. Why don't we talk just a bit about the Baker time there while you observed him because I have the feeling that Baker and his almost palace guard wanted to look for winning things to deal with, and not to deal with other problems. I mean, China has a quarter of the population of the world, and to have the Secretary of State thinking this is a loser so to hell with it. This is the wrong way to put it but you see what I'm driving at.

SOLOMON: That was the standard wisdom, that Baker didn't want to have to deal with losing issues or issues that would make him look bad. I was aware of that rumor as much as anyone, and in one or two instances I could see Baker deal with issues in a way that would make sure his personal credibility was not compromised. He willingly delegated to others issues that he didn't view as winning. But let me just say that on China policy, after Tiananmen and that first round of sanctions, I think that Kissinger and Nixon called Bush, the President, and said, "You can't let the reaction you're getting from fuzzy-headed liberals -- bleeding hearts -- about the suppression of the demonstrators destroy your -- our -- China policy. You've got to work out with the Chinese an understanding of what has to be done to repair this relationship." Those discussions occurred in the context of Baker having announced that there would be no high level exchanges, which was interpreted to mean no high-level leadership contacts. This situation trapped the President, and the way he tried to deal with it was via the secret mission of Scowcroft, Eagleburger, and others in July.

Q: Which became obviously non-secret.

SOLOMON: Four or five months later they announced it, but it was secret at the time. I think that secret mission was an effort by President Bush to tell the Chinese what had happened in the U.S. because of Tiananmen -- that is, the disruption of political support in the United States for normal relations, and what would have to be done to try to repair the damage. But that trip was all organized out of the White House; we only learned of it later. And Baker, as I said, was delighted not to have to deal with it.

Q: Did you have a problem...I mean here is the major testimony for the Assistant Secretary for East Asia Affairs and obviously your background is China, and you have an apparatus for dealing with China. Did you have a problem dealing with your people because of this freeze on Chinese-American relations?

SOLOMON: Our role was to prepare testimony for Eagleburger when he had to go up to Congress and try to defend the President's limited sanctions policy. It was a miserable job for him because China policy at that point had become totally politicized. The Democrats -- Senator Mitchell, Congresswoman Pelosi -- were pushing the line that Bush was "coddling dictators," was not hard enough in pushing the sanctions. Yet Eagleburger, for whom we helped prepare the testimony, believed there were good reasons for handling the situation the way we did. So it was a very difficult situation to manage so as not to destroy what was left of the China relationship. In fact, I was asked in the summer of 1990 whether I would like to be ambassador to China. This was when Jim Lilley was concluding his two-year tour as ambassador. I turned it down. I could see that the whole China relationship was frozen. Yet the notion...if you had told me in the '70s when I was working for Kissinger that I would turn down an opportunity to be ambassador to China, I would have said you were crazy. But after Tiananmen, I could see that the relationship was totally immobilized. You couldn't do anything useful; all you could do was play defense with Congress. For me, I had some very productive things going on in other parts of Asia, particularly the Cambodian negotiations.

Q: Let's talk about the Cambodian negotiations during this period. Could you tell what the situation was? You've already alluded to it, the fact that the Vietnamese were pulling out. But what were we doing, and what was the problem?

SOLOMON: Let me back up a little bit, just to complete the discussion of China that you've started. Over the next three years I periodically would go to Baker, or Eagleburger, or whomever, and say "This or that is going on with China. I think we ought to do this or that." I always expressed my views, but politically there was just no support for doing very much. The one thing that Baker was delighted to have me pick up as I began my tour as Assistant Secretary was the Cambodia issue. Let me just say there was a general style of operating in the Baker State Department, unlike the Shultz style, in which Baker really controlled all of the key negotiations through his inner circle -- which meant Dennis Ross, and Bob Zoellick, his counselor, Margaret Tutweiler, and one or two others. They were his operating core. Baker did not delegate very much initiative to his Assistant Secretaries, but it was a different matter in the case of Cambodia and one or two other things that I was working on -- issues that initially he thought were probably going to be secondary, or wouldn't get very far. So they handed off to me the whole Cambodia business, and said, "You run it."

There were several other issues, like Mongolia. "You run it." The Asia development that Baker was very interested in was APEC, APEC being the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation initiative. Because of his interest in economics, having been at the Treasury, he and Bob Zoellick, his counselor, took active interest in APEC, with the support of the bureau. We played a very active role in getting APEC started. We went to Australia in November of 1989 for the first, formative APEC ministerial meeting. Baker, I think, probably rightly considers one of his major contributions to Asia policy to be the development of a major economic institution for East Asia.

But the brief I was basically given free rein to run was Cambodia, as well as other issues

peripheral to our broader dealings with the region, which included Vietnam. Baker was supportive of what we were doing. As I say, I think initially no one thought that the Cambodia negotiations were going to get anywhere. But after the collapse of the French-Indonesian conference in the summer of '89 in Paris, I went to Baker and said, "I think that if we keep it up and get the UN Permanent Five involved, where the French, the Indonesians and the ASEANs have failed to get a settlement, I think we might be able to nurse this settlement process along." Baker was very supportive. He told the ASEAN ministers in September of 1989, a month or less after the failure of the Paris negotiation, that he thought it was time for the big boys, the Permanent Five at the UN, to pick up this issue. We would work with the ASEAN countries to try to get a settlement. So Baker supported the initiative, and one of the arguments I made to him was that this was a way of trying to bring closure to the wounds of the Vietnam War era, to stabilize a region that was important, a high growth area. He understood that.

The really loaded political issue in the Cambodian settlement was Vietnam, and there my bureau had a running negotiation with the POW/MIA lobby over how far and how fast to go with the Vietnamese. That was probably, in terms of domestic politics, the most difficult issue that we were coping with at that point.

Q: Let's stick with Cambodia and then move on to Vietnam. One of the Paris peace talks with Cambodia was...this was a French initiative, wasn't it? What happened with that particular initiative?

SOLOMON: Well, there had been a long history of efforts by the ASEAN countries, the UN, even the Austrians, to get a settlement over Cambodia. During the 1980s there had been a series of initiatives, but nothing happened -- until the Soviet Union started to collapse. They withdrew their aid from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, and created a situation where the Vietnamese understood they could no longer afford a surrogate government in Phnom Penh. The core of the Cambodia settlement was really worked out behind the scenes, between the Chinese and the Vietnamese. The Chinese and the Vietnamese each had their surrogates in the Cambodia civil war. The Chinese, of course, supported the Khmer Rouge, and the Vietnamese had installed a friendly government led by Hun Sen. We supported a non-Communist resistance out of Thailand led by Prince Sihanouk and Son Sann. The Thai didn't want the Vietnamese controlling their eastern border. The dilemma for the United States was that our non-Communist friends -- Sihanouk and Son Sann, who headed up an organization called the Khmer People's National Liberation Front, the KPNLF -- had formed a tactical alliance with the Khmer Rouge. So we seemed to be supporting the genocidal maniacs of Cambodia, and Pol Pot. We were in an impossible political situation.

The Chinese and the Vietnamese were not able to reach any kind of an accommodation over Cambodia in the summer of '89, so the first Paris conference collapsed. We were unable to get a resolution of differences. The Vietnamese, led by their Foreign Minister, Nguyen Co Thach, kept trying to build support in the West, in the UN, for an "anti-genocide" coalition, that is, a coalition of those who were opposed to the Khmer Rouge. And the Khmer Rouge resisted a settlement on the argument that the Vietnamese were

colonizing Cambodia. So there was no deal, and one of the most dramatic moments of diplomacy I have experienced occurred at the Paris conference. Sihanouk almost went crazy in the final session, in August of '89.

With the failure at Paris, it looked as if there was no possibility of a settlement. But it was my judgment that the major powers, China, Russia, perhaps the British, and the French -- who were hoping to reestablish their colonial-era influence in Indochina -- all were ready for a settlement. The ASEAN countries, particularly Thailand, wanted a settlement. So we ended up playing a major role in pushing the diplomacy into a new phase. Baker supported my idea of getting the UN "Permanent Five" to take the lead in negotiating a settlement, which led to the UN framework agreement for Cambodia, which I negotiated between January and August of 1990 in a kind of diplomatic shuttle between New York and Paris. Behind the scenes during that period, the Vietnamese and the Chinese worked out an understanding that included the purging of Thach, who was very hostile to the Chinese -- an understanding on the part of Beijing and Hanoi that the Vietnamese would withdraw all their remaining troops from Cambodia under international supervision, and that the Chinese would agree to terminate their outside support of the Khmer Rouge.

Q: Were you finding while you were involved with this that you were having any problems with the people in Congress? Because anybody who deals with that problem there's still pretty raw emotions in the United States, particularly from politicians.

SOLOMON: The answer is yes. Congress complicated the process as part of the Democratic party assault on the Bush administration for "coddling dictators." There were some people in Congress who wanted to attack us for supporting the anti-Vietnamese coalition. There was one Congressman from Massachusetts, Chester Atkins, who had a fairly large Khmer constituency in his district, and so was very critical. Also, Senator Cranston attacked our policy. And the media, fed by some elements in the government, some people in the intelligence community, were leaking information that implied that Sihanouk, who we were supporting, was collaborating with the Khmer Rouge. That would have violated Congressional law. Peter Jennings and ABC put together an expose television program that tried to create a case that we were illegally providing arms to the Khmer Rouge. So there was a coalition of Congress, media, and some elements of the bureaucracy that were opposed to the administration's approach of trying to get a UN-sponsored settlement of the conflict in 1990. It was a very hostile environment in which to operate.

Q: I remember seeing the Jennings Program.

SOLOMON: It was a very hostile environment. I was saved politically by the fact that the chairman of the East Asian Sub-Committee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Congressman Steve Solarz, basically had the same read on the situation that I had, and he supported our approach to a Cambodia settlement. He was on the House Select Intelligence Committee, as well. He knew that we were not secretly arming the Khmer Rouge, contrary to what Peter Jennings and others were saying. He did not trust Hun Sen, or the Vietnamese-established-and-supported government around whom some in

Congress wanted to build a settlement.
The Federation of American Scientists, led by Jeremy Stone, was convinced that Hun Sen was a savior, that he could prevent the return to power of the Khmer Rouge. Solarz and I, in effect, formed a coalition to try to get the UN settlement -- something that Solarz himself had been promoting since the summer of 1989. Solarz had had a discussion with Prince Ranaridh in which the idea of a UN trusteeship for Cambodia had come up. So Solarz and I were on the same track, and he was extremely helpful in building some public support for what we were trying to do on Cambodia. Fortunately, in the middle of August of 1990, the UN Permanent Five agreed on a settlement plan, and later behind the scenes the Chinese and the Vietnamese accepted that plan. That basically took the political heat off us, as we got a good deal.

It was the first UN peace plan at the end of the Cold War; the Chinese and the Russians supported it. At the very end of the negotiation, I remember the Russian delegate, Vice Minister Igor Rogochov, almost complained he could not commit aid money to the settlement, as he had "lost his country," i.e., the Soviet Union was collapsing and he was representing just Russia. But they would support the settlement. The Chinese were feeling pretty good, because they got the Vietnamese to agree to withdraw from Cambodia, which was their primary concern. They did not want to see the Vietnamese establish an Indochina federation, which had been one of Ho Chi Minh's goals for several decades. There was a real confluence of interests that played out through the UN process. Contrary to everybody's expectation, including that of my colleague John Bolton, who ran the International Organizations Bureau, we got not only a settlement plan, but then over the next two and a half years it was implemented in a way that led to a successful settlement.

Q: Turning to Vietnam, you had already had dealings with the problem when you were in Policy Planning. What was your impression at the time you took over EA of the missing in action POWs, lobby or interest group. What was driving it?

SOLOMON: Well, you had a very determined constituency, led by a very determined woman, Ann Mills Griffiths, who had been involved for a decade bureaucratically in the way the State Department handled the POW/MIA issue. She was cleared for participation in a special working group that oversaw the handling of POW/MIA matters. She and one or two others were convinced that the Vietnamese had a warehouse full of the remains of U.S. servicemen, and they were just dosing them out in dribs and drabs in hopes of gaining leverage for a normalization of relations. So when I inherited this issue it intersected with the Cambodian negotiations, because one of the issues in that negotiation was that the Vietnamese had to withdraw their troops from Cambodia. That withdrawal had to be monitored, and the question was how to monitor it. There would be monitoring posts set up, so we had to start dealing with the Vietnamese on the Cambodia settlement. I had one meeting in Paris in August of 1989 with Foreign Minister Thach, and because of his anti-China sentiment he wanted to draw the U.S. into a relationship. By that time the Tiananmen events had occurred, and the subsequent collapse of the U.S.-China relationship. So Thach probably saw the possibility of using American hostility to the Chinese to put more weight behind the Vietnamese position on China.

The issue for the U.S. was how far we should go with the Vietnamese towards normalization in the absence of fully resolving the POW/MIA set of issues. Therein lay tremendous bureaucratic fights, and the League of Families, led by Ann Mills Griffiths, was determined to resist the expansion of our dealings with the Vietnamese towards normalization unless, in her view, they came clean with the return of 400 or more remains. We ended up creating a detailed field investigation and accounting process based on efforts led by former General John Vessey, who was the president's personal representative on POW/MIA accounting. By the summer of 1990, the Permanent Five had agreed on a mechanism for settling Cambodia, so the question had become whether as we moved to settle Cambodia, and as the Vietnamese withdrew their forces from Cambodia, would we concurrently move to normalization with the Vietnamese. Well, after big internal struggles on the POW/MIA issue, we negotiated with the Vietnamese what became known as the "road map" for normalizing relations. The "road map" included some very specific benchmarks of performance that we expected of the Vietnamese in terms of POW/MIA accounting, in response to which we would lift the trade embargo, and otherwise move forward to dismantle the elements of our confrontation with the Vietnamese that had grown out of the Vietnam War.

In negotiating the "road map," which was done by one of my deputies, Ken Quinn, we had intense exchanges with Ann Mills Griffiths and several others who were very fearful that we would compromise the POW/MIA accounting process on the altar of normalizing relations with Vietnam. But this was not what we were about. We in fact strengthened that process by negotiating a field investigation mechanism, based on establishing a Department of Defense liaison office in Hanoi, which advanced the process of dealing with what I thought was the legitimate concern of the POW/MIA families. The Vietnam "road map" built on the Cambodia settlement to help heal the wounds of the war and, over time, establish the basis for stable relations with the Vietnamese.

Q: Did you have the feeling that with this MIA group...I mean, there were some who had the very legitimate concerns because their husbands, fathers had been killed and they had not been identified. Did you have the feeling that there were others with this using it for political purposes, for posturing?

SOLOMON: Well, understandably, this was an extremely emotional issue for all of the families involved. Secondly, a set of organizational mechanisms had been established, in which the League of Families was directly involved, and they in a sense had a vested interest in keeping the issue alive. The accounting process helped them pursue their cause, sustained the support of their members, and gave them a voice in the political process. And because of their work with our community of military retirees, and families who had suffered casualties, they had significant political weight. They pressed their cause with great bureaucratic skill.
Q: What about the other side, the Vietnamese. Was there a rationale for the Vietnamese trying to parcel out these bones or other things? Why did things sort of dribble out rather than...

SOLOMON: This gets into an area that was very difficult for me to fully understand. The best interpretation that I could come up with was that we were dealing with the legacy of Vietnamese distrust of the Americans. Also, there was the fact that they had dealt with the French in the 1950s on repatriation of remains in much the same way that they were dealing with us. They had discovered in dealing with the French that war remains gave them significant bargaining leverage, and they could also raise some money by returning remains. It was a very complicated issue, burdened with history, distrust, and the anguish of the families who had lost loved ones.

Q: Did you think the Vietnamese began to understand where we were coming from? Was this part of the thing of almost educating them in American politics?

SOLOMON: Oh, I think they had a good sense of American politics. After all, these were the same people who had manipulated our politics all during the Vietnam War. I think we were dealing with a situation where they didn't trust us. So all that combined into a rather unpromising environment. But, as the field investigation process played itself out, the Vietnamese actually ended up giving us a great deal of their internal information, material that our military would not have handed over to a foreign government, things dealing with operational procedures. Their political leaders were probably encountering real resistance from their military or intelligence agencies about providing all this information. It probably had some relation to their dealings with the Russians. As you know, there have been various rumors about the Vietnamese having allowed the Russians to interrogate our downed pilots. So it was a very, very complex and emotionally laden set of issues. All I can say is that, in terms of our handling of the issue at the State Department, I think we ultimately built up a reasonable level of trust with the POW/MIA community. They were fairly confident that we weren't going to sell them out, that we were trying to establish a process of field investigations that would serve their interest, but the bureaucratic maneuvering and politics were intense. Ann Griffiths overplayed her hand at one or two points. Because she had access to classified information, Griffiths knew about everything that was going on with the field investigation process, and she would feed some of that information to the POW/MIA people and to Congress to build back pressure on the State Department and White House. She was misusing her access to the system in ways that got people quite annoyed. She had political clout, however, and the White House did not want to alienate her. I was able to work with her, but I think my deputy, Ken Quinn, took some unfair hits because they saw him as being too eager to normalize with Vietnam. They felt he was not giving enough weight to the interests of the POW/MIA community, which I think was unfair. Quinn was following the policy guidance that the Seventh Floor of the State Department gave him in dealing with these issues.

Q: Moving on to Korea. I think that would be the other hot spot event.

SOLOMON: Korea became a very interesting issue during my tenure as Assistant Secretary, and we were fortunate to have done some useful work. When I was still in Policy Planning, we became aware of the North Korean nuclear program. When I became Assistant Secretary, the issue became how we were going to deal with it. Over a three-

and-some-year period, we worked out a game plan with the South Korean president and his national security adviser, a man named Kim Chung-whee -- whom I had known from my days at the Rand Corporation when he was an instructor at the Korean Defense University -- for trying to draw the North Koreans into a negotiation on the nuclear issue. We encountered determined resistance from the White House in getting involved in this, however. There was deep distrust of the North Koreans, as there was of the Vietnamese. The question was, could we even open a negotiation with these people?!

What happened, ironically, was that when President Bush announced the withdrawal of all surface nuclear weapons deployed abroad, he was focusing on a deal with the Russians as a way of getting their nuclear weapons under control. But that decision, by implication, also affected our deployments in Korea. This was in 1990, I guess, so suddenly we had an initiative that enabled us to go to the North Koreans and say, "All right, we'll guarantee you that there are no nuclear weapons under our control anywhere in Korea, but you have to come clean and allow for inspections by the IAEA of your nuclear program." And for reasons we couldn't fully discern at the time, they were under some real pressures to accept our proposal. They finally agreed to make good on their commitment to the International Atomic Energy Agency to allow safeguard inspections of all their declared nuclear sites, an obligation they undertook -- but had never implemented -- when they signed a non-proliferation agreement with the IAEA in 1985. That signature obligated them to safeguard all their nuclear facilities under IAEA inspection, but they resisted doing that. So with the Bush announcement of the withdrawal of all our surface nuclear weapons, suddenly they were under real diplomatic pressure. They lost their rationale for resisting submission to IAEA inspection. And we think the Chinese were also pressuring them because the Chinese didn't want them to proliferate. So out of that situation came negotiation between the North and the South that was codified in late 1991, and then ratified in early '92, that included a mutual non-proliferation agreement. And, in early 1992, we initiated direct political contacts at a rather high level with the North Koreans for the first time in decades. I was part of a delegation led by the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Arnold Canter. We met with a man named Kim Young-sun, who was very close to Kim Jong-il, the son of Kim Il-song. Kim Young-sun was the head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the North Korean parliament. We met this man in New York and discussed steps that would be required to . . . we didn't use the word "normalize" relations, but to improve relations between the U.S. and North Korea. So in 1991 and into '92, there were some major advances in terms of dealing with the North Korean problem. One advance was that the North Koreans accepted IAEA inspection of their nuclear facilities. There were six inspections that actually occurred. They also signed two agreements with the South Koreans dealing with a non-nuclear Korean Peninsula, and with reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula. And we opened direct talks between the U.S. and North Korea that gave the North some added incentives to be less confrontational.

Subsequently, after I had gone to be ambassador in the Philippines, all that progress came to a halt for complicated reasons. The IAEA inspections revealed that the North Koreans, in fact, had been cheating in terms of producing plutonium. I think they panicked at the exposure of what they were up to, and suddenly they started throwing a lot of roadblocks

in the way of the IAEA inspections. And with the onset of the Kim Young-sam government in Seoul, and the death of Kim Il-song, the North Koreans backed away from opening up. So Korea remains an extremely volatile, dangerous situation.

Q: This might be a good point to stop. So we've really reviewed East Asian. Is there anything else we should deal with the next time? We'll put it on the end here before we move to the Philippines.

SOLOMON: You might like to talk about Mongolia, the Philippine developmental assistance plan -- I forget exactly the proper name for it.

Q: We'll pick those up. And what about the Pacific Islands? Were there any things during this time? Or Australia and New Zealand?

SOLOMON: Australia and New Zealand. In New Zealand we had the issue of nuclear ship visits, and whether we would we re-normalize relations. That's important. I was the first Assistant Secretary to visit there since the mid-'80s. That's worth talking about. And then I think there's the growth of the ASEAN coalition.

Q: Okay, we'll pick those up next time.

* * *

Q: Today is the 3rd of July 1997. When we left it last time, your time in East Asian Affairs, you mentioned we should talk about Mongolia. Was there anything particular in Mongolia that was of particular concern?

SOLOMON: Mongolia was interesting during my tenure because of the effects of the reform movement there to try to open up their politics in 1989-'90, to deal with the consequences of having been basically ruled, directed, by the Soviet Union since 1924. We had gone through a long history of trying to develop relations with Mongolia as part of a broader China policy. Back in 1960-'61 President Kennedy had talked about establishing diplomatic relations with Mongolia, but Chiang Kai-shek overruled him. So nothing much happened until the Gorbachev period. I forget exactly which year it was, it was probably '86 or '87, that we finally established diplomatic relations with Mongolia. I was then at Policy Planning, and Secretary Shultz oversaw the establishment of diplomatic relations.

But with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Mongols suddenly opened up their politics; a very strong democratic movement developed. This was a development that Secretary Baker grabbed a hold of.

Q: There was sort of a bonding with Mongolia, wasn't there?

SOLOMON: It was ironic, because in a situation where dealing with China after Tiananmen had become a political no-no, Baker's involvement with Asian issues came to

focus on Mongolia. He himself was a hunter, and he wanted to get a trophy in Mongolia, the Argali Ram. We convinced him, however, that shooting a fairly rare wildlife species would be lousy politics. So he gave up that idea for a while, but he did eventually -- on I think his second or third trip to Mongolia -- do a little camping in the Gobi Desert, and he went back to Mongolia after he left office. So he got emotionally caught up with the Mongols. In August of 1990, Baker made his first trip to Mongolia, and I handled the drafting and the signing of a trade agreement with them. We met with leaders of the democratic movement, and encouraged them in what became a remarkable effort at a fundamental political transformation. The Mongols have a lot of problems. Basically they are sandwiched between two great powers, Russia and China. They desperately wanted to reach out and weaken their dependence on those two major powers. They were very anxious to develop relations with us, and economic relations with Korea and others, to give them outreach and diversification.

Another one of their big problems was environmental pollution. I remember the Soviets had built a power plant at the upwind end of the valley in which Ulan Bator, their capital city, is located. So all of the pollution from the power plant blew over the city. It was a classic case of bad urban planning. I assume at this point that the situation is better, but at the time, because of the withdrawal of Soviet aid, their economy had nearly collapsed. They did not have enough heating fuel, coal, or oil to generate electricity; they didn't have enough dynamite to run their mines. So we took steps in 1990 to try to help them out, and encourage elections. Those elections did occur and Mongolia has made significant progress towards improving their economic situation, although they're still trapped by geography between the two major Eurasian powers. And U.S. interest in Mongolia, frankly, will probably remain marginal.

But during the first Baker visit in August of '90, half way through the visit we were shocked Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. So we concluded the visit a day early; we got on the plane to meet up with the President, who was in Washington, but flew back via Moscow. On the trip back, I said to Secretary Baker that I thought it was finally time to send me to Beijing to try to gain Chinese support for a coalition effort against Saddam Hussein. Baker agreed. He called the President from the airplane and got presidential approval for the mission. So I flew all the way west from Mongolia to Moscow, waited a few hours, and then caught an Aeroflot plane back to Beijing to deliver the message that we wanted China to work with us, with the UN coalition, in dealing with the Iraqi aggression. The Chinese basically took a passive position. They were very anxious to avoid setting a precedent, of seeming to cooperate with us too closely. But that was an effort to reactivate a broader strategic dialogue with the Chinese.

Q: But this was after Tiananmen Square and so we were trying to keep a fairly aloft posture with the Chinese. Did this make you more as the highest ranking person to go out there?

SOLOMON: No, what had happened is that after Tiananmen, President Bush felt he had to impose certain sanctions on China, or have Congress do worse. He was under enormous political pressure at home. But the world was ready to respond. So we were not

alone. We did sanction the Chinese, along with many other countries. But one gaff in working out the list of sanctions was that Secretary Baker and Under Secretary Kimmitt has said that there would be no "high-level exchanges" with the Chinese. What they meant by that was that there would be no regular high level exchanges of the sort that the Secretary of Commerce was about embark on in July of '89, in terms of the joint commercial commission. They did not have in mind severing all high-level contact with the Chinese. But the press interpreted "no high-level contacts" to mean that we were cutting off all contacts. It was in that environment that I believe Bush came under considerable pressure. I believe that former President Nixon, and former Secretary of State Kissinger, urged President Bush not to let the situation lead to a breakdown in our high-level dealings with China. So that led to the secret Scowcroft trip to Beijing in July of '89 to try to keep a dialogue going, and to tell the Chinese frankly what was required to try to repair the damaged relationship. And then there was a second trip, in November of '89, which was announced publicly.

Those were efforts to keep a senior dialogue going. But they elicited a firestorm of domestic criticism, particularly from the Democrats, who felt that Bush, as they said in the election campaign of '92, was "coddling dictators," the butchers of Beijing, by maintaining these high level contacts. So the China relationship became a tremendous political liability for Bush. Then, after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, it was evident that if we were going to have a UN coalition, or at least the UN sanction of some collective effort to deal with Saddam's aggression, we would have to work with the Chinese, given their veto position on the Security Council. So it was in that environment that the State Department reactivated its dealings with the Chinese, at least at the Assistant Secretary level.

I made a number of subsequent trips to China, and in November of '91 Baker himself went to China and had a rather tense meeting because it dealt with the issue of Chinese weapons proliferation, something the Chinese were very sensitive about.

Q: I'd like to go back to this time when you were in Mongolia and with the Secretary of State. You'd heard about the Iraqi invasion. What was the reaction? Was there anybody there who could tell the Secretary what was going on? Did he have an expert with him? Or anybody like that?

SOLOMON: He had a military aide, General... I forget his name, but he later became Commandant of West Point. I honestly don't recall what mission that general officer was on as part of Baker's delegation; but as part of the delegation he was in a position to use the airplane's communications. And I think at that point the Ulan Bator embassy was in a position to receive code word communications, so we did have that link to the Defense Department, DIA, and we were getting briefings on what in fact was going on in the Saudi-Iraq-Kuwait area.

Q: From your perspective was this pretty much a surprise?
SOLOMON: There's no doubt that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was a strategic surprise. It was a great failure of American intelligence; at least it was asserted to be so after the

fact.

Q: Was there any talk on the plane as you were going to Moscow about what are we going to do about this?

SOLOMON: If there was I wasn't directly involved in it. That was not an area of my responsibility. As I recall there was a senior level assessment of what might be done back in Washington. And Baker arrived back from his trip -- via Moscow -- just as the President was convening National Security Council meetings to figure out what to do and come to a decision.

Q: Then turning back to other subjects you mentioned. You said we might talk a bit about the Philippine development assistant plan.

SOLOMON: We haven't talked any about the Philippines.

Q: No, we haven't talked about the Philippines at all during the time you were there.

SOLOMON: The major issue in the Philippines when I was Assistant Secretary, of course, was the renegotiation of the base agreement. I had been dealing with Philippine issues, although not at the center of my agenda, when I was running Policy Planning. In 1986, Corazon Aquino came triumphantly to Washington to give a speech to a joint session of Congress. Secretary of State Shultz made a public statement that he was "bullish on the Philippines," so we got behind the successor regime to Marcos led by Corazon Aquino. Things seemed to stabilize at that point. Then the issue became expiration of our base leases for Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base. That issue was heavily freighted with Philippine nationalism -- particularly in the wake of the Corazon Aquino "people power" revolution. The Philippine Senate became very hostile to the American bases. They looked at them as a holdover from the colonial era. Also, Marcos had used the bases as an excuse to gouge Americans for rental money, and it was evident that some of that money was used to line his own pockets. So there was real hostility on both sides.

At the same time, the Foreign Minister of the Philippines at that time under Corazon Aquino was Raul Manglapus. Manglapus had political ambitions, and at one point he thought he might run for UN Secretary General. At another point he was thinking of running for the Philippine Senate. When Corazon Aquino asked him to renegotiate the military base agreements with the Americans, he was pulled between his responsibilities as Foreign Minister and the forces of Philippine nationalism. He pursued a very ambivalent negotiating posture. On the one hand, he was instructed by Aquino to get a deal on the bases. But on the other hand, his own political agenda and other inclinations led him to want to take a very nationalistic stand. Richard Armitage was our lead negotiator on the Philippine bases. He spent the better part of a year trying to get the Filipinos, who do not run a very well-structured, disciplined bureaucracy anyway, to create a negotiating position. And Manglapus, the Foreign Minister, basically failed to exercise leadership because he was split down the middle himself on what to do on this

issue.

The outcome, which was determined by a vote of the Philippine Senate in 1991, rejected the renewal of a base agreement with the United States. So for the first time in almost a century, the U.S. was going to leave the Philippines. The mood between the U.S. and the Philippines was really not very good. Secretary of Defense Cheney had visited the Philippines, I believe in 1990, and Corazon Aquino had refused to see him because of domestic political factors. That really put everybody's teeth on edge, and there was an attitude of, "Well, if they're not interested in treating us in an appropriate way, the hell with them. If they want us to go, we'll go. Goodbye." There was a lot of bad blood in that situation.

So when the Philippine Senate voted -- it voted one short of even a tie vote on the bases agreement -- the attitude in Washington was "Fine. They don't want us there, we'll go."

Q: What was the Pentagon saying, the military, because its one of these things that we've always been told we have to have both Clark Field and Subic Bay. Was there a turn around?

SOLOMON: The initial turn around was an act of nature. In 1990, totally out of the blue, there was a major volcanic explosion in the Philippines. A mountain no one ever really paid much attention to -- Mount Pinatubo, which was part of a range of volcanic mountains just to the north of Clark Air Base -- suddenly erupted and spewed enormous amounts of ash, and generated major lava flows that destroyed Clark Field. It has since been reopened, but at the time it looked as if it was finished as a facility. Subic Bay remained, so the negotiations really ended up focusing on the future of Subic Bay, plus a couple of smaller facilities. That was the situation at the end of 1990.

Q: Did you find that the people dealing with the Philippines in the State Department and your bureau were somewhat happy to see Baker getting rid of this base business? This being a military thing and it complicated relations. Did you get any of that feeling?

SOLOMON: The opposition to renewing the bases agreement came largely from the Pentagon, where people had had increasing difficulty working with the Filipinos. They didn't want to be there if they weren't welcome. There had been, of course, the assassination in 1989 of a military officer involved in the JUSMAAG [Joint U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group] operation, Nick Rowe. In addition, there was a financial incentive to close out the bases because the Pentagon was already feeling the pressure of the post-Cold War budget squeeze. So the prospect of the 200 plus million dollar annual "rent" payment for the bases was something that the Navy was not interested in having to bear. Neither the U.S. military nor the Filipinos were taking a strategic view of the situation; it was basically a situation where the Pentagon, in particular, was fed up with the Fils, and they didn't want the monetary burden of sustaining the bases. So they were quite prepared to take a walk, and that's in effect - for complex reasons - what happened.

My relatively brief tour in the Philippines, which began on September 1, 1992, involved

overseeing the already fairly well-advanced process of closing out Subic Bay. I worked closely with the military, the commander of Subic Bay, whose name I forget at the moment, who was a terrific Naval officer. He did a very professional job. The major issue we confronted was whether we were going to leave a polluted facility. The military, I think, gilded the lily a bit on the degree to which they had cleaned up POL facilities and firing ranges of pollutants. But for the most part, I was impressed that they did do a professional job even though the Philippine press was highly critical, saying that we were leaving polluted facilities. I would say the culminating experience of my six-month tour as Ambassador to the Philippines was presiding over the formal ceremony closing out Subic Bay. That event, in the Filipino psyche, ended the colonial era. As President Ramos said in his speech at the closing ceremony, for the first time in more than three centuries there were finally no foreign troops on Philippine soil. The Spanish, of course, had gone when we drove them out at the turn of the century, after three hundred years, and now we were out of there. That really did end an era in Philippine history.

The remainder of my tour, which was only six months in all, was focused on developing a dialogue with the Filipinos about what they needed to do to get their economy going. Under Corazon Aquino, they had not taken very aggressive measures to keep up with the other ASEAN countries, who were growing at 7 to 8 percent a year. The Koreans at that time were growing over 10 percent a year. The Chinese were growing at about 10 percent a year. The Filipino economy was basically stagnant, in no small measure because Corazon Aquino refused for political reasons to build power plants. So there was a deepening electric energy shortage. Of course, with an energy shortage you can't expand your industrial base and make your economy grow. So that was the issue that we focused on in an effort to encourage the Filipinos to get on the fast track of economic development that all the other countries of ASEAN were on.

Q: Wasn't Corazon Aquino under any pressure from business interests in the Philippines to develop a better power grid?

SOLOMON: I can't tell you all of the details, but she was certainly under the influence of political advisers who felt that the Americans were untrustworthy because they had worked with Marcos. One major issue was a nuclear power plant deal that had been negotiated in the 1980s. The Filipinos claimed that General Electric had paid major kickbacks to Marcos to get the contract to build this plant, and to this day it has never been finished for political and environmental reasons. The environmentalists claim that to finish the plant, which is located not very far from Mount Pinatubo, would create a danger because of volcanic and earthquake instability, and the consequent risk of a nuclear accident should there be a major earthquake with this plant in operation. So while the structure of the plant was built, the nuclear reactor has never been installed and the project has never been finished.

Q: How did you find relations with the Filipinos when you went there? You talk about nationalism, I would have thought there would have been sort of a dual thing. One that would be the nationalism, let's get the Americans out. At the same time, let's keep up the special relationship which included immigration and close ties. We can always call on

the United States.

SOLOMON: Well, "ambivalence" is the word. The hostility to the U.S. was basically concentrated in a number of people in the Filipino Senate, and some people in the press. But on the whole the Filipinos were extremely friendly, and certainly friendly to me. I'm sure they wanted to feel that they were fully independent, but on the other hand they felt, I think, relatively close to the United States. During my time there the communist insurgency had diminished significantly, so some of that hostility toward the U.S. had eased. There was still the Moro insurgency down in Mindanao, but that wasn't directed at us. On the whole, I would say the Filipinos were generally very friendly to the United States. They were very anxious to maintain relations because so many Filipinos either wanted to emigrate to the U.S. because they have relatives here, because of wartime service, or because they don't have economic opportunity at home. Because they have good training in English, they could look to the United States as a place to emigrate.

Q: Did you find when you were in the Philippines did the Philippine American community play much of a role? Almost every other of our immigrant seem to have political clout but I never hear of the Philippine Americans.

SOLOMON: You mean in the United States? While I was there, in the 1992 elections, a Philippine American woman ran for Congress out of the Santa Barbara area of California. She lost, but the Filipinos in Manila were intensely interested in whether she won or not because, as you say, they felt that they did not have as much political clout as they wished they had.

Q: But did you feel they would make any difference in what you were doing at the embassy?

SOLOMON: Not really, although when the Clinton administration took office, President Clinton had at least one Filipino woman on his team who had worked with him in Little Rock, and she became a fairly central player in terms of White House personnel activities. Consequently, everybody in Manila was trying to get messages to her about who they'd like to see appointed to the Clinton administration positions. And frankly, President Ramos used his contact with her in an effort to get a very early meeting in Washington with President Clinton. So the Filipinos were pretty active. They're not as influential as some foreign communities, but they were quite active.

Q: What about Filipino immigration to the United States? Did that play much of a role?

SOLOMON: It is a major issue, and at the embassy the major section is the consular affairs office. Because of our past colonial relationship with the Fils, because of the service of many Filipinos in the U.S. military during World War II, because of the poor prospects for rather well educated Filipinos to get jobs in their own country, there was substantial pressure to emigrate. Every day in front of the embassy there would be a line of several hundred people seeking visas. There was a lot of scamming activity, and persistent efforts on the parts of various people to help Filipinos emigrate. During my

time there I got a direct call from Vernon Jordan, who I had known in earlier times -- he was very close to President Clinton. He called on behalf of a Philippine woman who was seeking to emigrate to the United States. There was a lot of that kind of activity. The one asset that an American ambassador in the Philippines had in the '90s was not foreign aid, it was - in the Philippine mind - the ability to facilitate visas. And our young FSOs who worked the "visa line," as they call it, learned very quickly the Philippine skill for scams in efforts to get exit visas. We also had a bad situation in Hawaii, where the Immigration and Naturalization Service had a very bad reputation for mistreating Filipinos who would first land in Hawaii on their way to the continental United States.

Q: When you would get reports about the bad treatment of Filipinos by Immigration Service in Hawaii, did you pass this on to the Immigration head office?

SOLOMON: Sure. We had an INS officer on the Country Team because of the volume of immigration activity. That was something that was an ongoing part of work at the embassy, and a serious issue. I think it's still a problem.

Q: What about the relations military to military particularly with the base closure? How did this develop?

SOLOMON: The Philippine military, I believe, was not anxious to be cut off from the United States. After we closed out the bases, we still maintained a defense treaty. The question was what shape would future mutual defense activities take? Because of the negative political voting on the issue of the bases and nationalistic sentiment, right after the bases were closed the big issue that provided counter pressure against us was whether we would work out a so-called "access arrangement" with the Philippines, as we had with Singapore. Even though we no longer maintained Subic Bay as an American Naval base, the question was whether the Philippine government would give our naval ships and sailors access to Philippine ports. Again, there was enormous political pressure in the Philippines against providing such access. So the level of U.S.-Philippine military cooperation subsided significantly.

One of the things I was able to do at the time was through the Mutual Defense Board and through CINCPAC [Commander in Chief, Pacific], who was then Admiral Chuck Larson. We negotiated a statement of mutual intention to maintain defense cooperation between the two sides, and we envisioned such activities as training and joint exercises. That was an effort that at least got a joint statement on paper that President Ramos supported quite actively. It helped to keep the door open. But despite that piece of paper, the political mood in the Philippines did not prove very conducive to doing very much, and the so-called SOFA agreement - the Status Of Forces Agreement - lapsed. The American military decided that they would not send their people to the Philippines unless they had the kind of guarantees in terms of judicial treatment and other favorable treatment for American troops that were part of the SOFA agreement. For several years thereafter there was basically no military training or visitation in the Philippines because of the lack of status of forces guarantees for our military personnel.

The reason I urged the Filipinos to keep our defense relationship active - this was in 1992 or early '93 - was that I felt that they were going to find the Chinese putting pressure on them as Beijing pressed its claims for the Spratly Islands and other areas in the South China Sea, some of which the Filipinos claimed. The Filipinos, at an official level, were aware of that situation. The Foreign Minister, Bobby Romulo, used to like to say that we shouldn't call the South China Sea the "South China Sea," we should call it the "ASEAN Lake." They were aware of the possibility of Chinese pressure, and indeed within a year of our leaving Subic, the Chinese put a structure up on what was aptly called Mischief Reef. They actively staked out a claim to territory that was in the Philippines' exclusive economic zone, an area where oil and gas had been found off the shore of Palawan Island. The Chinese asserted their presence in this contested area in the South China Sea because of a growing nationalism, which led them to want to reinforce their territorial claims. But I also think they did it as a way of making everybody aware that the Americans were not around anymore, and that the Philippines and the other ASEAN countries would have to deal with China on their own. I had urged Secretary Baker to take a fairly active position in response to Chinese efforts to put pressure on the Philippines and others who were our friends or allies in the region on the issue of the territorial disputes in the South China Sea. I made the argument that even if we weren't a direct claimant to these territories ourselves, if we were not seen as supporting the interests of key allies like the Philippines, then other allies in the region who are much more important to our interests - especially Japan, which had its own territorial dispute in the East China Sea with China, and Korea - would begin to have doubts about our staying power and our value as a defense partner. I urged a fairly forward leaning position in responding to these Chinese activities. But in the wake of the Gulf War, and in anticipation of the '92 elections, the Secretary, and I think the White House itself, was not anxious to take on another foreign policy challenge that seemed to hold the prospect of a military confrontation with China.

Q: Did you have a feeling in the time you were in the Philippines that this was almost a period that we had to get through doing the best one could, but with this resurgent nationalism but eventually it would sort of run its course. Our bases wouldn't come back, but there might be some other event, as far as bringing troops in, port visitations.

SOLOMON: My assumption was that after the bases were closed out, given what was going on in Southeast Asia, the Filipinos really had to face up to their economic circumstances and get their economy moving. They had missed the wave of heavy investment in Southeast Asia during the 1980s first because of the Marcos situation, and then due to the flaccid policies of Corazon Aquino on issues of economic growth. So in my view the Filipinos had to make economic growth their primary focus. We knew that nationalistic sentiment was still strong. We knew that President Ramos wanted to reorient the Philippines toward ASEAN somewhat, to make them much more of a player in ASEAN. I didn't see defense issues as high up on the agenda, but I wanted to keep the door open. As I say, the irony is how quickly the Chinese started putting pressure on the Fils in terms of the South China Sea, something that they themselves haven't figured out how to cope with.

I might mention one other thing that I tried to do - and failed to do - that I thought would have helped the Philippines and the U.S. maintain the integrity of ASEAN. That involved the American ambassador's residence in Baguio, up in the mountains. That residence had been significantly damaged during the Mount Pinatubo eruption because of earthquake activity. One small building on the site had been split in half and was no longer useable. There was a little damage to the residence itself, but a very steep hillside on this particular site where the Baguio residence is located became very unstable and had to be shored up. In addition, because of budget cuts, the Office of Foreign Buildings in the State Department was trying to save money and was eyeing the Baguio residence as something that could be eliminated. In that context, I tried to convince our people to, in effect, give the Baguio residence to the Philippine government in exchange for some favorable treatment on land in Manila that we wanted for housing and for a possible new ambassador's residence. I also proposed that the Filipinos make the ambassador's residence in Baguio a conference center for ASEAN. The State Department Foreign Service officers went along with me, but reluctantly. They were not enthusiastic about my plan, because a number of them didn't want to lose the use of the facility -- this was a terrific facility for our people to get out of the heat of Manila, to get up into the mountains, and Baguio is a very interesting little artistic community. It has many benefits, not least of which is Camp John Hay, right beside the residence area, which was being privatized by the Filipinos as part of the base closing and turned into a nice recreation center.

So the State Department people dragged their feet, and a few years later the issue of getting rid of the Baguio residence was dropped. It's still the ambassador's residence, but I felt it was potentially a very useful bargaining chip in terms of other things we were trying to accomplish in Manila and with the Filipinos. We were trying to acquire a major piece of land in Manila near the American cemetery to build a new residence, to build other new housing, and this would have been a very good trade. And, because the Philippines were not a lead country in ASEAN, with a conference facility they could have hosted conferences, seminars, and become one of the intellectual leaders of the ASEAN countries. But that approach to handling the ambassador's residence was not to come to pass.

Q: What about the American community, the business community. They had always been there hand in glove with the American military. Did the departure of the American military, and rising nationalism. How did the Americans...?

SOLOMON: There was a lot of interest in the business community in keeping things going. There were companies like Texas Instruments and Timex that had very effective manufacturing facilities, very profitable facilities. Everybody wanted the power generation problem solved, and many American firms wanted to remain active in the Philippines - down in Cebu or up closer to metropolitan Manila. I used to hold meetings with the American Chamber of Commerce once a month, and have other kinds of dealings with the American business community. In the post-Cold War period, I was certainly aware of the shift in emphasis in our foreign policy to supporting American exports and American business. This was one of the major new responsibilities of an

American ambassador. So we worked actively on those economic issues.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover on this before we close it off?

SOLOMON: I think that pretty well covers it. I can't think of any major things.

End of interview